Introduction
St Mary’s Primary School is a co-educational K-6 school serving the needs of the Catholic community of Corowa in providing a Catholic education for its students.

St Mary’s is very much a parish school. The school enjoys strong support from Fr Paul Hart P.P., the Sisters and parishioners. Many of the parishioners attended St Mary’s School themselves and there are a number of families who have maintained a direct link with the school over several generations.

St Mary’s is located close to the parish church and is on a single campus. The old convent building serves as the administration and staff area as well as housing one of the classrooms. Six other classrooms are located in the main school two-storey complex with a double portable classroom accommodating another class and the music room. The Monsignor Lane Centre, a modern multi-purpose building, currently houses the School Library with a Computer Lab annexe.

St Mary’s draws from Corowa and surrounds including Howlong, Rutherglen and Wahgunyah. The current school enrolment is 182, from Kindergarten to Year 6 in eight classes.

1. The School

The School

VISION STATEMENT
We believe St Mary’s Primary School is a community in which:

Jesus is our prime focus enabling us to be active members of a faith-filled community.

Children are prepared in a collaborative, cooperative and supportive environment, for the changing world, through the promotion of a comprehensive quality curriculum.

The dignity of each person is upheld and respected, and where the ideas of compassion and justice are allowed to flourish.

Parents, parish and teachers work towards total development of the child in a safe, cooperative and collaborative learning community.

MISSION STATEMENT
St Mary’s Primary School is committed to being:

A Community of Faith
Jesus is our prime focus enabling us to be active members of a faith-filled community, witnessed by:

Implementation of a spiritually rich, well informed, relative and flexible Religious Education curriculum.

Class Masses
School Masses
Anointing Masses
Paraliturgies
Classroom Prayer
Ecumenical Services
Sacramental Preparation

A Community of Learning
Children are prepared in a collaborative, cooperative and supportive environment, for the changing world, through the promotion of a comprehensive quality curriculum, witnessed by:

Investing in independent thinking, and the development and application of targeted skills

Provision of quality learning experiences in Key Learning Areas:
Religious Education
English
Mathematics
Science and Technology
Human Society and Its Environment
Creative and Practical Arts
Personal Development, PE and Health

Other Cross Curriculum Areas
School Choir and Musicals
Computers and related Technology
Cultural Performances
Excursions/Outdoor Education
Sport
Perceptual Motor Programme
Gymnastics Program

**A Community of Care**
The dignity of each person is upheld and respected, and where the ideas of compassion and justice are allowed to flourish, witnessed by:

- A Positive Pastoral Care programme
- The Peer Support programme

**A Community of Service**
Parents, parish and teachers work towards total development of the child in a safe, cooperative and collaborative learning community, witnessed by:

- A commitment to the community by servicing a wide range of community based projects, for example:
  - Anzac Day March and Ceremony
  - Remembrance Day Ceremony
  - Visits to Karinya House
  - Project Compassion and support of Missions
  - Caring for our school and local environment
- Specifically encouraging parental involvement in school life including:
  - Active participation in Key Learning Areas
  - Improving our school environment
  - Enhancing our outdoor education program
  - Contributing to the liturgical and pastoral life of our school

**Religious Education**
The school’s Religious Education Syllabus is ‘Sharing Our Story’. The teaching of Religious Education occurs daily in classrooms, with children learning about their Catholic faith, and covering the strands of God, Jesus, Church, Sacraments, Scripture, Christian Life and Prayer.

In 2007 the school conducted a variety of liturgical celebrations. Each class prepared their Class Mass in Terms 1, 2, 3 and 4. Mass was celebrated to mark the beginning and end of the School Year, and the school participated in Masses at various times throughout the year to mark significant feasts and observances.

Senior children attended Parish Anointing Masses during the year. Children often assisted in the preparation of Masses and were involved in Liturgy of The Word, altar service and as choristers. During Holy Week all school children participated in the Holy Week Liturgy which celebrates the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Staff and children are involved in the preparation of school and class liturgies.

The Sacramental Program included regular liturgical celebrations in students’ homes as well as in St Mary’s Parish Church, with each program culminating in the celebration of the particular sacrament (Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation).

**The Arts**
All students enjoyed weekly music lessons with the Principal and a variety of activities in visual arts, dance and drama with their class teachers.

Students enjoyed presenting their music, drama and dance skills at various assemblies during the year.

**Sport**
St. Mary’s School was involved in numerous sports in 2007. Our major events were swimming, AFL football, cross country and athletics. Carnivals were held for cross country, swimming and athletics with points awarded to all children who participated. Overall team winners were also acknowledged as well as age champions and children were selected for deanery carnivals.

Sporting trials were held to select children for deanery and diocesan events such as netball, cricket, Aussie Rules, hockey and tennis. Students who displayed excellence in a sport or represented the diocese in the MacKillop team for 2007 were acknowledged at our school’s final assembly.

The school participated in the local schools Winter Sports Carnival playing football, netball, mini-hockey, soccer and newcombe ball. Year 4, 5 and 6 boys also played AFL in the Paul Kelly
Cup (Southern Division) against other schools in the region.

