2008

Annual Report

Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga

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Introduction
Mater Dei Catholic College is a co-educational school which prides itself in being a Learning Community steeped in the Catholic tradition of Gospel values. We believe strongly that Jesus serves as a model for us all; especially adolescents of today.

1. The School

The College
Situated on the southern outskirts of Wagga, its location is unparalleled, not only in comparison to other schools in the region, but across the state. Mater Dei is only five years young with facilities that are fresh and modern. Views of Lake Albert are complemented by vast oval spaces. This aesthetically pleasing environment allows our students to experience effective learning as a result of quality teaching delivered by energetic and experienced teachers.

Mater Dei believes in the development of the whole child and as such offers students the opportunity to pursue their talents. For instance, we provide a varied and dynamic sporting program. Also, Mater Dei offers a comprehensive Music Tuition Program where students can be involved with Stage and Concert Bands and String Orchestra. They then have the opportunity to showcase their musical talents at many public venues.

Throughout 2008, a major overhaul and upgrade of technology provided increased access to computers for our students. This, combined with our strong emphasis on pastoral care for the individual, means the College will be well placed to prepare its students for the emerging demands of the 21st century.

Catholic Identity
Catholic Life and Mission
Catholic Heritage
Mater Dei Catholic College is a College with a five year history, born out of the rich tradition and spirit of the Brothers, Sisters and lay people who served Catholic Education in the Wagga Wagga district for over 130 years. The College attempts to meet the needs of the students for the present, and into the future. We aim to educate our students to take their place in society through an education that we see as part of a life-long process which, in faithfulness to our mission statement, “is founded in Catholic faith, justice and love (and) is inclusive, learner centred and seeks excellence and wisdom”. Gospel values, as demonstrated by our patron Mary, Mother of God, as well as by Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice are articulated in our Mission Statement and are at the centre of all our endeavours. We accept the challenge, as they did, to reach out to Christ, present in the poor.

Liturgical Life
The Sacramental life of the College continues to build our awareness of community and spirituality. This year members of each year group within the Student Council have taken responsibility for preparing the Liturgy with the assistance of various staff. For example, designated Year groups prepared the following liturgies:
8/8/08 Mary McKillop Liturgy - Year 7
27/8/08 Vocations Mass – Yrs 11& 12 - Year 11
19/9/08 Mater Dei Day Mass – Year 10
25/9/08 Year 12 Graduation Mass – Year 12
3/12/08 7-11 End of Year Mass that celebrates and farewells - Year 10

Local clergy have presided over liturgies for the College this year. Fr. Bernie Thomas, though new to Kooringal Parish, has been present at many events this year. The Opening Mass for the beginning of the College year was conducted in the Performing Arts Centre with Bishop concelebrating with a parish priest and the College chaplain. Several families and invited guests were present to witness the presentation of badges to the student leaders.

The Creative Arts Department helped prepare the environment and the music for liturgies. Students also play a large role in their participation in the Mass through reading Scripture and prayers, and involvement in processions. Each person’s reverent and prayerful participation supports the whole community in these spiritual experiences.

One new direction for liturgy this year has been the Back to Parish Mass for Year 7s. Year 7 students attended a Mass in the parish that they named on enrolment to the College. Where this was not designated, students were sent either to the Primary School parish which they attended, to the parish of the geographical area in which they live, or for
students who come from outer-lying parishes, to the Cathedral. The students travelled by bus to the designated Church. They participated in the liturgy and were then provided with morning tea by members of that parish.

A group of students and staff have been involved in preparing Youth Masses held at Sacred Heart Kooringal. These liturgies have been well received by parishioners and College community members who have attended. A Year 10 student council member also attended meetings at Sacred Heart in relation to future plans for liturgy in that parish.

The Lenten Liturgy was led by Year 7 students. We continued our celebration of Founders Day with Eucharist. Nano Nagle and Edmund Rice were remembered as founders of Religious Orders who came to Wagga Wagga to set up Catholic schools. This liturgy was attended by local Presentation Sisters.

Other liturgical highlights include Ash Wednesday where ashes were distributed within Homegroups in the context of a liturgy. Graduation Mass was concelebrated in the PAC by Bishop with Fr. Bernie Thomas. The contribution of the Aboriginal People was recognised with the College celebration of NAIDOC. Mater Dei Day was celebrated on 19th September.

