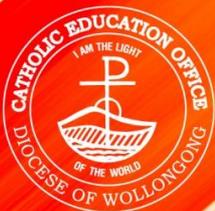


# *Annual School Report*

## *2014*



## About This Report

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Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Helensburgh is registered by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) NSW and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wollongong. The CEO is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report to the Community for this year provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines information regarding School Review & Improvement (SRI) initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school's Action Plans.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the CEO. This Report has been approved by Wollongong CEO to ensure compliance with all BOSTES requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the BOSTES, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and be available on the school's website by 30 June 2015.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school:

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Helensburgh NSW 2508  
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Website: [www.hchdow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.hchdow.catholic.edu.au)

**Parish Priest:** Fr Bede North

**Principal:** Kerrin Cronin

**Date:** 12 December 2014

## **Vision Statement**

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Holy Cross School, Helensburgh, is part of the Catholic community, striving to develop Gospel values within an educational environment that encourages all to reach their full potential in academic, spiritual, social and sporting endeavours through a holistic approach to learning.

## **Message from Key School Bodies**

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### ***Principal's Message***

This Annual Report outlines Holy Cross School's teaching and learning journey, the school's participation in many events and student outcomes for 2014. Some highlights of the year include: the development of a revised school Vision and Mission Statement; the development of formal frameworks to facilitate staff engagement in professional conversations, peer observations and goal setting initiatives to improve the teaching and learning of Mathematics; and the continued successful implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Framework (SPB<sub>4</sub>L) which supported the development of positive behaviour and improved student outcomes. The launch of the school Anti-Bullying Policy was a significant achievement. The school continued to develop Parish and parent partnership and invited the engagement of the local community in the life of the school. The students have been great ambassadors for Holy Cross in 2014 representing the school in a range of events and outreach initiatives.

### ***Parent Involvement***

The Parents and Friends (P&F) Association of Holy Cross are very proud, friendly and passionate about working together to support the school. The P&F Association are a collective group who build and foster great companionship and support the learning and the social development of the children of Holy Cross.

In 2014 the P&F supported various initiatives to promote community spirit such as Tea & Tissues on the first day of school for Kindergarten parents, the Holy Cross "Carnivale" school fete, school disco, Mother's and Father's day stalls and the annual Holy Cross P&F Ball. The fete generated revenue for purchasing digital devices for the classrooms, donations towards representative sporting event transportation, library donations, Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 Reading Eggs program, subscription to Michael Grose's Parenting Ideas magazine and subsidising the Year 6 leadership program.

The Pastoral Care program continued to operate and the parent volunteer register was well supported with registrations and assistance increasing this year. School events to promote parent engagement were well attended.

*Parents and Friends Association President*

### ***Student Leadership***

Students in Year 6 were provided with the opportunity to develop leadership skills. At the beginning of the year students were invited to become members of one of the student leadership teams namely; Faith and Justice, Leaders of Learning and Welcome and Hospitality. As a member of a team, students were given the opportunity to actively contribute in the decision making processes at the school, take on leadership roles, act as effective role models for younger students and offer responsible service to their school and peers. In 2014 Year 6 students supported a variety of school activities including Mission Week, ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies, school liturgies and Masses, Creative Arts initiatives, school assemblies, as well as justice and community service activities. Year 6 students were involved in the Kindergarten Buddy program where Year 6 buddies took special care of younger students as they settled into school life. At the beginning of the year, students in Year 6 participated in a leadership program attending a three day excursion to Berry Sport and Recreation Centre. The program provided opportunities to enjoy the benefits of an active lifestyle, develop social skills, independence and focussed on building leadership skills.

*School Leaders*

## **School Profile**

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### ***School Context***

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Helensburgh. The school caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6 and has a current enrolment of 151. It was founded in 1900 by the sisters of St Joseph with the Josephite charism remaining the cornerstone of the school's Catholic identity.

At Holy Cross, students are challenged to thrive in a rich learning environment where the focus is on constant improvement. A culture of reflective action is promoted. The highly professional staff are committed to the success and well-being of every student.

The school boasts state of the art facilities complemented by beautiful natural surrounds. Holy Cross is a future focussed community with a view to further enable quality teaching and learning that embraces digital pedagogy. The school is committed to assisting parents in the education of their children. Engagement of parents in their child's learning is a priority at Holy

Cross. The school is well resourced and caters for a variety of learning styles and the diverse learning needs of students.

