Annual Report
St Columba’s Primary School, Berrigan

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Introduction
Berrigan is one of four towns within the Berrigan Shire. We have 2 primary schools which feed into Finley High School for the student's secondary education. The main employers within the town are the Berrigan Shire Council, Local Hospital and Aged Care Facility. The farming community which surrounds the town conduct cropping and rearing of livestock. The town has a very active community which despite several drought years is able to support several sporting clubs and numerous other recreational activities.

1. The School
St Columba's, as a Catholic School, strives to mould people who, being self-directed and optimistic, will take a role in renewing both the church and society.

In moving towards this renewal mission this school will strive

- To be a place where a shared commitment to a faith based on Christ as a model, guides all our efforts towards the total development of each student.
- To recognise the dignity of each person within its community, working to create a climate characterised by trust, openness, encouragement, mutual support, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- To show special concern to those who are disadvantaged.
- To challenge students in order to enhance their personal achievement and spiritual growth.
- To be a Christian educational community, where human knowledge, enlightened and enlivened by faith, is shared by teachers, students and parents, in a spirit of freedom and love.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:
A Community of Faith
As a community of Faith, we at St. Columba's believe we will:

- Provide the community where faith is centered on the Gospel of Jesus.
- Provide the programs in the Sacramental life of the Catholic Church.
- Impart our Catholic tradition and proclaim we are a faith community.
- Recognise that each member of our faith community has an individual faith journey to foster and celebrate.
- Respect each person’s faith and tradition.
- That community members are led by good example emphasising the relevance of the Gospel in today’s world. Recognise the school as being part of St. Columba’s Parish and wider community.
- Participate in classroom and school prayer.
- Celebrate the church seasons and special events through liturgical celebrations.
- Have a sequenced Religious Education program.
- Foster a sense of hope.

A Community of Care
At St. Columba’s School we believe we are a community of care:

- Informal structures are in place to ensure pastoral care is experienced by all members. We encourage social attitudes so that the children live responsibly, respecting their dignity and the dignity of others.
- We support and nurture family unity.
- We accept and welcome all who come to our school.
- We challenge and initiate structures so our society is more just and compassionate.
• Individual differences are accepted and celebrated.

• The community is encouraged to love and care for the environment.

A Community of Service

As teachers of St. Columba’s School we will:
• Model the Gospel of Jesus through our relationships and actions with the whole community.

• Nurture and foster social attitudes so that our children will live responsibly in the community respecting their dignity and the dignity of others. Give the child the opportunity to reach their full potential in such a way that they will make progress spiritually, academically, culturally, physically and emotionally.

• Give the children opportunity to live a full and interesting life in a stimulating environment whereby he/she will develop their natural ability to widen their horizons and skills, enabling them to be responsible citizens in our society.

• Develop the children’s ability to work collaboratively on decision making

• Foster in our children a generosity to help those in need and to willingly share their gifts and talents.

A Community of Learning

As a community of learning we at St. Columba’s will:
• Seek to provide teaching and learning experiences which are relevant, developmental, and challenging, so that children can develop to their full potential.

• Provide opportunities for professional and personal development of staff.

• Develop in the children a love of learning and foster an inquiring mind.

• Recognise that education happens in partnership with families and the wider community.

• Develop an interesting, relevant and imaginative curriculum.

• Affirm all in their efforts to learn and make the world a better place.

• Involve parents in activities to develop their own growth and the growth of their children.

• Provide a safe and happy environment.

Religious Education

The Sacramental Program in our school is parish based. The Parish Priest prepares the Catholic students for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist when they are in Yr 4. The Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred by the Bishop every second year to the Catholic Students in Yrs 5&6. Informal structures are in place to ensure pastoral care is experienced by all members. We encourage social attitudes, so that the children live responsibly, respecting their dignity and the dignity of others. We support and nurture family unity. We accept and welcome all who come to our school. We challenge and initiate structures so our society is more just and compassionate. Individual differences are accepted and celebrated. Our whole community is encouraged to love and care for the environment. There are several discos and mufti days held throughout the year to support the work of the missions in different countries in our global backyard.

The Arts

Our aim is to develop in all students a vital interest in learning in Visual Arts, Music, Drama, Dance so that they can value the personal and shared meanings gained from experiencing the art forms. To this end we devote Term 3 each year to engaging all the students in a school production which gives meaning and purpose to the development of the students talking and listening skills. We are very fortunate to be able to employ an experienced drama teacher who enables each child to make maximum effort to attain a very high level of performance. The Visual Arts are taught by the generalist teachers in the school who are ably supported by colleagues and various visual arts in-services which are held in the
large regional centres within an hour of our school. We also liaise with the Berrigan Shire Librarian and are able to have workshops held at our school by visiting illustrators.

Sport
The students participate in a very full sports program each year. The number of students at our school means that ALL students get many more opportunities to practise their skills in all sports. Athletics, Football, Netball, Swimming and Tennis. Numerous clinics are held either at school or in a neighbouring town in Football (AFL) Soccer (S.Aust) Cricket (ACS). All students participate in these clinics.

Sporting awards are given to the students at our local carnivals as well as S.W. Deanery or Diocesan level. We have students who reach a high enough level to compete in Sydney.

School Initiatives
Each year the school holds a Transition Program for Kindergarten children who are commencing the following year. The children attend each Friday for 9 weeks and join in activities with the present K/1/2. This readiness program has proved very beneficial as an introduction to school life.

AASCProgram
Our school operates an Active After School Community program three afternoons per week for 8 weeks each term. Trained deliverers provide a range of activities to enhance the general fitness of the children attending.