Homegroup Prayer was supported by two Year 9 students, who have taken responsibility for putting together the prayer sheet for the week. This has been aptly named “On the Way”, the phrase given in the New Testament to following Jesus and His way of life. These students have endeavoured to present a variety of prayers for particular saints days, global or national events, needs of the community such as rain for our drought affected land.

The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese
We have endeavoured to include our Bishop and the clergy from the feeder parishes in our celebrations, to indicate that they are always welcome to visit.

The Year 7 students, through their initial unit of study in Religious Education, reflect upon the nature of our College as a faith community and the place of the College in the wider faith community.

Members of the College community participated in a Sunday Liturgy in the Sacred Heart Parish at Kooringal, through providing music and readers for a Youth Mass once or twice per term.

Since the opening of the College Fr. Plunkett has been active in erecting a Cross that would be very visible on the hill on which the College stands. This goal was achieved this year. This was marked with a blessing of the Cross and placing of a plaque.

Religious Education Curriculum
Year 7 has been studying the following topics throughout the year, Term 1 Initiation and Belonging, Term 2 Scripture and Catholic Beliefs and Practices, Term 3 Life and Times and the person of Jesus, Term 4 Prayer, liturgical cycle and spirituality and Sacred time and place.

Year 8 has been studying the following topics throughout the year, Term 1 Reconciliation, Term 2 Religion in the World and Homelessness, Term 3 The Church spreads the Good News, Term 4 Images of God and Service to the Community.

Year 9 has been studying the following topics throughout the year, Term 1 Moral Decision Making and Justice and Peace, Term 2 Images of Jesus and Ancient Religions, Term 3 New Testament, Term 4 Living Simply and Meaning in the Media combined with Religion and Ethics.

Year 10 has been studying the following topics throughout the year, Term 1 Commitment and Ministry combined with Community Service, Term 2 Reverence for Life and Death and New Life, Term 3 Christianity in the Middle Ages and Term 4 A Call to Unity.

Year 11 Studies of Religion
This year we have established our first 2 Unit Studies of Religion class along with three 1 Unit classes in the preliminary course. The students have been working towards building knowledge and understanding of the following areas; The Nature of Religion and Beliefs, Depth Studies on: Islam, Judaism (2 unit) and Christianity.

Year 12 Studies of Religion
The HSC course of Studies of Religion ran this year with three 1 Unit classes. In each of these classes the students worked toward their final examinations by undertaking a series of assessment tasks on each of their major focus topics; Religion and Belief Systems in Australia Post 1945, and Religious Traditions Depth Studies on Islam and Christianity.

**Journey of the World Youth Day Cross and Icon visits MATER DEI CATHOLIC COLLEGE**

On 29 February we were fortunate enough to have the Journey of the World Youth Day Cross and Icon visit our School Community. In July 2007, the World Youth Day Cross and Icon of our Lady arrived in Australia to begin a journey through each Australian Diocese. Originally the idea of Pope John Paul II, the 3.8m-high wooden Cross was built and placed as a symbol of the Catholic faith near the main altar in St Peter’s Basilica during the Holy Year of 1983. At the end of that year, John Paul II gave this cross as a gift to the youth of the world, to be carried through the world as a symbol of Christ’s love for humanity.

Since then, the cross has travelled far and wide. It has been throughout Europe, the USA, Canada, South America and The Philippines, to Poland and Prague, to the German Parliament and even to Ground Zero in New York. It has been carried from parish churches to youth detention centres, prisons, schools, universities, historic sites, shopping centres, nightclub districts and parks.

We were fortunate to have the WYD Cross and Icon in our presence for 2 hours on this day. At 9.00 am on this day we celebrated a Whole School Mass with the College Chaplain. The Mass offered special intentions for the pilgrims and organisers of World Youth Day. Following this the Year 12 Leadership group carried the enormous and heavy Cross from Mater Dei around to Apex Park at Lake Albert and the whole of Mater Dei followed behind them. Looking out over the beautiful Lake we enjoyed live music from Mater Dei’s Strings Group, Songs from the Choir and Prayers of dedication from the Captains. Following this we handed over the WYD Cross to Kildare to continue its journey around the Wagga Wagga Diocese.