### **Student Enrolments**

<b>2014 enrolments</b>	
Boys	75
Girls	76
Total	151
Indigenous	2
LBOTE	5

The Diocesan Primary Enrolment Policy and Procedures exists to assist schools in the equitable prioritising of enrolment applications and in order to ensure that the requirements of State and Commonwealth legislation are met. This documentation can be found on both the school website [www.hchdow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.hchdow.catholic.edu.au) and the CEO website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2014.

### **Student Attendance**

<b>2014 Attendance</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Kinder	94.1%	94.8%
Year 1	94.4%	95.7%
Year 2	94.1%	96.1%
Year 3	94.0%	95.5%
Year 4	97.2%	95.6%
Year 5	94.9%	95.7%
Year 6	92.2%	92.0%
Whole school	94.4%	95.3%

### **Management of Student Non Attendance**

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitors part or whole day absences.

Student attendance at Holy Cross was recorded electronically on the computer generated roll through the School Administration Software (SAS) system. Non-attendance required a note from parents/caregivers. In the event that a note was not received a generic form was sent home for completion. Holy Cross complied with the Education Act 1990 (Part 5) in regards to attendance at school. Exemption forms were completed by all students who took extended leave. At the end of each Term a student attendance summary was given to the Principal to address frequent late arrivals, early departures and absences.

## Staffing Profile

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There were a total of 11 teachers and 5 support staff at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School in 2014. This number included 7 full-time, 4 part-time teachers.

### **Teacher Standards**

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 2 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

Teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* guidelines	100%
A bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education	0%

\*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff

### **Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2014 was 96%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 99%.

### ***Professional Learning***

During 2014, Holy Cross Catholic Primary School personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement priorities.

These included:

A. Holy Cross Catholic Primary School whole school development days involving 17 staff.

These days focused on:

- key CEO and School Policies and Procedures;
  - staff Spirituality: Engaging in the Field of God's Mission;
  - student Engagement;
  - student Support – data gathering, classroom management, classroom environment; and,
  - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Anaphylaxis and Emergency Care Training.
- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses:
- SPB<sub>4</sub>L Phase 5 Yellow Zone training (6 staff);
  - SPB<sub>4</sub>L Team Training: Classroom Systems (5 staff);
  - Active Supervision: Playground (9 staff);
  - National Consistent Collection of Data Tool (9 staff);
  - Religious Literacy Diocesan Marking Day (1 staff);
  - Disability Standards for Education (17 staff);
  - Sacred Art, Illustration and Storytelling appreciation and reflection (1 staff);
  - Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Middle Leader and Senior School Support Officer Retreats and Network Days (5 staff);
  - Personal Development and Professional Review Pilot Program (1 staff);
  - Growth Coaching accreditation – Phase 3 (1 staff);
  - Primary Libraries Network Meeting (1 staff);
  - Leading Libraries Primary Day (1 staff);
  - Setting Up and Implementing a Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) Team (2 staff);
  - The Successful 1:1 Primary iPad Classroom (1 staff);
  - Leading Numeracy Intervention (1 staff);
  - Leading Literacy Intervention (1 staff);
  - Sentral Software Training Pilot Program (2 staff);
  - Data in Numeracy (11 staff);
  - Literacy Data and the Continuum (11 staff);
  - Professional Learning Communities (11 staff);
  - School Review and Improvement Final Ratings (9 staff);
  - Self-evaluation Assessment Tool (10 staff);
  - Critical Incident: School Bush Fire Plan (13 staff);

- Quality Numeracy Block (11 staff);
- Reporting using Sentral software (11 staff);
- Numeracy Data and the Continuum (10 staff);
- Leading Primary Curriculum Implementation: Mathematics (1 staff);
- Leading Primary Curriculum Implementation: English (1 staff);
- Australian Curriculum Primary Mathematics Leaders (1 staff);
- Australian Curriculum Primary Science Leaders (1 staff);
- Australian Science Curriculum Quality Programming (11 staff); and
- Understanding of Work Health and Safety Consultation & Risk Managements (1 staff).

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$520. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the Catholic Education Office with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$2025.

## **Catholic Life & Religious Education**

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In 2014 the Parish of Holy Cross undertook some restructuring in accordance with the Diocesan Pastoral Plan 2011-2015 *Parishes Working Together*. As a result Parish Masses were streamlined to one weekend Mass on Sunday and one weekday Mass on Wednesday. Parishioners largely took responsibility for the running of the Church with some support provided by Holy Cross School. The Parish Priest continued to have a presence in the school visiting regularly on Wednesdays, and at other times, to support the community. The parents of Holy Cross continued to share the responsibility for the spiritual growth, welfare and religious education of students and appreciated the support and guidance of the Parish Priest.