Kidsmatter
Our school was selected to be part of Kidsmatter, a Australian Primary schools mental health initiative. Social & Emotional Skills were taught one hour per week to students in 2007 and 2008 and the results measured by staff from Flinders University in South Australia. The Kidsmatter initiative has drawn to a close in December 2008. The school has now embedded a social and emotional skills component in the Self and Relationship strand of the PD/H/PE Syllabus.

School Policies
Apart from the seven Key Learning areas the school has available: - An enrolment policy, discipline policy, complaint and grievances resolution policy, student welfare policy, internet and email use policy as well as a parent handbook in which all the necessary items will be found to keep your child/children safe and in a learning environment whilst they are in our care. The school follows the Catholic Schools Office policies in these areas. Copies of the relevant policies can be found at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

School Council
The School Council is an advisory body to the Principal. Throughout 2008 we have been part of the decision making at our school. We monitor the happenings and spend time promoting our school. Fundraising is a very important part of our many activities, with approximately eight thousand dollars to be raised each year. This year we received another grant from the Commonwealth government known as, “Investing in Our Schools”. With this money we have committed the funds to upgrading Learning Centre One, painting re-carpeting and cupboards. Purchase of a new rider mower and overhead fans in three rooms to direct the heat downwards in the hope of saving power. We are most grateful for the grant of $29,000 which meant we were able to decide the priorities for the students in our school.

2. Information on Key School Programs

Curriculum Focus
Each curriculum focus is based on outcomes and teachers teach each unit of work knowing the outcome they wish to achieve and note the indicators that show that the students have established, are consolidating or developing a concept for that Outcome

Programs to Support Learning
All Key Learning Areas have a technology component, learning about and learning with technology. The school is in a very good position to support students in this area whether it be computer access, calculators, video and digital cameras etc.
Children in Kindergarten are closely monitored in the development of their Literacy and Numeracy skills. If the class teacher assesses the need for a student to have extra help in Literacy the student will be placed on a Reading Recovery Program in their second year of school. If a student has need of extra help in Numeracy either a Numeracy for All or Count Me in Too Program will be instigated.

All teachers who undertake the Literacy program at the school are trained in Reading Recovery therefore ongoing support for any child is readily available.

**Equity Programs**

All of our Key Learning Areas have in-built curriculum perspectives whereby teachers will plan to ensure that syllabus outcomes and content reflect the learning needs and priorities of individual students. This includes, Gifted and Talented students, Aboriginal students, ESL (English as a Second Language) students, Aboriginal and Indigenous issues, the gender of our students and any differences and diversities.

**Programs to Support Students**

Students with Disabilities are very ably supported by the IEP, Individual Education Program which is written for them by the class teacher in conjunction with the Educational Consultant for our deanery. We also have services of a fortnightly visit by a school counsellor provided by Centacare. This service is available to the family as well as the student.

The school is visited each year by the Life Education Van and the students are given very informative information regarding Drugs and the reaction of our bodies to such substances.

Each two years the school holds a parent and student night for Yr 5&6 students to deepen their understanding of personal development in the company of a family member.

**Respect and Responsibility**

Every student in our school is encouraged to treat others with consideration and show regard and respect another person’s point of view. Being accountable for one’s own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways is taught to our students and consequences are in place when these values are ignored. Students are also taught to contribute to society and to civic life and to take care of the environment. These values are embedded in all subjects of the curriculum taught.

**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>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAPLAN 2008**

Our school has participated in NAPLAN (National Assessment Plan in Literacy & Numeracy).

Due to the small cohort the trend data is unreliable. Results are above State mean.

**Staff Achievement**

Staff at our school tries to keep abreast of research by continually reading the latest research either in journal form which arrive at our school or the Board of Studies site and other educational sites on the Internet.

All Staff keep their Senior First Aid Certificates current and attend inservices in all compliance areas e.g. Chemical Safety, Child Protection, Code of Conduct, Harassment.

### 3. School Renewal

**Progress of the School Renewal Framework**

Each year we undertake a review of several of our policies. This year it was PD/H/PE. We have undertaken a review of all our compliance policies to ensure they are up to date and the staff are aware of their implications.
We have continued Integrated Studies this year whereby we teach a Unit of Work which consists of one complex question and 3 inquiry questions. Each term our questions come from the 4 big ideas, Choice, Environment, Change and Culture. We work with the five other schools in our CAP cluster. Next year we will continue with our Integrated Units and also commence, to embed higher order thinking in our questioning of students.

4. School Overview

School Enrolment

Enrolment Policy
We offer enrolment to students whose families are seeking a Catholic Education for their children or to those families who wish their children to be educated in a Christian environment.

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>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Structure of Classes
The students are in two learning centres. One for students Early Stage 1 & Stage one. The second group are in a separate learning centre Stage 2 & 3 students. All students share Library facilities, Art room and Practical Activities centre as well as a gathering space for Assemblies, music and dancing.

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>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Learning
Teachers have undertaken 4 days of professional learning in the writing of units of work in Integrated Studies as well as four days of computer technology up skilling.

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 98.86% was achieved in 2008 by staff at St Columba’s Primary School.

Parent Involvement and Participation
The parents at school participate in many ways. There were also two very well attended working bees to do general maintenance. Parents come and hear students read each week. The library is technically maintained by a volunteer parent. Parents regularly transport students to sporting events and excursions and help during special days e.g. Indonesian, Christmas Craft, etc.

Community Use of School Facilities
This year AASC (Active After School Community Program has been run at our school each Term and will continue into 2009. This program is a Commonwealth Government initiative.

Community Satisfaction
The following information has been provided to the school/college. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction our community has with St Columba’s School

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students
I am usually happy at St Columba’s School
Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree
--- | --- | --- | ---
80% | 20% | % | %

**Staff**
I am usually happy at St Columba’s School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
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**Financial Statement Summary**

**About This Report**
This report was put together by the Principal together with the Staff.