Senior girls and boys competed against other diocesan schools in the Frank Kelly Shield (AFL and Netball) at Finley.

Girls in Years 4, 5 and 6 participated in the Diocesan Netball Competition, with all teams advancing to the final. The Year 4 team won the inaugural Jackie Murphy Netball Challenge for the Year 4 Division in September, at this event.

**School Initiatives**

- Teacher Professional Development in the areas of Child Protection, Duty of Care, CPR and Teaching and Learning
- Healthy Canteen Program, continuing the 2006 initiative to introduce more healthy food choices at the Canteen and establish a vegetable garden
- Implementation of policies and practices in the National Safe Schools Framework
- Conduct of a Values Education Forum in conjunction with other schools in the region
- Implementation of the mandatory reporting framework
- Continuation of the School Student Representative Council (SRC)
- Continuation of the Peer Support Program for all students
- ‘Teachable Moments’ – Catholic Personal Development / Sexuality Program. Sessions for students and parents
- Painting of classroom areas in accordance with the School Maintenance Plan
- Purchase of laptops, digital projector, portable PA system and interactive whiteboard using Commonwealth Government Investing In Our Schools Program funds
- Installation of a school networked PA system using Commonwealth Government Investing In Our Schools Program funds
- Landscaping and school beautification using Commonwealth Government Investing In Our Schools Program funds
- Successful application for funds under the Commonwealth Government’s Community Water Grant Scheme, for installation of an irrigation system, water tanks and water-efficient devices in 2008

**School Policies**

The Catholic ethos of the school means that respect for and responsibility of all people is a core value in all dealings with all people and is reflected in the school policies.

Students are helped to develop respect and responsibility through the implementation of the Student Welfare and Discipline Policies.

The school has policies for dealing with complaints and grievances, in accordance with the Catholic Schools Office - Wagga Wagga, which has established a Complaints Handling Policy implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The school also has an enrolment policy in line with that of the Catholic Schools Office - Wagga Wagga. The full text of these CSO policies can be found at [www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au)

**School Council**

**St Mary’s School Council Chairperson’s Report 2007**

I would like to begin this report by thanking those members of the School Council that have honoured their commitment in 2007 to help the school maintain a high level of education through participation in this committee.

This report covers the main activities conducted in 2007 by the St Mary’s School Council with the welcomed support of the schools P&F committee. Membership of the Council during 2007 was as follows:

- Brendan Christy (Chairperson)
- Phil Taylor (School Principal)
- Fr Paul Hart (Parish Priest)
- Paul Schnelle (Treasurer)
- Colin Bennett (Secretary)
- Peter Hughes (elected member and P&F representative)
- Julia Coyle (elected member)
- Louise Forrest (elected member)
- Teacher representative (different member each term)

The operation of the School Council is different from a School Board which previously operated at the School in that a
Council is seen as an advisory group to discuss issues surrounding the efficient running of the School. The final decision and liability of actions rest with the School Principal with guidance from the Catholic School’s Office. This change in operation has provided the School Council with a challenge to remain relevant in the running of the school decision process. On behalf of the Council I would like to thank Phil for his commitment to listening to the advice offered by the Council, for without the support of the Principal the Council lacks the ability to function effectively in the school decision process.

It has been a big year for the school which has been helped by a strong parent community who have contributed in many ways which benefit the school. The school fete was highly successful raising an amazing $14,385 and I extend my thanks to the P&F committee for organising this event and all the parents who worked tirelessly, as the money raised will benefit the school in the coming years. I would also like to thank the P&F for the successful running of the Nitbusters program this year. It was an extremely successful program helped by a large group of dedicated parent helpers and supporting teachers and there are plans to run the program again next year.

During the year the Council coordinated the funds allocated by the Federal Government through the “Investing in our schools” program. The school was allocated a total of $46,000 and the guidelines for allocating funds stated the decision process needed to include input from the parents of the school. The council surveyed parents to determine their ‘wish list’ before reaching a final decision on priorities. In making their decision the Council focussed on the larger, more expensive items of the ‘wish list’ as it is difficult to fundraise for these capital items due to their one-off expense. The funds from this program allowed the school to landscape and provide seating and tables to allow all children within the school to be seated in shaded comfort while eating their lunch. Money was also spent on improving the computer facilities and the sound system within the school. Overall these items are a welcomed addition to St Mary’s School and I extend a big thanks to all involved in organising the spending of these funds.

The council was successful this year in receiving a Federal Government Community Water Grant. The grant will allow the school install water tanks to capture rainwater for use in the toilets and the garden. Funds will also be spent on water efficient toilet and an automatic watering system. After such a run of dry years the success of this grant is timely with on-ground works due to start in the new year.

Finally, after three years, my time on the School Council has come to an end. I thank all who have supported me over this time and wish the Council well as they face the challenges of 2008.

Brendan Christy
Chairperson
2. Information on Key School Programs

Curriculum Focus
The teaching and learning process is a high priority for staff. In 2007 teachers participated in professional development with workshop presenter Ralph Pirozzo, on quality teaching and learning which engages all children and enhances teachers' skills and classroom practice.