Throughout the year, significant Church and community occasions were celebrated at special Masses, assemblies and liturgies. These celebrations continued to take a creative and inclusive approach incorporating liturgical dance, drama, singing and playing instruments to offer the community an uplifting experience of prayer and worship, meanwhile giving opportunity for teachers, parents, parishioners and students to share their gifts for ministry. In further support of the Parish Pastoral Plan, and towards achieving School Review and Improvement (SRI) goals, the school assisted the Parish to connect and engage with young people and families particularly as the school took responsibility for leading selected Sunday Masses, along with selected Wednesday Masses.

Highlights included the Opening School Mass, Holy Week Liturgy, the Sacraments and Whole School Sunday Masses including the Triumph of the Cross Feast Day. The school community participated in ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies along with National Rosary Day. A guest speaker for Catholic Missions visited and students from Year 5 and Year 6 participated in the Cardinal's Christmas Art Competition.

This year a key SRI goal was to engrain a modern Vision and Mission into the culture of the school. Staff worked collaboratively to write a new Vision and Mission Statement through professional development experiences and the Staff Spirituality Day, which focussed on the role of the Catholic School and Pope Francis' call to vocation.

Individual and whole staff faith formation, including communal prayer, formed part of regular school life. Staff engaged in Godly Play Storytelling for prayer as a means of providing spiritual nourishment meanwhile developing skills for facilitating quality Religious Education experiences for students. Whole school singing was also introduced as a means of engaging all students in joyful prayer and celebration as they prepared for various Masses and events throughout the year.

Gardening projects were initiated to promote environmental stewardship within the school community. An expert ecologist, as well as the local community who donated resources, supported the projects. Gardening Club transformed Yalunga Garden into a native conservation area. Students across Stages also had the opportunity to participate in the Vegetable Garden project as part of curriculum based learning.

Collaboration with local Catechists continued, promoting involvement which extended beyond Sacramental Programs to include the Year 6 Retreat; assistance with school Masses and liturgies, and, providing access to Religious Education resources.

In 2014 the Faith and Justice teams, with both staff and student groups, organised charitable works projects. The staff volunteered to help prepare and deliver meals to the homeless via the St Vincent de Paul Vinnies Van. The student Faith and Justice team continued to lead charitable works projects promoting awareness for social justice and opportunities to stand in solidarity with the less fortunate.

The school community donated the following amounts to various organisations: Caritas \$453; Catholic Mission \$445; Jump Rope for Heart \$1275. The school community also made in excess of \$1000 worth of food donations to support St Vincent de Paul Vinnies Van and Christmas Appeals. In addition to this \$156 was raised to support Religious Education projects within the school.

The staff, students and parents were also involved in outreach programs in the community through participation in the Culture, Activity, Friendship, Education (CAFE) Club run by Neighbourhood Aid and local preschool visits.

The school supported the Parish Sacramental Program. Nineteen students received their First Holy Communion and eleven students received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Twenty-one students received the Sacrament of Penance.

### **Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2014. The school cohort in 2014 consisted of sixteen Year

4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 25 August 2014 and the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *Mary – First Among the Saints* and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending. Students showed a high level of performance in their knowledge of the religious tradition. This high level of performance was particularly noticeable in their ability to:

- identify key symbols, signs and rituals of the Catholic Tradition;
- identify key symbols of Baptism;
- recall key events in the Scriptures that tell of Mary's openness to God;
- identify key aspects of the Season of Lent;
- describe and explain an image of God from the Scriptures;
- demonstrate an understanding of the Commandments and relate to own life;
- identify how groups can act in service to others like Jesus did;
- describe the presence of God in creation; and,
- recognise qualities of saints who are models of love and service.

The students' responses showed a need for them to develop their capacity to work with and apply the religious tradition especially in their ability to:

- recall the events of Holy Week focusing on the Stations of the Cross;
- identify the concept of Trinity;
- identify Jesus' example of service to others;
- demonstrate basic understanding of the Sacrament of Penance; and,
- identify a prayer of sorrow.