**World Youth Day Celebrations in July**

In the July School Holidays, students and staff who had worked all year in preparation attended the World Youth Day events in Sydney. We were fortunate to join with the other 4 secondary schools from around our Diocese for the pilgrimage and special events in Sydney on the final weekend.

The WYD08 week provided the occasion for hundreds of thousands of pilgrims and visitors to meet and participate in a variety of events in celebration of our Catholic faith. Over 170 nations were represented at the WYD08 events. The Holy Father’s first visit to Sydney attracted enormous interest from international media, pilgrims, Sydney-siders and visitors to Sydney.

Our Students boarded coaches with Kildare students in very early hours of Saturday (19th July) morning headed towards Sydney to join the throngs of pilgrims already assembled for WYD activities. Once arrived in Sydney disembarked at the Catholic Education Office at Daceyville for breakfast. Following this the students joined the Pilgrimage Walk towards Randwick Racecourse, the site of the Evening Vigil. A ceremony of light and testimonies of young people was followed by the Holy Father’s address and a time of prayer and music, especially Eucharistic Adoration. Around 235,000 attended the evening and the Wagga Diocesan Group along with about 200,000 other pilgrims, slept out under the stars. The students remarked that this truly was a memorable and special moment in their World Youth Day journey.

Despite the obvious challenges of such an enormous crowd, the occasion was amazingly prayerful and quiet. Staff and students truly felt they had been part of a once in a lifetime, life-changing event!

**Catholic Worldview**

At Mater Dei Catholic College we consider all aspects of education as an expression of the Catholic worldview. We encourage all staff members to apply this worldview which translates into a Christ-centred orientation that permeates all aspects of school life including relationships, structures, celebrations and routines, as well as the formal curriculum.

A Staff Reflection Day was held on April 11. Kerrie Cusack, the leader for adult faith formation for the Diocese of Wagga Wagga
was invited to help plan this day. The focus was “A Mission from God: Evangelising Mission of the Catholic School”. Bishop Gerard Hanna spoke to the staff about being called to mission. We explored the relationship of gender to spirituality: Male Spirituality with Fr. Tony Loth and Female Spirituality with Kerrie Cusack. All staff were invited to a greater awareness of their Spirituality through various options.

At the Year 7 reflection day students worked their way through three sessions. The Gospel reading for this day was “The call of the disciples”. Reflection and discussion centred on the ways in which we are called to lead. Students were also involved in co-operative games and the “Why Try” program. The Creative Arts Department joined forces with the Year 8 team to offer a two day experience for Year 8 students. Year 9 were separated into gender based groups for their reflection day on relationships.

We continued to develop our Year 10 Community Service project. We began with a day of preparation at the end of Term One. Students went out into the wider community in class groups and then followed this with a half day Retreat in the Nagle Room under Mount Erin Chapel.

The College St Vincent de Paul group has been very active in fundraising and also supported the Meals on Wheels program in Wagga Wagga. This year they organised a very successful Christmas Appeal in which students brought in gifts and non-perishable food items that more than filled the tray of a one tonne utility.

This year we as a College have benefitted from the National School Chaplaincy Program. The Director of Mission’s work has been partly supported financially by this program which has allowed more time to be dedicated to the provision for faith formation of students through for example: prayer, liturgy, reflection day experiences and in consultation with various members of the College and wider community.

Parent Participation
As parents are the primary educators of their children, they are informed by the Principal and the Religious Education Coordinator, through the weekly newsletter, of various aspects of the Catholic life and mission of the College. The focus of upcoming units of study in Religious Education is also posted in the newsletter. Use of the College internet facilities with on-line Religious Education classes in “myclasses” for each year group has continued. Parents are informed of this opportunity and are able to access assessment tasks and information to support their son/daughter’s learning.

Parents, relatives and friends have an open invitation to attend any liturgical celebrations which are noted in our College newsletter. Parents are also informed of the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday as well as being given information as to other current celebrations within the liturgical life of the Church.

