2008

Annual Report
St Therese Primary School, YENDA

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Introduction
At St. Therese School, teachers and parents work co-operatively to ensure that the students enjoy school and strive to reach their full potential.

St Therese offers a comprehensive curriculum that values effort and achievement, allows gifts and talents to be nurtured and individual differences to be catered for.

We aim to teach students to achieve their best by being independent learners and critical thinkers.

This report reflects achievements, events and policies for 2008.

1. The School

St. Therese School
St Therese School is a creative, caring, family orientated school providing quality education to the students of Yenda and surrounding areas.

Our vision and mission is to strive to educate our students to their fullest potential within a community that has Jesus as our model and the Gospel values as our guide.

The staff our committed to delivering a curriculum that serves each individual child and reflects our school motto:

“Educating the whole child to strive for excellence”

Catholic Identity
Religious Education:
St Therese School is an integral part of the St. Francis Parish of Yoogali, Hanwood and Yenda.

We work closely with our Parish Priest, Fr Neru to teach our students about their faith and guide them in their prayer and spiritual development.

Students study Religious Education following the Wagga Wagga Diocesan curriculum, “Sharing our Story”. Learning and Teaching is treated as all other Key Learning Areas and is linked to A-E Assessment Criteria. The teaching of Religious Education occurs daily in the classrooms.

Sacraments
Preparation for sacraments is a special time for the students of St. Therese. During 2008 students were prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This preparation was incorporated into the learning and teaching programme and the tradition and celebration shared by the entire school.

Students being prepared for sacraments are introduced to the parish through special commitment masses and parishioners are encouraged to pray for the recipients and share in their journey.

The students attended a Confirmation Retreat Day at Pioneer Park with students from St. Mary’s, Yoogali.

Liturgies and Masses
Mass and other liturgies to celebrate special feast days are celebrated with the parish. Once a month, our school hosts a Saturday night Mass in our parish. The students are responsible for the readings, altar serving, prayers and singing at this Mass.

Pastoral Care
We have continued to support St.Vincent de Paul and Project Compassion financially this year and also participated in St. Vincent de Paul’s Assist a student programme. The money we raised was able to provide education for a student from a developing country for the entire year.

We have also supported Jeans for Genes Day, Year 6 organized a charity lunch in which all proceeds went to CanAssist.

Community Involvement
St. Therese school students have participated in the Yenda community celebrations of Anzac Day and Carols by Candlelight.

They have decorated Christmas Trees at Griffith Central Plaza and the Yenda Diggers Club and performed Christmas Carols at Griffith Central.

Special Events
During 2008 we hosted the World Youth Day Cross and Icon. Teachers and Catechists from the parish led special activities at a Day Camp that was attended by catholic children from surrounding areas.
All students were given the opportunity to venerate the cross and icon before they processed through a flag-waving guard of honour from the school to the church.

Each year the Staff and Students participate in Kris Kindle. The students find this very exciting and it is a way to help keep Christ in Christmas by giving to someone who you may not usually give to.

**A Message from key School Bodies**

School Council
St. Therese School Council meets bi-monthly to work in co-operation with the staff and CSO to provide the best possible learning environment for all students.

The School Council has ended the year well within budget and in a healthy financial position to start the 2009 school year.

In 2008 we again held a very successful Yenda Community Fun Day. All organizations in Yenda were invited to join together to raise funds for their organization and promote community spirit. This looks to be a very successful annual event.

The School Council thanks all staff, students and parents who support our school and work together to the benefit of all.

P&F
The P&F meets once a month to work collaboratively with the School Council and staff to improve resources at St. Therese School.

The P&F has been able to supplement the school’s financial position through successful fund raising activities. This year the P&F have purchased two interactive white boards for the school.

Thank you to all staff, students, parents and friends who have contributed to our many ventures.

