2008

Annual Report

St Joseph’s Primary School, Lockhart

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Introduction
St Joseph’s Primary School Lockhart provides a comprehensive educational program for all students based on the outcomes identified by the NSW Board of Studies. These courses of study address the educational needs of the students and provide the opportunity for each student to reach their fullest learning potential while encouraging ongoing life-long learning.

In 2008, the school was organised from Kindergarten to Year 6 each day in three composite classes. These were a K/1, 2/3 and a 4/5/6, each with a qualified full-time teacher. Support staff included two permanent part-time teachers, two special needs teacher assistants, a clerical assistant and a cleaner.

The school principal and staff are assisted by a School Board and School Auxiliary and report to the Parish Council of St Mary’s Church Lockhart on a regular monthly basis.

1. The School

The School

Vision Statement 2008
To provide faith development to the parish school community whilst encouraging excellence in academic learning for today’s children who are tomorrow’s adults.
To nurture, love and extend each child towards achieving their full potential through Jesus Christ’s love.

Catholic Identity
Religious Education is integral to all that occurs at St Joseph’s Lockhart. A daily time allocation is incorporated into the school timetable, with additional focus given to the teaching of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation. The Diocesan Program “Sharing Our Story” forms the basis of the R.E. program.

The school worked in close rapport with St Mary’s Parish of Lockhart, its Priest, Father Howie, the Parish Council and Parish Community. The school and parish mutually support each other for the benefit of all. Each class is responsible for the preparation of a Mass each term.

The Student Council of St Joseph's Lockhart provides support for the Pontifical Missions by raising funds through a variety of activities each year. The amount raised annually is significant, given the pupil population.

The school’s Pastoral Care Policy is embedded within all school policies and treats all individuals with respect, dignity and Catholic values.

A Message from key School Bodies

Board Report
As another year draws to a close, we look back on 2008 and will remember the great year for St. Joseph’s as we turned 100 which culminated in our celebrations back in April. I would like to thank the organising committee on a tremendous effort, the staff, all current and past parents, our students and anyone else who was involved in contributing to the success that it was. The positive feedback was great. Well done to all.

I would like to thank all the members of the Board for their hard work and commitment throughout the year. A lot of work has been carried out and I thank the Board and all parents for your support.

Thank you to the school Auxiliary, Charina and then Sarah who took over midstream. Your hard work is very much appreciated. As you would be aware, next year the structure will change with a school council replacing the current Board and Auxiliary, so we will have one combined council. It will be great to see some new faces on our council so I encourage you all to give this some thought over the holiday period.

I congratulate Debbie on her role as acting principal and next year as the principal officially and we wish Derek well in his retirement. Once again we have been successful in gaining a number of government grants which help us in having up to date equipment and technology, so thank you Debbie for all the work you do in relation to this and the general running of our school.

I would like to express my appreciation to all our teachers for your hard work and dedication through the year. It can seem a thankless task at times but your commitment
to the students shows in their positive attitude and behaviour. To Marg for all the hard work and “behind the scenes” day to day running of our school, you do a great job.

In closing I would like to congratulate all the students for your efforts in 2008. I wish the Year 6 students success in their new schools next year and encourage all to keep up the great work and the positive attitude, as you do yourselves and your parents proud.

Wishing you all a great Christmas and a happy holiday and we all look forward to another successful year.

Wishing everyone a merry Christmas and a happy, safe new year.

Sarah Smyth

2. Information on Key School Programs

School Determined Improvement Targets

In 2008, the main priorities were those in the School Renewal Framework listed below;
- School Centenary 2008
- Curriculum Reviews in PDHPE and HSIE
- Continuation of our writing project
- Technology upgrade using IOSPX funding

In 2009, our priorities are as follows;
- Curriculum Review – Science and Technology and Religious Education
- ‘Making Jesus Real’ program for senior class
- Embedding technology into learning and teaching – professional development
- Specific special needs professional development
- Reading Recovery Continuing Contact

Programs to Support Students

Current Curriculum Initiatives

In 2008, Curriculum Reviews in PDHPE and HSIE were conducted by personnel from the Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga. In 2009 there will be further Curriculum Reviews for Religious Education and Science and Technology.

Staff have undergone varied professional development in curriculum based areas in 2008 including Reading Recovery continuing
contact, NAPLAN analysis, SINA Administration, Reporter Pro training, Maths Measurement and continuation of a school based writing project.

We also received a $3000 Numeracy grant from the Catholic Schools Office as part of a Numeracy Project. The learning focus for our project, ‘Developing Number Sense’ was a follow on to the ‘Anita Chin’ workshop that we attended in Wagga. Anita Chin outlined the huge need for using mental computation skills in the classroom rather than simply relying on written algorithms to solve a problem. To support this, we at St Joseph’s, needed to provide the materials and technology to promote this. The resources that were bought with the grant money allowed all classrooms and children to have access to a range of basic but necessary aids in the teaching of a deeper understanding of all mathematical concepts, particularly number.