Message from key School Bodies
School Council Report
This year has seen us farewell our foundation Principal Mr Clem Welch. He undertook the daunting task of merging two historical educational institutions into one, forming its identity, while another school was expecting to do the same. He did the ground work and now we are attempting to build on it. The library has aptly been named the Welch Library as a sign of respect for his contribution.

The new year has seen us welcome our new Principal, Mr Greg Miller. Greg has brought with him new endeavour, new ideas and new passion. His style of leadership has been welcomed with open arms and gives all optimism for hope of wonderful things to come. Already we have seen standards of uniform and dress ethic improved, a new house system being implemented for next year, executive roles being re-evaluated and positions appointed, and a new style of leading from the front with a straight bat.

The Board has been delighted by Greg’s attitude, enthusiasm and his achievements in such a short tenure. This year, we have installed Fr Plunkett’s long awaited Cross in a prominent position in the school, instigated a favourable fee collection process which is already bearing fruits, hopefully, at long last re-started the Mater Dei College Foundation with our $100,000 in its coffers for capital works programs in the school. Our new school website has been launched after outsourcing its formation.
Greg, with our support, has prepared an application for Commonwealth funding for a multi-purpose centre. The Government’s push to develop trade centres within schools may see us be able to apply this sort of funding to our need for a Multi-Purpose centre. We have received support from our federal member Mrs Kay Hull and Mayor Kerry Pascoe for this project.

A proposal to change the boys’ uniform has been postponed to 2010. This is an inevitable outcome of the original intentions of the schools to develop their own identity. This has been successful with the introduction of the new girls’ uniform. It is now time for the boys and next year will see the final stages of selection with the students having their input before a decision is made by the College Executive.

We need to support the institution of a new and smart boy’s uniform to complement our girls.

2. Information on Key School Programs

School/College Determined Improvement Targets

One of the key challenges of the authentic Catholic school is to continually work at improving student learning outcomes while building a specifically Catholic, evangelising and nurturing community. The purpose of this section of the newsletter is to inform you of some recent actions that specifically target improved student learning outcomes in various Year group and other settings. It is worth reading because it makes clear what you should expect for your son or daughter and it makes explicit a whole-school focus on improving teaching and learning:

1. All teaching and learning-support staff spent a day at the end of 2008 learning how to interpret and employ NAPLAN data to improve their teaching of literacy and numeracy. NAPLAN (National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy) seeks to measure the literacy and numeracy learning of students in all Australian schools in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. A ‘Smart Data’ package allows each teacher to source results for current Year 8 and Year 10 classes and identify strengths and weaknesses revealed in the 2008 testing. This will improve the targeting and delivery of literacy and numeracy teaching in the College. Later this term and early next term Year 7 and Year 9 students will have a series of lessons that help prepare them for NAPLAN testing (Week 3 Term 2);

2. Whole-school literacy and numeracy initiatives include compulsory vocabulary lists for each unit of work in Stages 4 and 5, and commitment from teachers to insist on whole-sentence responses in student writing. Ms Stacey Donoghue has given a large amount of time and expertise to develop Mathematics games and strategies to assist Year 7 Maths teachers improve learning outcomes in Number, Fractions, Decimals and Percentages. She insists that Maths can and should be fun and her excellent work reflects this belief;

3. All KLA Co-ordinators have met with their teachers and analysed HSC and SC results. The HSC results are greatly enhanced by data supplied by the NSW Catholic Education Commission’s ‘HSC Data Analysis Project’ which provides a measure of learning gain obtained by each HSC class in each NSW Catholic school. This excellent data allows us to determine if students have exceeded a learning gain predicted from School Certificate results. Following trends across HSC years allows Stage 6 teachers and KLA Co-ordinators another source of data to improve teaching and learning. They ask the questions: What are we doing now? Is it working? How do we know? What changes do we need to make? When informed by validly analysed data, experienced teachers can strategically plan to improve learning gain and learning outcomes for students, classes, departments and entire cohort;

4. All Year 11 and 12 students and all teachers have a copy (and use it regularly) of ‘Glossary of Verbs and Verb Scaffolds’ which includes all verbs that are used in Board of Studies syllabus Outcomes and SC/HSC exam and assessment questions. Understanding of verbs and how they guide the processing
and presentation of content is integral to success in the HSC. All students have promised to have their ‘Verb Book’ close by whenever they are engaged in HSC work. Parents can check this by casting an eye around the study space;

5. Our new timetable has increased face-to-face teaching and learning hours in Year 11 and 12 by 20%. It is beyond doubt now that the most significant factor that leads to improved learning outcomes for students is increased class time spent with a skilled and experienced teacher.

