CONTACT DETAILS:

PRINCIPAL: Ken Mooney
ADDRESS: 2-14 Coree St
           Finley NSW 2713
PHONE: 03- 5883 1630
WEBSITE: 
EMAIL: kmooney@sjf.wagga.catholic.edu.au
Introduction

1. The School
St. Joseph’s Finley is a small school in the South West Deanery of the Wagga Wagga Diocese. There are 113 students in five classes ranging from Kinder to Year 6. Finley has a population of 2100 and is situated in a rural community in the Riverina district. We are currently experiencing an extremely severe drought which is placing a heavy financial and emotional burden on the families of our town.

Catholic Identity

Our Vision
Our Vision is to provide a quality education in an environment that supports the welfare of all. Our community promotes strong Christian Values, faith development and family involvement in each aspect of our school.

Our Mission
We believe that St Joseph’s School, Finley is a faith community within St Mary’s Parish where:

- Christ is central and all members are encouraged in their faith journey to empower them to be able to make a difference in the present and future world/society.
- There is a commitment to strive for excellence in education therefore ensuring that all children will work towards their potential.
- There is respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each person in order to cater for the individual needs of all children, and foster their whole development—spiritual, moral, social, emotional and intellectual.

The atmosphere of the school community reflects clearly that gospel values are endorsed and witnessed by teachers, students, parents, and all of the members of the parish community.

Exit Outcomes
When the boys and girls at St Joseph’s have completed their schooling with us, we the parents and staff, would like for them to:

- have experienced God and Church and have developed a knowledge of our faith and the values that our religion stands for
- be independent, flexible and cooperative workers who are capable problem solvers, risk takers and decision makers
- be active participants in life who have experienced the responsibility of leadership
- be happy and proud of themselves and be confident to share their talents and skills with others
- be respectful of others and their differences
- be willing to have a go and do their best
- be competent readers, writers and mathematicians
- be competent users of technology and have an appreciation of the arts
- have developed an understanding of the world around us
- have knowledge and understanding of good personal health
- be lovers of life and learning
- appreciate the value of family and have experienced good role models here at school
- be prepared for life beyond St Joseph’s

Religious Education
Religious education is the central component of our school curriculum. We continue to implement the syllabus ‘Sharing Our Story’ and strive to inspire our students to be active and involved members of their faith community. We began our year with the Captains Induction Mass where the leaders of our school were called upon to make a commitment to their role. Our Year 3 students continued on their initiation into the Church through receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation on the 5th of June and First Eucharist on the 3rd of August. Through the year we have our liturgies which are prepared by the class. During Term 3 our 5/6 students celebrated their Confirmation on the 30th and 31st of August. Our Year 6 group celebrated their journey at our Graduation Mass on the 17th of December.

The Arts
We offered a variety of specialist arts programs (see outlines under Programs to Support Learning) to our students. This year we participated in the Albury Eisteddfod in the choir. This involved whole group, soloist and harmonies. We placed 3rd in our category and their certificate is on proud display in our school foyer. As a follow up to this our choir then sang for the residents at
the Berriquin Nursing Home. The children also had the opportunity to display much of their artwork in the school work section of the Finley Show and in the school display.

**Sport**

Sport is an important part of our social and physical education programs. We strongly encourage all our boys and girls to “Have a Go and Do Your Best”. We conducted our school swimming and athletics carnivals and participated in the South West Deanery Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country carnivals. Many of our students then went onto Diocesan Level Representation and even MacKillop Level (Southern NSW Catholic P.S.). Other opportunities were provided for boys and girls to participate in football, cricket, tennis, netball, and soccer and rugby trials on the path to state teams. This year we also provided our students with the opportunity to participate in the ‘Active After Schools Community’ (a Commonwealth Government initiative) this involves sustained physical activity and a healthy afternoon tea. The program aims to promote healthy lifestyle and develops the skills required to maintain this.

**School Bodies**

The St. Joseph’s School parent bodies brings together representatives of all those within the parish who are concerned with the work of the Catholic School.

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**2. Information on Key School Programs**

**School Determined Improvement Targets**

Every year, as a staff, we meet together to look back on and celebrate our achievements and work to set direction for the coming year.

We achieved most that we set out to do in 2008. All of the following was completed.