For Part A, 0% of students were placed in the developing level, 75% in the achieving level and 25% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 12% of students were placed in the developing level, 69% in the achieving level and 19% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 19% of students were placed in the developing level, 62% in the achieving level and 19% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

## School Review and Improvement

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School Review and Improvement (SRI) is an on-going process of self-evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. It informs action planning at the school level to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Above all, Catholic schools must be good schools with a strong learning orientation and a strong sense of purpose. In all aspects of improving and developing, schools should be learning-centred, constantly striving for excellence and have the student as their primary focus.

### School Review and Improvement components reviewed and rated in 2014:

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**

- 1.1 Vision and Mission

- Goal: To implement a revised school Vision and Mission Statement that inspires, informs and guides the school's decisions and actions as an authentic Catholic learning community.

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**

- 2.1 Educational Potential

- Goal: For students to consistently display positive behaviours for learning that represent the four school rules on the playground.

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**

- 3.3 Provision for the diverse needs of learners

- Goal: To develop school systems, structures and agreed practices to monitor, track and regularly review student progress in English and Mathematics.

- 3.4 Planning, programming and evaluation

- Goal: For teaching programs to be dynamic working documents that respond to students' needs and reflect quality teaching and learning and the CEO Guidelines for the Quality Teaching of English & Mathematics.

- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**

- 5.3 Environmental stewardship

- Goal: To establish a culture of environmental stewardship that involves students in the planning, implementation and management of mini projects to transform areas of the school site.

## **School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2015:**

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**

  - 1.1 Vision and Mission

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**

  - 2.5 Pastoral Care

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**

  - 3.1 Curriculum provision

  - 3.7 Professional Learning

- **Key Area 4: Human Resources, Leadership and Management**

  - 4.5 Overall compliance with legislation and other requirements

- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**

  - 5.1 ICT Resources

- **Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**

  - 6.2 Reporting to the Community

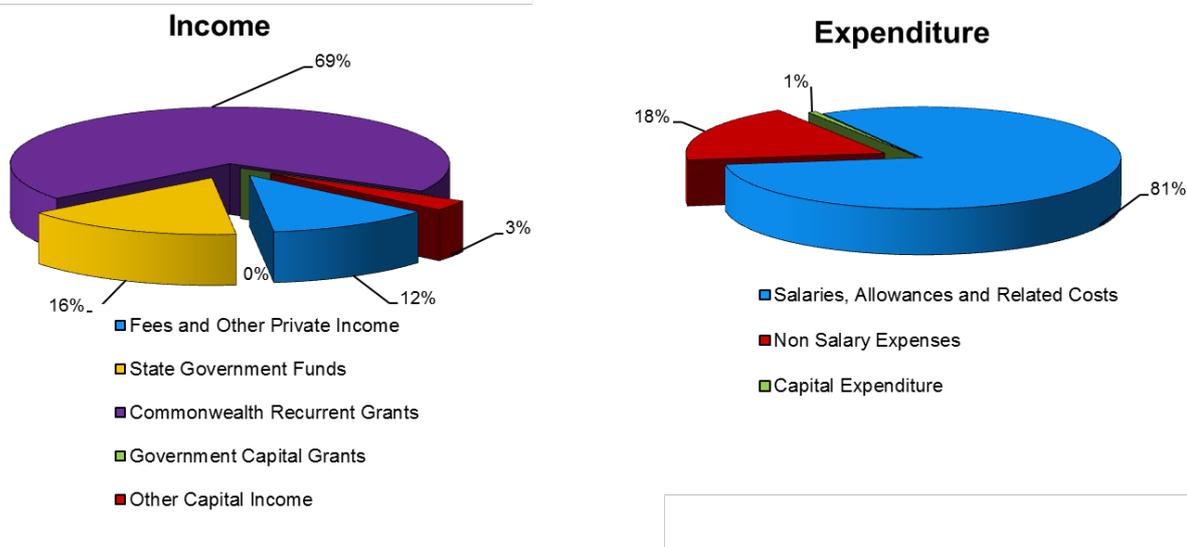
## **Financial Summary**

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During 2014 the school continued to provide students with access to the Reading Eggs software program for Kindergarten to Year 2 and the HOT Maths software program for Year 3 to Year 6. The school supported the participation of students in Year 3 to Year 6 at Sport Gala Days and also subsidised the costs of Year 6 Leadership programs. These programs, as well as costs associated with the maintenance of digital devices, were financed with the assistance of the P&F Association. The school also provided each class teacher with an iPad to enhance student learning. The removal of several trees, as part of the school Bush Fire Plan, was financed by the Holy Cross Parish School Enhancement and Debt Servicing Obligation (SEDSO) funds. Our school also received a grant of \$5000 from Peabody Mines, Helensburgh.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Helensburgh for the year ended 31 December 2014. This data is taken from

the 2014 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations



## Student Welfare

The well-being of each student is central to the culture of the school. The school implements a range of frameworks and programs that promote the well-being of all students.