6. Each KLA Co-ordinator has a detailed Professional Learning Plan that reflects the learning needs of the individual, the staff that work in the KLA and the students who learn in the KLA. These plans are constructed by the Co-ordinator, with the assistance of myself and Mr Miller. This reflective process provides a concrete, observable and measureable account of the goals, learning needs and professional development of our KLA Co-ordinators. The idea that they are our ‘leading learners’, rather than just administrators, gives a powerful, positive message to the rest of the College community and emphasises that carefully planned and targeted professional learning is another pre-requisite for the sustained improvement of student learning outcomes. Please use their expertise;

7. Our 2009 Attendance Policy is designed to reduce lengthy unexplained absences and better monitor the reluctant attendee. Please don’t be offended by requests for explanation: learning outcomes are improved by attending school. Access this policy on the College website.

8. Our 2009 Representative Sport Policy is designed to ensure that the more active student prioritises sporting commitments to limit time out of classes. A small number of students in previous years have missed up to 10 days in a term, which equates to attending school 4 days a week. Access this policy on the College website. Note that it requires our teachers to limit their missed class time as well and that no limit is placed on representative sport commitments that occur outside of class time.

We will carefully monitor these initiatives and look for evidence of improved learning outcomes. School Certificate, HSC and NAPLAN results provide concrete data while other areas will require planned evaluations. Thank you to all parents, students and staff who continue to work hard to support this College’s primary purpose of providing high-quality learning in a Catholic setting.

Programmes to Support Students

Current Curriculum Initiatives
In 2007 Mater Dei Catholic College formulated a Whole-School Literacy Plan. Staff were trained in Adolescent Learning, Subject Specific Spelling and Vocabulary and Paragraph Writing modules from the Stepping Out Literacy Program. Vocabulary lists were developed for each teaching program across all Key Learning Areas in 2008. Two additional staff were trained as Stepping Out Literacy Leaders this year. The same staff were also trained in the related First Steps Numeracy program and attended an Unpacking Naplan In-service.

This mix of professional learning in 2008 provides Mater Dei Catholic College with the data and expertise to carefully analyse NAPLAN results and integrate literacy and numeracy considerations more effectively in whole-school and KLA-specific initiatives. A key initiative in 2008 has been the development of learning and teaching materials for the Number unit in Year 7 Mathematics. These materials, based on the ‘First Steps’ program, are designed to increase student engagement in mathematics and to incorporate diagnostic testing into teaching programs.

Other Learning Support Initiatives
A key element of staff professional learning in 2008 has been a focus on Christine Richmond’s Teach More, Manage Less (2007) model of behaviour management. Described as a ‘minimalist approach to behavior management’ the model focuses on balancing expectations, acknowledgement and correction strategies in order to increase the ‘teaching conversation’ and decrease the ‘managing conversation’. The approach ensures that students experience a more
consistent use of language and strategy as they move from teacher to teacher through the school day.

**Equity Program Initiatives**

**Aboriginal Education**

At Mater Dei Catholic College we acknowledge that the traditional nations of Australia include both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise the importance of consulting with local Aboriginal communities when aspects of Aboriginal history and culture are being incorporated into the school curriculum.

The College employs an Aboriginal Education Officer who works with students from Year 7 to 12 and with the wider community. One of the highlights for this year was the Burrabinya Workskills program which was jointly sponsored by Wagga City Council, Charles Sturt University, Country Energy, Compact and the local Indigenous Community.

**Student Support Programs**

Members of the Student Support Team facilitate the “Why Try” program with at-risk Year 9 students. This program targets students with low motivation, providing strategies to assist in the development of self-control, self-respect, freedom and increased choice.

Elements of the ‘Why Try’ program are also presented to Year 7 students during a Reflection day.