- Revisit and revitalize our Vision and Mission statements
- Develop and continue quality enrichment programs
- Review and analyse BST data
- Update and develop many policy documents
- Involved in the PD/H/PE Curriculum Review
- Be compliant
- Offer Professional Development to the staff including First Aid
- Participate in CAP cluster project
- Continuation of the Success for Boys program
- Numeracy project
- Maintain grounds roster
- Rework canteen servery
- CAP projects
- Continue to update technology
- Purchasing of Interactive Whiteboards
- Keep the balance between subjects getting the high public profile
- Special needs programs
- Maths support program

Many of our projects will be continued into next year. New projects for 2009 are;

- Explore web 2.0 and future technologies
- Healthy School Project
- Spotlight classes through class assemblies
- Upgrade office/Admin area
- Develop garden around mailbox
- Technology master classes for staff.
- Professional development around Interactive Whiteboards

**Programs to Support Students**

**Current Curriculum Initiatives**

We continue to strive to improve and better ourselves in serving our children. Some of the initiatives we include are:

- Student Leadership Opportunities - all Year 6 children are offered captaincy positions.
- Continuing the Success For Boys Program (a Federal Government Grant, 2007) – As we are aware the academic levels for boys are often lower than their female classmates. This program aims to enhance the academic growth of boys through a number of modules. This program was continued through the school and was facilitated by Miss Renee Steward. This involved re-visiting the outcomes of the program and conversing at staff meetings about the strategies being used in the classroom.
• Numeracy Project – We received a grant to assess and target and numeracy needs in the school. Analysis of the BST results and teacher assessment resulted in the identification of target areas. Staff then developed in class programs to improve students’ skills in the target areas.

Other Learning Support Initiatives

• Inquiry Learning (CAP) – We continued our training and implementation of the Inquiry approach model. Teacher training was provided each term to support this. Teachers developed units of work based on the 4 big ideas of Chance, Change, Culture and Environment. The units were integrated throughout all the KLAs.

• Kinder Transition Program – A Kinder Information evening was held on the 17th of September. All parents were given the opportunity to meet teachers and parents while viewing the school rooms and grounds. All preschoolers where then offered the opportunity to come to school on the 4 Wednesdays of November to experience their new environment.

• Kinder / Year 5 Buddies - kids are paired up so younger boys and girls are provided with direct support and care.

• Annual Book Fair which this year saw students and staff dress up in regards to the theme of the colour ‘Blue’

• Father’s Day fun – this was Father’s Day Mass followed by a BBQ with dad’s with their children and staff.

• Parent Information Evenings - each class holds an Information Evening for parents to inform them of routines and expectations of that year level.

• Interim Reports – after beginning of the year assessment, each teacher sends home informal reports that outlined social, behavioral and academic concerns. This enables upfront communication with parents and encourages an open and supportive relationship.

• Tournament of Minds – we entered 1 team into the ‘Tournament of Minds’. This team was coordinated by a staff member and themselves and completed the challenges set. Their solutions were presented at Wagga Wagga and they represented themselves and the school beautifully.

• Visiting Performances - artists, performers and educational presenters are invited to be part of our program in delivering new and valuable experiences to our children. In 200 they were;

  - Leaping Loonies
  - African Drumbeat
  - Art in a suitcase—a number of different themes
  - ‘I am Jack’ performance

• Excursion Program - a progression is provided to broaden the children’s experiences: Kinders - After school BBQ, Year 1&2 - Overnight school sleep over, Year K, 1 & 2 day excursion, Year 3&4 - 2 night excursion and Year 5&6 - Major 3 night excursion. This year the Kinders, 1’s and 2’s went to Melbourne and explored the Melbourne Zoo. Year 3 travelled to Borambola, which is a sport and recreation camp. Years 4/ 5/ 6 travelled to Canberra as part of their Democracy unit for 4 days.

• Hands On Science fun day - as part of our Science and Technology program we ran a day where children rotated through 6 different activities such as static electricity, surface tension and liquid to solid.

Student Support Programs

Our school curriculum is based on the NSW Syllabus Documents and has Religious Education included.

At St Joseph's we run K-6 specialist rotations on Friday to deliver quality programs that utilise individual teacher strengths and areas of interest.

The Programs are:

Library—children are taught the basics of the Dewey System of Classification and become familiar with returning, borrowing and locating books using a computerised library system.

