2007

Annual Report

St Joseph’s Primary School Leeton

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Introduction
St Joseph’s School Leeton is nestled in the centre of Leeton. Leeton is a country town of approximately 8,000 people. St Joseph’s has 461 students. They are country children from supportive families. Our Catholic Tradition comes from the involvement of the St Joseph’s Religious Order who started the school and Catholic Education in Leeton. Our history is rich in the wonderful work of the Josephite Sisters.

St Joseph’s today is a thriving and vibrant community of 18 classes ranging from Kindergarten to Year 6. The staff is very committed and dedicated to the children. They care for them and support them academically but also socially, emotionally and spiritually.

St Joseph’s school has had a productive and very busy 2007. We’ve seen the children develop and grow as the year has progressed. The St Joseph’s school spirit is alive and can be witnessed in so many ways. It is alive when we see the beautiful progress of our Kindergarten children and their Year 6 buddies looking out for them. We see it alive when a grandfather comes into school each day to work with his grandson and it makes a very positive difference in this child’s life. We see it when all the staff and children join together to raise money for ‘Relay for Life’ to support a Kindergarten child who suffered from cancer. We see it when a husband of a teacher comes in and works with Year 6 children to build a primary sandpit. The St Joseph’s school spirit is evident in the smiles of the children each day and the way they interact with each other.

1 THE SCHOOL
ST.JOSEPH’S PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEETON

VISION STATEMENT
We believe that St. Joseph’s Leeton is a place where:

1. Catholic beliefs are taught and the Catholic faith is experienced, witnessed and shared.

2. The values of the Gospel are evident in the daily routines of school life.

3. All children are given every opportunity to develop their full potential in all curriculum areas.

4. The individual talents and needs of each child are recognised and nurtured.

5. All members of the community experience respect, dignity and justice.

6. All children will be provided with a valuable foundation for their future life enabling them to be happy and fulfilled members of our society.

ST. JOSEPH’S PRIMARY SCHOOL
LEETON

MISSION STATEMENT
Our school is a place where, Catholic beliefs are taught and the Catholic faith is experienced, witnessed and shared. Therefore we are committed to:

- Planning and implementing a comprehensive Religious Education programme.

- Providing regular and varied experiences of prayer, celebration and liturgy.

Our School is a place where, the values of the Gospel are evident in the daily
routines of school life. Therefore we are committed to:

- Integrating the values of the Gospel, as manifested by the person of Jesus Christ, into all aspects of our teaching, learning and our interpersonal relationships.

- Focusing our community on the needs and aspirations of children, staff and families.

- Building relationships among people who have as their foundation co-operation, honesty, justice and integrity.

Our School is a place where all children are given every opportunity to develop their full potential in all curriculum areas. Therefore we are committed to:

- Providing relevant, meaningful and appropriate learning experiences for each child.

- Providing all members of staff with opportunities for professional and spiritual development so they may respond to the current needs of the children.

Our School is a place where the individual needs of each child are recognised and nurtured. Therefore we are committed to:

- Considering the needs, talents and gifts of the children when planning and implementing teaching, learning and extra curricula activities.

Our School is a place where all members of our community experience respect, dignity and justice. Therefore we are committed to:

- Developing and maintaining communication based on mutual respect between children, staff, families and the wider community.

- Establishing opportunities and structures for consultation and collaboration with children, staff and families in the preparation of policies, programmes and the development and implementation of school change.

Our School is a place where, all children will be provided with a valuable foundation for their future life enabling them to be happy and fulfilled members of our society. Therefore we are committed to:

- Providing opportunities for academic growth where children develop important attitudes, skills and knowledge to handle situations in the wider world.

- Establishing and maintaining a secure and positive school environment that enables our children to be co-operative, confident and happy people.

- Providing opportunities for the children to work with staff, families, the parish and our local community so they can develop responsibility and leadership.

Religious Education

In 2007 St Joseph’s conducted the sacramental programs for Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation. In each sacrament the children became very involved, prayerful and reverent. They took on the program in a very serious and sincere manner.

The Religious Education Syllabus “Sharing Our Story” was taught and knowledge of the program has been refined over the year. In term 3 our mission day was fun for the children while they knew they were raising funds for others less fortunate than themselves.
The Arts
All classes have music lessons each fortnight and beautiful singing and music from instruments can be heard. The music from the children also adds beautifully to our Masses and Liturgies.