The Campbell-Page organisation conduct the Pathways to Employment program for students considered at-risk of not completing formal education to an appropriate level. Factors that place these students at risk include emotional, social, behavioural and financial blocks to completion of education. COMPACT also provide a program to assist in transition from school to the workplace for students considering full-time employment. The course includes resume construction, presentation/ interview skills, and work experience.

Mater Dei Catholic College has a Learning Support Centre (Room 19) staffed by a Learning Support Co-ordinator and four support staff. Approximately 30 students attract funding for individual support. This funding provides the staff who work both with individuals and in classrooms to support student learning.

Ultimately the number of students supported far exceeds the number of funded students. Learning Support staff and College counsellors also provide a Cognitive Therapy program for students who have been diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The federally-funded “Even Start” program supports students who achieved results below national benchmarks in literacy and numeracy. Trained tutors provide twelve hours of one-on-one support for targeted students.

**Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**

The Mater Dei Catholic College Welfare Policy states, in part: Students have the opportunity to create, with other members of the Mater Dei Catholic College community, norms of behaviour that allow an answering of the question: ‘How do we treat one another at Mater Dei Catholic College?’ These Year Group Norming Documents detail how students support one another and support learning at Mater Dei Catholic College.

In addition, students and teachers collaborate to produce Ideal Classroom Documents, which reflect a shared understanding of the types of classrooms we need to create to maximise learning outcomes and promote well-being.

The practical reality and responsibility of providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment conducive to learning, demands clear minimum guidelines for student behaviour. Year Group Norming Documents and Ideal Classroom Documents build on these minimum requirements for membership of a caring educative community.

Engaging students in the production of these documents is the major initiative at Mater Dei Catholic College that promotes respect and responsibility. Documents are displayed in every teaching space and form the basis of ‘Teach More Manage Less’ strategies employed by teachers. Ideal Classroom documents created in 2008, will be further developed in 2009.
Student Performance
National and State-wide Tests and Examinations

National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy [NAPLAN]

Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga has participated in ELLA and SNAP since its inception 2002-2006.

Mater Dei Catholic College NAPLAN results:
Mater Dei Catholic College students performed in NAPLAN with the following results:

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<td>achieved benchmark compared to State result of 95%</td>
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Achievement Standards:
Our College has participated in ELLA and SNAP since its inception and participated in NAPLAN for the first time in 2008.

In Year 7 the mean score for Overall Literacy was slightly above the State mean. Both boys and girls were above the State mean. The overall Numeracy result was slightly below the State mean. Boys were below State mean and girls were above State mean.

In Year 9 the mean score for Overall Literacy was slightly above the State mean while the result for Numeracy was slightly below the State mean, with both genders following the pattern.

School Certificate
In 2008, 146 students completed the School Certificate across a range of courses. The School Certificate results showed that the students were performing close to the state mean in most courses. Students completed the online Computing Skills Test. Results from this test indicated that all students fell into the Competent or Highly Competent categories.

ENGLISH - LITERACY

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AUSTRALIAN HISTORY - CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

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AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHY - CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

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<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2008 Annual Report

COMPUTING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BAND</th>
<th>School Test Percentage</th>
<th>State Test Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly</td>
<td>52.44</td>
<td>57.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>45.45</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher School Certificate
In 2008, 50 students completed the HSC in 2008. Students achieved commendable results in many of the courses. The results, along with statistics from a range of additional reports, have highlighted strengths and areas on which to build.