Students studying Indonesian are
introduced to the island country of Indonesia and provided with opportunities to discover and appreciate the differences and similarities between Indonesia and Australia.

P.E. sessions develop fitness and game skills. These are then applied to a variety of games and sports. Parents’ assistance is an important aspect in delivering this program. Art—through formal skill sessions, our boys and girls learn a variety of artistic techniques and grow to appreciate different visual art forms. Music—through learning the musical concepts the children participate in singing, playing, moving, organising, sound and listening activities. Dance & Drama—the children are involved in formal and informal role play and are directed in composing and performing their own drama and dance pieces.

Computers had been previously provided however, this year we felt that they are now integrated fully into our daily programs and the skills are therefore incorporated into all we do. Other programs offered are:

- Reading Recovery: a one-on-one reading program offered to Year 1 children.
- Maths Support: a small group program offered to children through the school who require focused assistance in this area.
- Enrichment Program: students’ talents and interests were provided guidance in a variety of programs.

**Equity Programs**

Teacher aid time is allocated to classes where there are children who have English as a Second Language and a special program is developed for them. We include LOTE as part of our cultural awareness program and provide support for our English as a Second Language student. Indigenous Australian awareness days and units of work are a part of our school program.

**Programs to Support Students**

Special needs programs take place with the ongoing support of Teacher’s Assistants. They work with the classroom teacher to provide support and assistance to particular students who have specific learning or social needs.

Ms. Helene Cahill trained in Reading Recovery this year and two children from Year 1 were on the program every day to bring them up to the class average.

Half a day a week of staffing was set aside to work with children with needs in Maths at the Year 2 level. A program was developed for each of the children to work on at home during the week with parental assistance. They also had a small group or one-to-one lesson with the Maths support teacher.

**Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**

Values for Australian Schools and The National Safe Schools Framework posters are on prominent display in our school environment.

**Student Performance**

**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 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Year 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St. Joseph’s Primary 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.

3. School Overview

School Policies

Discipline Policy
The community of St. Joseph’s are committed to endorsing the gospel values of justice, inclusion, reconciliation, respect and honesty. The school follows the CSO policy which is available at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Student Welfare Policy
The community of St. Joseph’s are committed to endorsing the gospel values of justice, inclusion, reconciliation, respect, truth and honesty. A safe and secure environment is developed when all members of the school community respect the individual’s rights and freedoms, responsibilities and duties, as well as responding to the needs of students, staff and community. The school follows the CSO policy which is available at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Complaints and Grievances
The community of St. Joseph’s are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment. This is characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. The school follows the CSO policy which is available at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Enrolment Policy
Our Enrolment Policy serves as a guide to the Principal and Parish Priest in implementing the Enrolment Process throughout our school. St Joseph’s accepts families with any cultural or religious background. Enrolling parents understand and accept that the children attending our school are involved in all activities including our Religious Education Program. Our enrolment policy and procedure is linked directly to the Diocesan Enrolment Policy.

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></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Structure of Classes
K/1 Class- Mrs Patsy Doyle

Year 2- Ms. Helene Cahill

Year 3- Term 1 & 2 Mrs Kelly Baldwin
        Term 3 & 4 Mrs Kate Bunnett

4/5 Class- Miss Renee Steward

5/6 Class- Mr Chris Lewis

Maths Programs- Mrs Joanne Walliss

Music and Reading Recovery- Mrs Rebecca Doyle

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>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
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Professional Learning
Growth and development of staff learning and teaching method is paramount to the on-going success of our school. We openly recognise the efforts of staff and provide a structured program that fosters a wide range of Professional Development. During 2008 the Staff at St Joseph’s were involved in a wide range of Professional Development. All attended curriculum days the School Vision &
Mission, Exit Outcomes, Policies, Programs, Assessment and Reporting. All staff also updated their Emergency Care and CPR, and were inserviced on Child Protection legislation and Anaphylaxis.

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 (insert school name here).

Parents
My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at St. Joseph's Primary, Finley.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students
I am usually happy at St. Joseph's, Finley.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff
I am usually happy at St. Joseph's, Finley

<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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</table>

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 98.36% was achieved in 2008 by staff at St. Joseph's.

Financial Statement Summary

About This Report
This annual report was generated in collaboration with the Principal, the School Staff, School Parent Community and the Catholic Schools Office of Wagga Wagga.