2008

Annual Report
St Joseph’s Primary School, Narrandera

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Introduction
On behalf of the staff of St. Joseph's School I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work and commitment to making St. Joseph's the highly successful school that it is. I would particularly like to thank the staff, the children and their parents and Father Tony for their continued support.
Graeme Urquhart
Principal

1. The School

The School
Our Vision
In keeping with the evangelising Mission of the Catholic Church, that is to “carry forth the Good News to every sector of the human race”, St. Joseph's School is a faith community, learning together, building the kingdom of God.

Our Mission
This shared Mission, arising from our Vision, is our commitment to our school community. Mindful of the circumstances of others, we will endeavour to meet the needs of our school community by:
- Providing a Religious Education Program, which enhances knowledge, understanding and practice of our Catholic faith tradition and one which will lead to a life of truth, love and service
- Creating a Catholic Community where all members treat each other with respect, take risks, take pride in themselves and each other, and, care about each other and recognise that everybody's ideas and concerns are important
- Valuing the role of parents as primary educators of their children and encouraging their involvement in the life of the school
- Ensuring that Gospel values reflected in the total curriculum are obvious in the daily activities of the school community
- Promoting peace and love
- Being inclusive
- Reaching out to those in need
- Encouraging all members to grow spiritually and live out gospel values
- Treating each other with honesty and respect in a supportive and caring atmosphere
- Recognising, fostering, appreciating and celebrating cultural diversity
- Teaching a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the Key Learning Areas
- Fostering learning as a lifelong Areas
- Providing learning opportunities and resources to cater for individual needs
- Engaging children in their learning and decision making processes
- Providing a happy and safe environment which encourages student and teacher experimentation and risk taking to ensure the success of all
- Incorporating a range of learning styles which enhances each child's development
- Providing an education for students, which will prepare them for a life in which they will work collaboratively with others, exercise judgement, apply complex and diverse bodies of knowledge, continue to learn and to generate creative solutions to problems
- Promoting and continually renewing knowledge and skills through personal and professional development
- Promoting a responsible attitude towards care of the environment.
- Reflecting on our practice of all of the above

Catholic Identity
This has been an exciting year for Religious Education in both the school as well as the Diocese. We have seen the introduction of the 'Sharing Our Story' program into all classes and under the guidance of the ‘Agile Minds’ company, have begun to develop the Religious Education Policy for the Diocese. Using the concept of Curriculum Alignment, these developments have seen the Religious Education Policy lead the way for development of all future policies. Throughout 2009 it is hoped that all schools will be inserviced in the new Religious Education Policy.

During the year we have celebrated many important Feast Days and other significant occasions. Our celebrations for Holy Week focused on the local production of the musical “Grunt”, in which the trial, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ were presented through the eyes of a spectator. All students attended this interactive performance, and were moved by this realistic interpretation of Christ’s Passion, death and resurrection.

Our celebration of St Joseph’s Day came early to fit in with Easter. Once again, this was a great opportunity to share our school with the community through a Whole School Mass, Open Classrooms and tabloid activities.
At the end of Term 1, we celebrated Catholic Education Week. This was a wonderful chance to showcase Catholic Education through various activities, including a whole school Mass and visits from various groups. In August, we also celebrated the Assumption and the Feast of Mary MacKillop with special Masses and activities.

We had a lovely visit from Bishop Hanna towards the end of June, with our Year 6 students receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation on the 21st June. Our Year 3 students received their First Communion on the 2nd August this year, and our Year 2 students made their First Reconciliation on 26th November. We are very grateful to all who assisted our students in their preparation for these Sacraments. Fr Tony Schipp has been very involved with all our students this year, and we would like to thank him for all his assistance throughout this year, especially with the Sacramental programs.

Once again we are very grateful to our school community for their generous support throughout this year with our fundraising activities. We have been able to donate to various causes, including Project Compassion, Sisters of St Joseph’s Outreach Program, Catholic Missions and the Christmas Box appeal. Through their generous gifts, we are enabling the students to see Christ at work in our community.

Our Parish Centenary was a major celebration this year, with the visit of clergy from Ireland. Our school celebrated the Centenary with Mass, a concert, Open Classrooms and old fashioned activities on 22nd November. Our Year 5 and 6 students also attended the Mass for Priests and Religious on Tuesday 19th November.

We would like to thank our Altar Servers who offer their time and talents so generously to serve at School and weekend Masses. We thank Fr Tony for his time in training these servers and for his continued support.