2008 Higher School Certificate Results, the College presented students who sat for examinations across 28 subjects. We were above state average in 13 of those subjects. Those subjects were.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>VARIATION (above state average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society and Culture - 2 Unit</td>
<td>11.90% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music 1 - 2 Unit</td>
<td>10.12% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Science - 2 Unit</td>
<td>8.28% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography - 2 Unit</td>
<td>5.74% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Standard - 2 Unit</td>
<td>4.77% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Examination - 2 Unit</td>
<td>3.59% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Technology - 2 Unit</td>
<td>3.77% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts - 2 Unit</td>
<td>2.96% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies - 2 Unit</td>
<td>2.85% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology - 2 Unit</td>
<td>2.38% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Family Studies - 2 Unit</td>
<td>2.30% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDHPE - 2 Unit</td>
<td>2.08% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics - 2 Unit</td>
<td>0.31% (above state average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Advanced - 2 Unit</td>
<td>0.02% (just on state average)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Points of Note
- In Community and Family Studies - 10.52% of students received a Band 6 as compared to 9.65% of the state. 42.1% of students received Band 5 as compared to 30.11% of the state. Overall, 52.62% of Mater Dei students received either a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 39.76% of the state.
- In Design and Technology, 16.66% of Mater Dei students received a Band 6 as compared to 7.33% of the state.
- In English Advanced - 52.94% of Mater Dei students received either a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 49.39% of the state.
- In Geography - 71.42% of Mater Dei students received either a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 47.88% of the state.
- In Hospitality Examination - 50% of Mater Dei students received Band 5 or 6 as compared to 18.69% of the state.
- In Music 1 - 66.66% of Mater Dei students received a Band 6 as compared to 14.76% of the state. 100% of Mater Dei students received a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 53.94% of the state.
- In Senior Science - 22.22% of students received a Band 6 as compared to 9.65% of the state. 33.33% of students received Band 5 as compared to 29.21% of the state. Overall, 55.55% of students received either a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 38.86% of the state.
- In Society and Culture - 100% of students received a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 29.63% of the state.
- In Visual Arts - 87.5% of students received a Band 5 or 6 as compared to 46.58% of the state.

3. School Overview

School Policies
The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established Pastoral Care and Discipline 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
The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

**Student Welfare Policy**

We have been careful at Mater Dei Catholic College to ensure that College Policy aligns with and supports Diocesan Policy. The Diocesan Mission Statement and TCTA: Principles and Practices for Learning and Teaching in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga continue to be important documents.

The Mater Dei Catholic College Welfare Policy flows from a Vision statement that emphasizes the development of a nurturing community which:

- Is founded in Catholic faith, justice and love.
- Is inclusive.
- Is learner-centred.
- Seeks excellence and wisdom.

More specifically the Mater Dei Catholic College Mission calls us, as nurturers, to:

- Care for each individual ....
- Foster right relationships ....
- Provide particular attention to those most in need.

Build a welcoming, safe and supportive school environment.

In TCTA: Principles and Practices for Learning and Teaching in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga we are asked to contribute to the building of:

- Caring and effective learning communities, where the spirit of support and challenge work in harmony, where relationship is the glue that holds the community together and where Gospel values such as respect, acceptance and inclusion are the foundation upon which everything is built.

TCTA outlines many effective learning and teaching practices that are particularly relevant to the development and application of a Welfare Policy.

Effective teachers:

- Engage students in meaningful inquiry and research;
- Use mistake-making and error as an important part of the learning process;
- Honour the intrinsic motivation of students;
- Use language that actively promotes self-responsibility;
- Teach appropriate problem-solving strategies and skills and constructive ways of resolving conflict;
- Build unity and a sense of belonging in the classroom;
- Help students develop as principled, ethical human beings, displaying values such as respect, fairness, courtesy, responsibility and kindness.

**Welfare Committee**

The Welfare Committee consists of Assistant Principal, Student Welfare Coordinator, Year Coordinators, Special Needs Co-ordinator, School Counsellor and Diocesan Behaviour Support Consultant (when available). This group meets regularly to:

- Discuss the welfare of individual students;
- Plan whole school and Year Group welfare initiatives;
- Evaluate initiatives and strategies employed;
- Oversee, with the Principal, the continued development and evolution of the Mater Dei Catholic College Welfare Policy.

Thursday morning whole-staff welfare meetings initiated in 2005 have continued through 2008. In addition, Wednesday morning is now set aside for meetings with teachers of students who are involved in the Behaviour Support Model and require Individual Behaviour Plans.

**Welfare Policy**

The Mater Dei Catholic College Welfare Policy details the way in which College staff and outside agencies provide pastoral support to students and families. Under headings ‘Caring for students’ ‘Student Behaviour’ and ‘Referral procedures’, the document outlines an approach to welfare that flows from a variety of Diocesan documents.