The English Curriculum was formally reviewed in 2007 and HSIE will be reviewed in 2008.

Programs to Support Learning
The school's learning support initiatives include:

- Current technology, including the use of DVDs, scanners, photocopiers, digital cameras, laptops, the interactive whiteboard and use of internet and intranet for learning
- Reading Recovery Program, to support reading skill development for children 'at risk' in the early primary years
- Peer Support Program, assisting self-esteem, self awareness, communication skills and group co-operation
- PMP (Perceptual Motor Program), to develop co-ordination and motor skills of the infants children
- Gymnastics Program from Kindergarten to Year 6, to develop children's co-ordination, flexibility and balance
- S.P.O.T. Program, to teach infants children about safety and correct care and handling of dogs and cats

Equity Programs

- Aboriginal Education, supporting indigenous students' access to the curriculum
- Centacare, supporting students and parents through provision of counselling services
- Multicultural Education, supporting Catholic principles of awareness, respect and understanding of people from different backgrounds and cultures

Programs to Support Students

- Students with disabilities are supported through special education programmes tailored to their individual needs
- Drug Education Program supported by 'Life Education' sessions for all children
- Values Education Program, including the conduct of a Values Education Forum for parents
- 'Teachable Moments' – Catholic Personal Development / Sexuality Program. Sessions for students and parents
- Student Representative Council, which forms part of the student leadership team in the school
- 'Teachable Moments' – Catholic Personal Development / Sexuality Program. Sessions for students and parents
- Peer Support Program, assisting self-esteem, self awareness, communication skills and group co-operation

Respect and Responsibility

- Drug Education Program supported by 'Life Education' sessions for all children
- Values Education Program, including the conduct of a Values Education Forum for parents
- 'Teachable Moments' – Catholic Personal Development / Sexuality Program. Sessions for students and parents
- Student Representative Council, which forms part of the student leadership team in the school
- 'Teachable Moments' – Catholic Personal Development / Sexuality Program. Sessions for students and parents
- Peer Support Program, assisting self-esteem, self awareness, communication skills and group co-operation

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>Year 3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</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 the information to inform its learning and teaching practices for the upcoming year.

**Staff Achievement**

In addition to whole staff professional learning activities, individual staff members have been involved in spiritual development, autism workshops and collegial sharing of best practice methods in literacy and numeracy teaching.

**3. School Renewal**

**Progress of the School Renewal Framework**

School Improvement Targets

Targets for 2008 include:

- Further development of the Learning Agenda: shared vision and agreed practices for teaching and learning - engaging all children in the thinking / learning classroom
- Use of Community Water Grant: installation of irrigation system using harvested tank water and provision of other water efficient systems in the school
- Curriculum Review in the area of Human Society and Its Environment
- Student Welfare Policy Review to improve practices and communication

Curriculum Review in English was completed in 2007. This will inform future direction and long-term planning.

School beautification and improvement of facilities continue to be high priorities and the school's parent representative bodies, the P&F Association and School Council, are involved in the planning and development of special projects.

---

**4. School Overview**

**School Enrolment**

**Enrolment Policy**

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established and Enrolment 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](http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au)

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

The NSW Department of School Education School Attendance Policy states that it is the duty of the parents to ensure that the students attend the school on each day that instruction is provided.

Parents have a legal obligation to notify the school about their child's absence. Procedures are in place to monitor student absences.

**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>84</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

**Post-school destinations**

At the end of Year 6, students move on to various secondary schools in the area, including Corowa High School, Xavier High School and Galen Catholic College.

**Structure of Classes**

In 2007 there were 8 class groupings:

Kindergarten, Year 1, 2 x Year 2 groups, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6.

**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.
### Professional Learning
2007 staff professional learning included:
- Child Protection
- Duty of Care
- CPR / First Aid
- Teaching and Learning: engaging all students in quality learning experiences – whole staff inservice with educator Ralph Pirozzo

### 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 95.4% was achieved in 2007 by staff at St Mary’s Primary School, Corowa.

### Parent Involvement and Participation
- St Mary’s School P&F Association raises funds for needed and/or desired amenities that assist the school body and raise the teaching facility of the school
- The School Council, advisory to the Principal, has four parent members
- Assistance at school functions including sporting carnivals and events
- Assistance during excursions
- Help with reading groups, PMP and other class activities
- Working Bees
- Involvement in Parish Sacramental Programs

### Community Use of School Facilities
- Various community groups hire or borrow the school’s portable shade structures
- Use of school grounds for outdoor parish masses
- Sharing of equipment for sporting events with other local schools

### 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 Mary’s School, Corowa.

#### Parents
My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at St Mary’s Primary School, Corowa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Students
I am usually happy at St Mary’s Primary School, Corowa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Staff
I am usually happy at St Mary’s Primary School, Corowa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</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.

The total income and expense of the school, that is included in the above, is shown below.

About This Report
This report was written with input from the staff, Parents and Friends Association and School Council.