The Diocesan SPB<sub>4</sub>L framework, now in its third year at Holy Cross, has continued to make a significant impact within the school. During 2014 the focus was to continue embedding SPB<sub>4</sub>L in all non-classroom areas through the use of specifically taught behavioural expectations, all of which were founded on four school rules.

In Terms 3 and 4 the program focussed on the classroom where teachers and students collaboratively established clear, concise behavioural expectations. The program continued to develop non-classroom and classroom expectations through the teaching and modelling of appropriate behaviours.

The provision of an efficient method for documenting data and reporting student behaviour continued to be a focus for the school. The Diocesan Sentral software data collection suite assisted the school to make informed decisions and guide the direction of the SPB<sub>4</sub>L framework.

In 2014 Holy Cross launched the school Anti-Bullying Plan and Procedures and conducted a community SPB<sub>4</sub>L Expo. The Expo highlighted the school's journey and reinforced the positive impact of this framework at the school.

A CatholicCare counsellor was available one day a week to support students and their families. The counsellor provided individual counselling, and educated and supported staff with implementing programs for both small groups and whole class. A school-wide social skills program called 'Bounce Back' was used throughout the school.

A buddy system operated for Kindergarten and Year 6 students, which assisted the younger students with their induction to primary schooling and provided them with mentors and a support network. Kindergarten Orientation and Transition Program took place to familiarise the 2015 Kindergarten students and their parents with school life at Holy Cross. In order to assist in a smooth assimilation into our school environment it offered both parents and the new students opportunities to become familiar with routines and school settings.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to a safe and supportive environment. The principles, guidelines and procedures set out in the policy documents ***Maintaining Right Relationships*** is the framework for school leaders, students, staff, parents and the wider community to develop a safe and supportive environment. The Diocesan ***Complaints Handling Procedures*** forms an important element in the Diocese's commitment to ensuring safe and supportive environments for school communities. These documents can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2014.

In compliance with the ***NSW Reform Act 1990***, Corporal Punishment is banned in all schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

## **Learning and Teaching**

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### ***Introduction***

Holy Cross is committed to providing quality Catholic learning and teaching. Both school and system based initiatives are designed to enhance and further promote teacher quality and student learning.

### ***Curriculum and Pedagogy***

#### ***Syllabus Implementation***

Throughout 2014 considerable focus was given to the implementation of the NSW Syllabus' for the Australian Curriculum in English and Mathematics. This enabled the redevelopment of the school's scope and sequence for both of these Key Learning Areas (KLAs).

The BOSTES syllabus documents in Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Science and Technology, Creative Arts, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) along with the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education curriculum, were the basis for the school's curriculum. Key Learning Areas were implemented across four stages of learning by classroom teachers.

#### ***Assessment and Reporting***

A wide range of assessment strategies were utilised on a daily basis within each class to monitor student progress. Teachers collaboratively planned assessments within each Stage and Year level that addressed assessment for students' learning, assessment as learning, and assessment of learning. Learning progress was reported to parents formally and informally during the course of the year. Parents of students in Year 1 to Year 6 were provided with two written reports. Parents of Kindergarten students were provided with an end of year written report.

#### ***Integration***

Curriculum integration occurred across the school from Kindergarten to Year 6. Nominated aspects of KLAs were integrated to make learning purposeful and contextualised for students.

#### ***Technology supporting learning***

The school is committed to utilising Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT) such as SMART boards, iPods, iPads and Macbook computers to enrich and expand learning potential. Thirteen iPads were purchased and integrated into all classrooms. Students used a variety of digital devices to support their learning. All students from K-6 were involved in the Australian Government's 'Digital Citizenship' online program aimed at helping students use the internet and keeping themselves and others safe and healthy in an online world. Holy Cross was chosen as a pilot school for a Diocesan initiative to implement the Sentral software package modules in Pastoral Care, Parent Interviews, Reports and Continuum Tracker. The use of Google Drive to collaborate and share documents was

implemented in Year 3 along with all students in the school being set up with individual Google accounts that were supported by the CEO.