A Message from Key School Bodies

P and F Report

2008 has been a busy and productive year for St Joseph’s Parents and Friends Association. Throughout the year, the P & F has presented “Christian Living Awards” to one student from each class at their class assembly. These book awards are presented to children who consistently display the Christian ethos in their day to day school life. The P & F has also coordinated several fundraising activities in 2008. Our major fundraising event was the annual Spring Fair - this year held in conjunction with the centenary celebrations of our church – St Mel’s. The Fair was a huge success despite the unseasonably cold and windy November day. Although figures are still not finalized – the day resulted in an estimated $17000 profit.

An extremely motivated and hardworking subcommittee of the P & F also produced a wonderful school cookbook – The YUM Cookbook, with recipes submitted from many of our families. The cookbook has been a sellout, and has been extremely well received. A St Mel’s Centenary Calendar has also been produced for 2009, and continues to sell well.

Our P & F has also run a very successful school disco, and a luncheon held in conjunction with Narrandera’s “John O’Brien Festival” – both of which contributed to our fundraising efforts.

Many other regular activities by P & F members include assisting with school morning teas, orientation of our new families (particularly our Kinder families in the early part of the year), coordination of tuckshop, and sales of various school merchandise ( this year including school backpacks and sunglasses).

Thank you to all our members for their hard work this year – we look forward to another productive year in 2009.
School Council Report
We commenced the year with 41 new students for our school including a number of students with special needs. To cover our ever increasing costs, school fees had to be increased by 4% on the previous year. Early in the year the boys' toilet block was refurbished – it is planned that we do the same for the girls in the future. Due to difficulties securing volunteers to assist the school canteen, surveys were sent home to determine what parents wanted as far as the canteen was concerned. As a result, extra volunteers came forward to assist with the provision of canteen services. An additional concern for our community and, no doubt, schools in other rural communities, was the ability to attract and retain permanent teachers to our school. This concern was voiced to the Catholic Schools Office in the hope that they might like to offer or suggest possible solutions. This year it was very pleasing to experience an upturn in the participation rate at school Working Bees. Our Working Bee Co-ordinator has been very busy in this area. Our School Council has had a very active and successful year. Our members are to be congratulated.

2. Information on Key School Programs

School Determined Improvement Targets
The curriculum foci at St. Joseph's School during 2008 were Science and Technology, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education and, Information Technology. Interactive whiteboards will be installed in all Primary Classrooms by the end of 2008.

Programs to Support Students
Current Curriculum Initiatives

Other Learning Support Initiatives
Language Class is a program aimed at children with specific language difficulties. Talking and Listening and Phonemic Awareness are important aspects of literacy acquisition. The program is supported by a speech pathologist (Alison Burcham) and by Education Officers from the diocese who offer specific training to the teacher. In 2008, 2 children from Year 2 and 3 children from Year 3 were withdrawn from regular classes for language work in Terms 2 and 3 for 45 minutes, 3 days a week.

Equity Program Initiatives
ITAS and IESIP funding, for children of aboriginal background, was used to assist 11 children in the areas for Literacy and Numeracy.

Student Support Programs
Reading Recovery is a program designed for children after one year of instruction, it is normally offered in Year 1. Children are withdrawn from class for 30 minutes daily for between 10 and 20 weeks. In 2008 the Reading Recovery program began in Term 2. Eight children from Year 1 spent between 7 and 18 weeks in the program.
At St Joseph’s School, children may receive additional in-class assistance by Teacher Assistants or by withdrawal by a teacher for special programs. In 2008, 10 children from kindergarten to Year 6 received such assistance.

Library
The school library continues to be well utilised by staff and students since being refurbished in 2007. This year, further improvements have been made with the addition of a suspended ceiling, new paintwork and improved lighting, all of which have greatly enhanced this busy learning area. Students are enjoying reading the many books in our collection, especially the new additions which, are continually being added to the database. Our students visited the local town library as part of the 2008 Book Week celebrations.

Sport
As 2008 draws to a close we reflect on another successful year for St Joseph’s Primary School. In celebrating our success this year we recognise the hard work and dedication of a range of people including members of the P&F, teachers; Mrs Carlie Dyce, Mrs Marie O’Brien, Mrs Julie Flynn and the many parents who have made it all possible. Their efforts provide the organisational framework for sport to operate in the school. They do this superbly in an increasingly more complex and demanding environment. Coaches, managers, parents, teachers and district staff continue to give freely of their time to ensure that St Joseph’s Primary School Sport continues its tradition of high quality performance both on and off the sporting field.

As in previous years our students have excelled on the sporting field and many have been rewarded by gaining selection in the various sport-specific Deanery, Diocesan and Mackillop teams. We congratulate everyone involved with school sport from those who participate in interschool sport to those who are successful at the highest level. This year has been an exceptional year with the St Joseph’s Primary School winning the netball and football shield. We had a Strong performance in the Jackie Murphy carnival. As usual the school sent numerous teams to Catholic Schools Basketball and enjoyed a great deal of success.