Other Learning Support Initiatives
Reading Recovery forms an integral part of the daily learning support structure at the school. A staff member, trained in Reading Recovery, delivered this program daily in 2008.

Access to current technology and electronic learning is provided at St Joseph’s Lockhart through student-based work stations based in each learning area, library and multi-purpose room as well as laptops which are connected to our wireless network and powered on a portable trolley. These allow all students to have computer access during a learning activity. Students have personal accounts, monitored access, support and web protection. Procedures, policies and written parental consent are in place to block offensive material and unauthorised browsing of the world wide web. External infrastructure support is provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

Creative Arts, which includes visual arts, performing arts, dance, music and drama are timetabled weekly at the school and cross Key Learning Area boundaries. Extra curricular activities within the school and throughout the wider community also become the audiences for our learning experiences such as the Lockhart Show, Spirit of the Land Festival, Senior Citizen’s Day, Mission Day and Presentation Night. The children’s talents were also showcased during our wonderful school Centenary celebrations in April, 2008.

In 2008 we participated in the National Literacy and Numeracy week activities along with thousands of other children around Australia and the Year 4/5/6 children also participated in Census-at-School and Maths Day where they answered hundreds of on-line maths questions alongside other children from all over the world.

Physical activity is a timetabled weekly activity at St Joseph’s Lockhart. Inter-school sporting competitions in football, netball, cricket, swimming, athletics and cross country were a highlight for the children in 2008 as well as participating in National Kick-around-the-world Day.

A school sporting house competition is in operation at the school, with awards in Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming. Team sports, interdependence and the “Aussie Spirit” are encouraged while developing the skills, gifts and talents of individual students with opportunities provided for them to compete at carnivals, trials and competitions at Deanery, Diocesan, State and National Events.

In 2008, our ‘Swimsafe’ program, operated through the Department of Sport & Recreation and was supported by almost all of the school student population. This provides a vital life-skill to the children and is aligned with the Physical Education program at the school.

Equity Program Initiatives
Australian society is comprised of people with a diverse cultural background. The school has a responsibility to provide experiences which develop knowledge about other cultures, countries, heritages and languages in a positive way. St Joseph’s Lockhart provides experiences for students to gain a fuller understanding of their own ethnic background and history, while providing all students with an appreciation of cultures and languages different from that found in their own extended family and local community.

Student Support Programs
St Joseph’s Lockhart has programs in place and continues staff professional development for students with varying needs.
The Life Education program is highly valued and supported at our school, promoting nutrition, active lifestyle, communication, problem solving, personal health choices and growth development.

Student leadership is encouraged at our school through the Student Council. Student councillors are elected by their grade peer group each term. Our school also holds elections each year for school captains and sports captains. The Student Council members are drawn from each class across the school population. The school captains and Year 6 cohort are permanent council members for the calendar year. This forum provides an opportunity for students to propose, discuss and present ideas, suggestions and requests to the appropriate adult group of staff, school board, school auxiliary or parish council.

The school’s “buddy system” supports new enrollees, especially Kindergarten students. There are also visits by the preschool children and an orientation program to support the children who are enrolling at our school. Our transition program was continued this year where the children who will be beginning Kindergarten in 2009 have been spending one morning per week in the K/1 classroom for the last half of Term 4. This has been very successful for all those involved.

The school received government grants to assist with the ongoing development of the school. In 2008, we received the second round of our ‘Investing in Our Schools’ grant which was used to purchase 12 laptop computers with a portable trolley and wireless access, 9 marimbas to enable the students to play tuned percussion instruments and an upgrade to the student toilet block.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility
Our whole ethos at St Joseph’s is based on respect for others and the children taking personal responsibility for their actions.

In putting these values into action, we celebrated Catholic Schools Week in 2008, inviting the students and staff of St Francis Xavier School, Urana to join us for Mass and other religious based activities during this week. We also participated in National Schools Clean Up Day and National Tree Day with members of the community to enhance our school and provide service to our local area.

In the ‘Self and Relationships’ units of the PDHPE program, the students are involved in ongoing experiences about interpersonal relationships, growth and development. In addition to this, each class at the beginning of the school year, establishes ‘Norms of Behaviour’ to promote respect and responsibility in the classroom.

Student Performance

Statewide Tests and Examinations

The table below indicates the percentage of students who have achieved national minimum standards in literacy and numeracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Punctuation and Grammar</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Punctuation and Grammar</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St Joseph’s, School has participated in BST Literacy and Numeracy since 1998 and in BST Writing since 2001. The school monitors 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
St Joseph’s School is committed to ensuring fairness and justice within appropriate discipline structures. This is characterised by endorsing the gospel values of justice, inclusion, reconciliation, respect, trust and honesty.
It is the policy of St Joseph’s School to offer all students an education of the highest quality and to assist each student to develop fully as an individual and as a member of the Catholic School community and the wider community. To this end, teachers encourage a learning/teaching environment where there is appropriate management to ensure purposeful learning. The school policy on student management is understood and adhered to by teachers and students. The discipline of students is based on procedural fairness which is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities.