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**2. Information on Key School Programs**

**School Determined Improvement Targets**

Technology Update
At St. Therese School we aim to keep updated with technology. We have a computer ratio of one computer to every two students. This year has seen the installation of two interactive white boards which are widely used in each classroom. Wireless internet was also installed enabling more efficient access to the internet for all students.

Curriculum Alignment
For the last two years and continuing into the future, teachers at St. Therese have reported back to students using clear marking criteria for assessment tasks that relate directly to their learning. This allows students to clearly see what is expected and aim for excellence in all areas.

Open Days of Discovery Programme
St. Therese School again offered the ‘Open Days of Discovery Programme’ in Term 3. This programme targets children from families in the local area who are eligible to begin primary school the following year. The aim of this programme is to provide an educational experience that is different from the traditional pre-school programme. This programme also fosters smooth transition to school.

**Programs to Support Students**

Current Curriculum Initiatives

**Jolly Phonics**
In 2008 the Jolly Phonics Programme was introduced in the infant’s class at St. Therese School. Teachers undertook training in order to initiate this programme. Research data indicates that this programme accelerates the development of reading and writing skills using visual, aural and kinaesthetic cues.

**Sena Testing**
Students in Years One and Three are given a full numeracy assessment twice a year. The information gathered at the initial test
the teaching and learning activities for the future. The test is readministered toward the end of the year to gather information on student learning and progress. All students at St. Therese School reached benchmarks at the initial test.

2008 Numeracy Grant
St. Therese School was successful in gaining a Numeracy Grant which enabled one-to-one and small group focused teaching for students requiring extra assistance in Mathematics. This initiative had benefits for each class and testing results indicated that this venture was a great success.

Curriculum Review
During the year, representatives from the CSO evaluated St. Therese School’s HSIE and PDHPE curriculum. The school was commended on the commitment by the teaching staff to ensure that all outcomes are taught across the school and that our planning caters for changing class structures.

School Accreditation and Registration
In September, St. Therese School underwent accreditation and registration. A panel of educational experts from the CSO in Wagga examined school policy and teaching and learning documents. The panel acknowledged:

- The high level of involvement of staff in a small school environment
- The significant commitment to the use of technology
- The quality of school publications.
- The commitment of school staff to teaching of all outcomes across the school.

Other Learning Support Initiatives
Technology
St. Therese School staff are committed to the enhancement of student learning through technology. Students in the Primary classes are relying more and more on technology and workbooks are becoming a thing of the past as they write their first drafts straight on to a computer. This allows them to proofread, edit and improve their writing immediately and has led to more quality in writing and more proficient keyboard skills. Publishing is instantaneous through networked printers.

The daily use of interactive whiteboards in both classrooms has also enhanced student learning. Questions can be quickly addressed through immediate internet research. The ceiling mounted data projectors and interactive whiteboards have been an invaluable tool in the focussed teaching of concepts in all Key Learning Areas.

The students have competently used computer programs to make movies for shared prayer and have experimented with the use of a digital video camera. It is hoped that we move along further in this area next year.

It is our intention next year to expand our website to include many other aspects of the school, including student work samples.

Student Achievement
St. Therese School is very proud of the high standard of student achievement that exists in all classes. We operate small classes that cater for all individuals. We encourage our students to be independent learners and critical thinkers.

Opportunities
We offer a wide variety of stimulating learning experiences throughout the year, some of which include:

- Active After School Community Fitness Programme
- Live Theatre Performances
- Public Choir Performances
- Circus Skills Workshop
- Art Exhibition
- Sporting Clinics
- University of New South Wales Competitions
- Excursions
- Sporting Carnivals
- Swimming Lessons
- Tennis Lessons
- Wiggles concert

Equity Program Initiatives
The St. Therese School population includes students from Australian, Italian, Sikh, South American, South African and Lebanese backgrounds.

Respect for all cultures is a core feature of our Christian beliefs. Other cultures are recognized and celebrated. We participate in a wide variety of community events.
Student Support Programs
A school counsellor is accessible to all students as required.

In class programmes are run that target individuals needing support.