This year we have been lucky to have two students who earned the right to represent Mackillop at NSW PSSA level, these students were Prue Walsh (Cross country) and Mathew Lyons (Shot-put). At the Mackillop level this year we have had Kyle Bull, Jack Grintill, Mathew Lyons and Prue Walsh.

Both the Swimming & Athletics Carnivals continue to run very smoothly each year. This is in no small part due to the partnership arrangements that we have in place with various outside agencies and club personnel. Very competent and experienced teacher personnel and parents make these days possible.

This year the school has spent over $1500 revamping the school sporting equipment. This included buying new sports balls, an electric pump, Aus Tag equipment, cricket coaching equipment, Frisbees, storage equipment, Vortexes and Football Match Balls. Due to new rules regarding the hiring of sports equipment at St Joseph’s the retention of the equipment has improved. This year the Intensive Swimming Program has been re introduced after a considerable break. The teachers and helpers are to be congratulated for their efforts.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility
At St. Joseph’s Primary School, emphasis is placed on student leadership. The senior students have many opportunities to take on a leadership role in the school. During 2008 the staff participated in “Success for Boys” training. We proudly display the National Safe Schools Framework and Values for Australian Schools posters in our school.
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>87%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>95%</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>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>97%</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.

Comparison to State Wide Results
In relation to Overall Literacy results in comparison to the State, Year 5 has displayed an increase in performance for the period 2006 to 2008 and performed above the State in 2008.
In relation to Numeracy results in comparison to the State for the period 2006 to 2008, Year 5 has performed above State level.

3. School Overview

School Policies

Discipline Policy
At St. Joseph's School we believe that children respond best to an approach that encourages and rewards positive, independent behaviour. Our Discipline Policy reflects this. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

Student Welfare Policy
We at St. Joseph's School believe that every child has a right to be safe and feel safe. Our student welfare policies and practices guide us in achieving these goals.

Complaints and Grievances
The school has adopted an approach to resolving complaints and grievances that is based on procedural fairness, it recognises that parents/ caregivers and students must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory way.
Parents/students with a complaint are encouraged in the first instance to contact their class teacher. If the need then arises contact with the Principal and the CSO may be appropriate.

Enrolment Policy
NSW legislation allows for the enrolment of children who turn 5 before August 1. At St. Joseph's School, parents seeking to enrol their child / children who turn 5 after May 30 are advised of possible implications.
The closing date for enrolment is advertised in the School Newsletter, the Parish Bulletin and the Narrandera Argus.

Diocesan policies on enrolment, discipline, student welfare, complaints and grievance resolution can be found at the CSO web site in Wagga Wagga.

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>83</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Structure of Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3 / 4</th>
<th>Year 3 / 4 SO</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Smith</td>
<td>Mrs Carroll</td>
<td>Mrs Dyce</td>
<td>Mr Francis</td>
<td>Mrs Stuchbery / O’Brien</td>
<td>Mrs Petty / O’Brien</td>
<td>Mrs Hunt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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>10</td>
<td></td>
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Professional Learning
The staff and Leadership Team from St Joseph’s has been involved in a number of professional development programs, both in school time and in their own time. These include Zart Art, Maths with Anita Chin, ITAG, Religion and Curriculum Alignment, RE Conference, Success for Boys, First Aid, Induction days, Sue Larkey workshop; Autism and Asperger’s, Teaching Strategies and Behaviour Support, Dr Barbara Watson- “Promoting Literacy through the Classroom”, Reading Recovery Continuing Contact, Whiteboard Demonstration, Gifted and Talented, Jolly Phonics, I.E.U. Support Staff Training Day, Equal Opportunity For Women in the Workforce, AP Conference and Theological Studies at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

Staff Achievements
In addition to the numerous professional development courses staff have participated in, Robyn Petty and Emma Lane have completed their LLTC course during the year. We will be finalising Success For Boys by the end of the school year and starting to develop and implement strategies associated with this program.

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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students
I am usually happy at St Joseph’s School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff
I am usually happy at St Joseph’s School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
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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 92.88% was achieved in 2008 by staff at St. Joseph’s.

Financial Statement Summary
About This Report

Mrs Nella Smith, Mrs Marie O'Brien, Mr Daniel Francis, Mrs Robyn Petty, Mrs Linda Carmichael, Mr Graeme Urquhart, Mrs Michelle Smith (representing and P and F) and Mr John O'Mahoney (representing the School Council) wrote this report.