Student Welfare Policy
This policy has been written so that the rights and responsibilities of students and their behaviour are clearly understood by parents, teachers and the students themselves.

St Joseph’s School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating environment conducive to learning. This is characterised by 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. This policy asserts that students have a right to a safe environment at school and that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Clearly defined steps will be taken to protect students in a safe, healthy and friendly environment.

Our school is committed to being a place where every student can learn and grow with confidence and where teaching and learning occur in the context of Pastoral Care.

Complaints and Grievances
St Joseph’s School, Lockhart is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment. This is characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. A safe and supportive environment is developed when all members of a school community promote open communication, tolerance and positive relationships and embrace respective, just and transparent processes. When clear preventative policies are applied consistently and issues that can give rise to complaints are identified early, matters can be resolved before they escalate to the point where relationships are damaged. To promote positive and effective relationships all staff are encouraged to recognise the distinction between personal and professional conflict so that appropriate relationships can be maintained, even where there might be professional disagreement.

Complaints and suggestions can be opportunities for growth and improvement. Complaints, as well as compliments and other constructive feedback, create opportunities for a school to improve its services and prevent future problems. A community that is open to complaints and suggestions is characterised by signs of impartiality and confidentiality, respect for the dignity of those involved, and is proactive in ensuring there is no fear of victimisation. The processes in our Complaints Handling Procedure are to ensure procedural fairness, with a fair hearing and a deliberated decision.

These policies, Student Welfare, Discipline and Complaints and Grievances, have all been updated in 2008.
Full details are available from the Catholic School’s Office website – www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Enrolment Policy
Enrolments are considered for all children after turning five years of age. Kindergarten enrolments are to be for the commencement of each new school year. An orientation program will be organised annually to assist in the process. No Catholic child will be refused a Catholic Education on financial grounds. Enrolments of non-Catholic children are accepted as long as there is sufficient accommodation for these children, the Parish Priest and Principal are in agreement with the enrolment, the pupil participates in all religious observances as allowed by doctrine
and the proportion of non-Catholic pupils does not become so large as to affect the Catholic ethos of the school. Parents agree to the financial arrangements concerning school fees as determined at enrolment. Parents should be in agreement and sympathy with the philosophies and practices of the school before enrolment is accepted. Full details are available from the CSO’s policy which is available on the web site – www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Student Enrolment Profile:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Indig’</th>
<th>LOTE*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
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</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Structure of Classes
In 2008, St. Joseph’s Lockhart classes are established as a K/1, 2/3 and 4/5/6 composite groups. We operate a timetable that includes daily block teaching groups for English, Religion and Mathematics. These 3 classes are stage-based, being Early Stage 1/Stage 1, Stage 1/Stage 2 and Stage 2/Stage 3.

Staff then specialise in the remainder of the KLA’s to deliver the mandatory learning experiences across the school week and population. This initiative is strongly supported by the parent community. The methodology is reviewed by staff and stake holders annually.

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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
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Professional Learning
In 2008, staff have completed training in a number of areas including Reading Recovery, Anaphylaxis Shock training, Chemical Safety, Occupational Health & Safety, Child Protection, Workers Compensation, reporting to parents, update emergency first aid requirements, religious education syllabus construction, school website upgrading and BST Primary Writing marking.

Community Satisfaction
The following information has been provided to the school. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction our community has with St Joseph’s, Lockhart.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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Students
I am usually happy at St Joseph’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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Staff
I am usually happy at St Joseph’s.

<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>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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Teacher Attendance and Retention
The federal Schools Assistance Act 2005 requires that each school report on the average attendance rate of staff members in a given school. The end figure is determined by calculations including certain periods of absence due to sickness, personal carers leave, leave without pay, special leave and accident/workers compensation leave. An attendance rate of 97.18% was achieved in 2008 by staff at St Joseph’s School.
Financial Statement Summary

About This Report

This report was generated using all available information available from the school. This includes the SRF 2008 & SRF 2009, the school policies, records, weekly newsletters, surveys and reports to and from the school and wider community as well as from data supplied by the Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga.

The report was written by the Principal, Debbie Sheather, in December, 2008.

It will be presented to the Parish Council of St Mary's Lockhart, the school community of St Joseph's Primary School Lockhart with the full knowledge of the school staff and the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

A copy will be tabled at the next meeting of all stakeholder groups.

This draft report was electronically sent to the Primary School’s Consultant at McAlroy House, Tarcutta St, Wagga Wagga on December 11, 2008.