Orientation
Kindergarten Orientation was offered on Fridays during Term 4.

Year 6 students also attended orientation programmes at their respective High Schools of choice.

Sport
The first sporting event on the calendar this year was the school swimming carnival. Many students went on to represent the school at the Deanery Carnival with some going on to the Diocesan carnival. Mikayla Russell represented our Diocese at the Mackillop Carnival in Sydney.

During Term 2 we held our Athletics Carnival where again many children went on to represent us at Deanery and Diocesan levels.

The whole school participated in an intensive swimming programme. Two days per week for five weeks the children were provided with skilled instruction from staff at the Griffith Regional Aquatic Centre.

In Term 3 the whole school participated in a school tennis programme. Margot Dal Broi provided her expertise and the skill development of all students over the ten weeks was evident.

Students have had the opportunity to participate in all Diocesan Team Trials and have participated in specialist clinics for Aussie Rules, Basketball and Rugby League.

The Federal Government programme, Active After School Community was also run during Terms One, Two and Three.

During 2008, students participated in workshops with trained personnel, including the Life Education Van, which emphasised good self esteem, anti-bullying and drug education.

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></th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Punctuation and Grammar</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St. Therese 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 Statewide Results
Students from St. Therese School achieved excellent results with both classes achieving well above the National Average. All students in Year 3 had results in the top two bands in Literacy and Numeracy. Many students individually achieved at a very high level.

Basic Skills Trends
Results reflect strong teaching and learning at St. Therese School. Students have shown growth in all areas.
3. School Overview

School Policies

Discipline Policy
We believe the most effective form of discipline is self discipline. This encourages students to make decisions and accept the consequences for their actions.

Parents play an integral part of the child’s education and have a major role to play in each child’s behaviour and discipline. The support we receive from parents in assisting their children to make correct decisions is invaluable.

All students and teachers have the responsibility to respect the rights of other students and teachers.

Bullying is not acceptable or tolerated. Students and/or parents are strongly encouraged to report any form of bullying immediately.

Teachers have the responsibility to investigate all reported and suspected incidents of bullying.

Student Welfare Policy
St Therese School, as a Catholic School, is called to provide an environment that is safe and in which all individuals are able to develop to his or her potential.

Teachers have an important role in the total care and growth of each individual.

Students also have a role to play in the care and growth of their peers.

Complaints and Grievances
Students, parents and staff are encouraged to seek solutions to problems as soon as it is evident that a problem exists.
All complaints and grievances are to be taken seriously and appropriate processes put into place for procedural fairness.

Students, parents and staff are encouraged to contact the Principal in regard to these matters and, if necessary, are able to contact the Parish priest, School Council Chairperson and relevant personnel at the CSO.

Further information can be obtained from the Diocese of Wagga Wagga Catholic Schools office website

www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Enrolment Policy
St. Therese School is an inclusive school and welcomes enrolment applications from students with disabilities and from other faith traditions.

Children from families who are prepared to be supportive of the life and teachings of the Catholic Church and adhere to the religious practices, educational ideals and financial requirements of the school may apply for enrolment.

No child is to be excluded from enrolment on the basis of a genuine inability to pay school fees.

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>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Structure of Classes
A: Kindergarten, Year 1
B: Years 3, 4, 5 and 6

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>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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Professional Learning
During 2008 staff have participated in the following professional development to further their skills and knowledge.
- Development of HSIE and HPDPE Policy and Scope and Sequence
- Jolly Phonics
- CPR/First Aid Updates
- Harassment/Child protection
- OH&S and Workplace practices
- Literacy Learning and Teaching in the Classroom

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. Therese School.

Parents
My child is usually happy at St. Therese School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

Students
I am usually happy at St. Therese School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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Staff
I am usually happy at St. Therese 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>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 96.32% was achieved in 2008 by staff at St. Therese’s School.

Financial Statement Summary

About This Report
This report has been prepared by the school’s Acting Principal, Mrs Kathryn Grant, in consultation with the wider school community.