The culmination to the year saw a combination of a P&F fund raiser Pool Party and Christmas Carols from the children. Great Christmas songs and poems were performed. Kindergarten summed up Christmas very well through their song about Jesus. Again the school participated in the Leeton Eisteddfod. A wonderful combination of dance, singing, percussion and poetry was performed with many successful first and second places being won.

Sport
All the children were involved in whole school sport and physical activities such as athletics and cross country as well as tabloid sport days and the primary children had their swimming carnival. All children did physical activity each week as a requirement of the government. Many opportunities arise for talented children to participate in Deanery, Diocesan and State level sports.

The Infant children participated in the Perceptual Motor Program which is a program where they interact in a planned way with specific equipment. They climb, crawl, roll over and under and balance on this equipment.

School Initiatives
Boys’ Education has been a high focus for two years now and a lot of research has taken place which has led to some new initiatives for St Joseph’s school. An activity room available for students to use at lunch time has catered for those students who like hands on activities in preference to sports. A primary sandpit will also allow primary students an opportunity to do an alternative activity at lunch time.

Plans are underway for Year 5 in 2008 to have a different structure. There will be a boys’ class, a girls’ class and a mixed class. The research for this comes from Stephen Biddulph, a renowned authority in Boys’ Education and the experience of Darley Primary School in Victoria.

The Writing project continued in 2007 and again saw outstanding improvement in the children’s writing. As a result of clear assessment and focused explicit planning and teaching the standard and quality of writing increased significantly.

The Kindergarten orientation program commenced with a parent meeting which gives the parents the opportunity to find out about St Joseph’s. This was followed by an individual family interview with the parents, child and principal. A three week program allowed the children to come in on a set day for 2 hours. This helped them to become familiar with the school and of course to meet their Year 5 buddy.

The ICT focus also continued at St Joseph’s in 2007. An interactive whiteboard has enthralled all the students. All key learning areas can be supported with the use of this interactive whiteboard for all students Kindergarten to Year 6.

Resilience building in children was a focus to complement our Anti Bullying program. Dr Toni Noble ran an inservice day for staff and an evening meeting for parents on ‘Bounce Back’. The ‘Bounce Back’ program will be implemented in 2008

School Policies
Student Welfare;

The students’ welfare is always of utmost priority. The following school policies which can be accessed at the school highlights the wide range of and different levels of care given to all children.

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Health Care Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Students with Addition Needs Policy
- Road Safety Policy
- Students Code of Conduct Policy
- Critical Incidence Policy
- OH&S Policy
- Chemical Safety Policy
Discipline;
The school’s Welfare Discipline Policy allows for students who are well behaved to be acknowledged. It also outlines clear procedure for working with children who have behaviour difficulties. It also can be accessed at the school.

The school;
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, a meeting with the Principal can be arranged. St. Joseph’s Welfare Policy outlines procedures for working with children who have behaviour difficulties.

This policy can be accessed at the school and the following is a link to the Catholic School’s Office policies at their public website www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

School Council

2007 St. Joseph’s Leeton School Council Report
The Council fulfilled its main role of providing help and support to the school principal (Helen Mulholland) with the management of the budget and planning the future direction for the school.

The School Council consists of parents who have been nominated from the school community. The 2007 School Council members have been very supportive parents and passionate about our school. Their advice always looks at the best interest of all students. Their support during 2007 has been much appreciated

The school building is a project that has taken a lot of the Council’s time and thought. The project will be completed in 2008 and we look forward to a new classroom and much needed improved facilities for the staff and students.

The School Council has been very diligent in maintaining the grounds and this was difficult at times with the drought.

The 2008 school budget has been developed and approved by the School Council. This puts in place the financial support for the school for the coming year.

During the year the Council has been conducting working bees on a regular basis to maintain the school environment and buildings.

Many thanks to all parents who have contributed to the school over the year.

Parents and Friends Report
The culmination of many year's work and planning took place with the opening of the COLA (Covered Outdoor Learning Area). The opening was in the form of a bushdance which was a fun night for all.

The Parents & Friends have again worked tirelessly during 2007 to raise $18,500 for the school. On top of this there have been many more financial donations. The P & F bought representative sport uniforms. They gave Year 6 a special book to help them through life as an end of primary schooling gift. They supported the Infant children by funding sandpit equipment. The school year ended with a very successful pool party and Christmas carols were presented by the children. Thank you to all the hardworking parents in the Parents & Friends.