TCTA: Principles and Practices for Learning and Teaching in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, focuses on the Diocesan vision of helping children grow into adults who are:

- Spiritual, inquirers, thinkers, reflective, adaptable, knowledgeable, communicators, collaborative, principled, caring, global citizens and healthy.

Students who have the opportunity to construct moral meaning/understanding,
devise and justify ethical principles and learn (with others) how one ought to act in a community are better supported in their growth to adulthood than those who only have the opportunity to do (or not do) what they are told.

Students in each Year Group have again had the opportunity to create, with other members of the Mater Dei Catholic College community, norms of behaviour that will allow an answering of the question: ‘How do we treat one another at Mater Dei Catholic College?’

There has been a deliberate effort to focus on this inclusive approach rather than on a more formal, traditional approach of pre-determined rewards and sanctions for particular student behaviours. This approach is proving to be very reliant upon parents being informed and involved in the steps toward responsible behaviour choices by students.

Complaints and Grievances

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established a Complaints Handling 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

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

Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established an 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

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

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>350</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>668</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate for 2008 as a single percentage is 90%.

Student Retention

As Mater Dei Catholic College has only been established for 5 years, there are limited relevant figures for retention rates at this time. 2008 is the third year in this College’s life, where there has been Year 12 (HSC) cohort of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Started Yr 7 in 2005</th>
<th>Completed Yr 10 in 2006</th>
<th>Started Yr 8 in 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started Yr 10 in 2008</td>
<td>Completed Yr 12 in 2008</td>
<td>Completed Yr 12 in 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Destination

Year 10

112 of the students currently enrolled in Year 10 have indicated their intention to continue in Stage 6 at the College. Of those who are leaving, 10 have secured Apprenticeships and 8 will complete their education at TAFE.

Year 12

Of the 16 students who have applied for early entry to Tertiary institutions, 15 were successful. 3 students achieved early entry to more than 1 institution. 1 student was successful in achieving selection in Art Express, and another student had her work selected to tour with DTech.

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>56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Learning

Individuals in positions of responsibility work with the Principal and Assistant Principal to develop a Professional Learning Plan. The Wagga Wagga Diocese RADPOR process is congruent with this model of Professional Learning at Mater Dei Catholic College. The
necessary components of self-reflection, data-collection, validation and development of a Professional Learning Plan are present and on-going.

Eight KLA Co-ordinator and Executive staff have now experienced Active Minds Curriculum Alignment professional learning. This has increased understanding of the processes of alignment of syllabus outcomes, teaching programs and assessment tasks in order to improve learning outcomes for students.

In 2007 Mater Dei Catholic College formulated a Whole School Literacy Plan. Staff were trained in Adolescent Learning, Subject Specific Spelling and Vocabulary and Paragraph Writing modules from the Stepping Out Literacy Program.

Two additional staff were trained as Stepping Out Literacy Leaders this year. The same staff were also trained in the related First Steps Numeracy program and attended an Unpacking Naplan In-service.

Religious Education Professional Learning
This year we celebrated the graduation of two Religious Education staff members who completed four units across two years with the support of the College and the Catholic Schools Office to achieve the Graduate Certificate in Theology.

Three members of staff attended a two day training program with Christine Carlton who works in the areas of Retreats, Spirituality, Storytelling, Drama and Creative Arts in Religious Education.

A staff member attended the conference for member schools of the Presentation Order. She brought back with her ideas for keeping alive the charism of Nano Nagle in our College.

The Director of Mission recently attended an in-service in Hobart about the Making Jesus Real program. This program is centred around the belief that we are Jesus representatives and our actions should reflect His values. We plan to begin to integrate this program into the Year 7 and 10 curriculum in 2009.

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 Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga.

Parents
My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at Mater Dei Catholic College.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students
I am usually happy at Mater Dei Catholic College.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff
I am usually happy at Mater Dei Catholic College.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Attendance and Retention
The Federal Schools Assistance Act 2005 requires that each school/college 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 95.86% was achieved in 2008 by staff at Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga.
Financial Statement Summary

About This Report

The Mater Dei Catholic College Principal, and Executive have contributed to Mater Dei Catholic College Annual School Report for 2008. We also acknowledge the contribution of the Chair of our College Council.