2. Information on Key School Programs

Curriculum Focus
In 2007 the School Renewal Plan included the following Curriculum areas.
- Religious Education
- Boys’ Education
- Writing Project
Programs to Support Learning

St Joseph's in 2007 conducted two Language Classes for children in Kindergarten and Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 with speech difficulties. These small groups met regularly in terms 2 and 3 with a trained teacher.

Reading Recovery is a program that supports children in Year 1 who are having difficulty with Reading and Writing. A specialist teacher works with each child for 30 minutes per day for 17 weeks.

Technology has been a focus and has been supported with a large financial commitment from the School Council.

Equity Programs

St Joseph’s provides several equity programs. They are programs that support Special Needs Children and Indigenous Children. Class teachers plan programs that are implemented by teacher assistants.

Programs to Support Students

Programs to support Special Needs Students and Indigenous children operate at St Joseph’s. Special Needs Students are assessed and if funding for support is approved a teacher assistant is organised. The class teacher plans the child’s program for the teacher assistant to implement. Meetings with parents occur during the year.

Indigenous students also receive assistance from teacher assistants on a regular basis. The assistance is for Literacy and Numeracy.

The Student Representative Council is elected by the students. This group of children lead the school. They meet regularly with the Assistant Principal and together they look at how they can be of help to the school.

Respect and Responsibility

Class norms that are set at the beginning of each year show how children want to be treated. Children and staff have asked to be treated with respect. Out of this comes the responsibility therefore to treat others in this way. At times during the year when a class “rough spot” is experienced this value is revisited. The school displays the values for Australian Schooling and National Safe Schools Framework posters to show that we value their importance.

As a part of the Values for Australian Schools program in 2007 our focus was “Building Resilience in Children.” A very successful parent forum was held.

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</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>93.75%</td>
<td>98.75%</td>
<td>96.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>91.31%</td>
<td>98.54%</td>
<td>97.12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The Infants staff were inserviced in Jolly Phonics and Jolly Grammar which complements our Phonemic awareness program.

All the staff were involved in a ‘Building Resilience’ inservice with Dr Toni Noble. The technology teacher participated in a 3 day course on interactive whiteboards and their use in learning and teaching.
The school’s website was completed, due to the commitment of two staff members.

Several members of staff attended a workshop with Stephen Biddulph with the focus being Boys’ Education.

3. School Renewal

Progress of the School Renewal Framework

The following were the main focus for 2007. Programs, Policies and Curriculum.
- Writing Project
- Programming and Assessment
- Boys’ Education
- Resilience / Bounce Back
- Anti Bullying
- Sports Program
- Information to parents re: children’s progress
- Information Technology Leadership and Administration
- NSSF School Safety
- Values Forum - Government funding
- Phonemic Awareness
- Spat Assessment and Jolly Phonics

Resources and Facilities
- New Building
- Refurbishment of Multi Purpose room and staff room
- Technology

4. School Overview

School Enrolment

Enrolment Policy
St Joseph’s School Leeton implements the Catholic School Office enrolment policy available at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Indig’</th>
<th>LOTE*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>234</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Structure of Classes

All teaching staff at St Joseph’s have appropriate teaching qualifications, from a recognised higher education institution.

St Joseph’s school has 18 classes:- Kindergarten to Year 6. Many grades have 3 classes and the others have 2 classes. The average size is 26 children.

There is a commitment to making the infants classes as small as possible. Larger classes have teacher assistant support. Music teacher, librarian and computer teacher give specialist lessons. Reading Recovery operates for at-risk students in Reading and Writing for Year 1 children. The language class operates to support a small group of children who have language difficulties. An “English as a Second Language” program has operated for children who struggle with English as it is not spoken at home.

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>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Learning
The following is the professional learning the staff have had the opportunity to receive in 2007;
- MIA Writing Project
- Resilience / Bounce Back
- Assessment
- Technology
- Jolly Phonics
- Phonemic Awareness

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 97.5% was achieved in 2007 by staff at St Joseph’s Primary School, Leeton.

**Parent Involvement and Participation**
See Council and Parents & Friends reports.

**Community Use of School Facilities**
The community has use of the school facilities for meetings, reunions and sport. At all times the issue of insurance needs to be considered.

**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 Leeton.

**Parents**
My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at St Joseph’s Leeton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Students**
I am usually happy at St Joseph’s Leeton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42.96%</td>
<td>55.47%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff**
I am usually happy at St Joseph’s Leeton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54.54%</td>
<td>40.58%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.02%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

![Financial Statement Chart]
The total income and expense of the school, that is included in the above, is shown below.

**About This Report**
This report was written by the Principal.