### ***Cross Curriculum***

#### *Literacy Strategies*

The focus for Literacy this year involved the exploration of the NSW English Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum. Teachers continued to implement aspects of the Diocesan Quality Teaching of English Guidelines, focusing on the implementation of quality English sessions, which included whole class, individual and guided small group instruction in Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening. The Focus on Literacy (Kindergarten-Year 2) and Focus on Reading (Year 3-Year 6) programs continued in all classrooms.

#### *Numeracy Strategies*

Improving student outcomes in numeracy continued to be a high priority during 2014. The development of effective numeracy teaching practices, in alignment with the Diocesan Quality Teaching of Numeracy Guidelines was a focus. Teachers continued to refine their practice and collaboratively shared experiences to ensure quality learning and teaching across the school.

The introduction of the NSW Mathematics Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum provided an opportunity to give priority to quality pedagogy whilst becoming familiar with new content and structure. In conjunction with this process, staff focused on differentiating the curriculum in the classroom and developed effective guided group sessions with a focus on the aspect of Place Value. All teachers assessed, tracked and monitored student achievement in order to set numeracy learning goals for students.

Participation in the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge and the Home Reading Program had a positive impact on student engagement of reading this year. All students participated in the nationwide 'Music Count Us In' event, which promoted the learning of music and aided in building a sense of community. School incursions and excursions enriched and supplemented the curriculum.

### ***Meeting the needs of all students***

Within each classroom, teachers continued to diversify the curriculum to meet the individual needs of students. Literacy support was given to targeted students in Year 1, as well as students in Kindergarten and Year 2 who were identified with particular needs. All students were monitored throughout the school to ensure learning growth continued.

The responsibility of meeting the diverse needs of students belongs to all staff that are supported by the school's Student Support Team. The role of this team is to meet with the classroom teachers and develop strategies and, when necessary, Individual Plans that support the ongoing learning of both the staff and students. Individual Plans were developed for students with identified high level needs using the Diocesan Planning tool. The Student

Support Team, led by the Assistant Principal, met regularly with class teachers to discuss, plan and action strategies to assist the academic, social and emotional needs of students.

### ***Expanding Learning Opportunities***

At every opportunity the school endeavoured to offer opportunities for the students to expand their learning beyond the classroom. Some highlights included the Book Week parade and activities to promote reading and Grandparents' Day. This day was celebrated with a Mini Assembly, morning tea, open classrooms and the Year 5 and Year 6 Science Fair.

### ***Competitions***

Students were provided with many opportunities to engage in learning beyond those offered in the school curriculum. Students in Years 3 to 6 were given the opportunity to participate in the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools (ICAS) in the areas of Mathematics, English, Spelling, Writing, Science and Computer Skills. A number of credits and distinctions were awarded to the students. Students in Year 5 and Year 6 participated in the Wollongong North West Cluster Public Speaking Competition and the Christmas Art Competition organised by the Catholic Education Offices of Wollongong and Sydney.

### ***Sport***

During 2014 a large number of students from the school participated in a wide variety of sports. All students participated in the school's swimming, athletics and cross country carnivals. These events encouraged maximum student participation and developed community spirit. Year 3 to Year 6 students participated in Sports Gala Days including soccer, rugby league and netball. Students were selected to represent the school in regional carnivals, with one student selected to represent MacKillop in soccer. In rugby league the senior girls were runners-up in the Paul McGregor Shield and were invited to play during half time at the National Rugby League (NRL) game between The Illawarra Dragons and The Melbourne Storm. All students had an opportunity throughout the year to participate in the Jump Rope for Heart skip off, Backyard League and Australian Football League (AFL) workshops.

## **Student Achievement**

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The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

## **NAPLAN**

NAPLAN is implemented for students in Years 3 and 5 and the results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

In 2014, twenty-one Year 3 students and twenty-eight Year 5 students sat for the NAPLAN tests. Trend data for Year 3 indicated improvement with no Year 3 student placed below the National Minimum Standard in any aspect of the test. An analysis of data indicated areas for further review and investigation were in the aspects of Writing, Spelling and Numeracy. NAPLAN results reflected the data gathered through classroom assessment tasks, standardised tests and professional knowledge and planning.

### **Student Achievement in Bands**

Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement.

**Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.**

<b>NAPLAN 2014: % in Bands</b>		<b>YEAR 3</b>			<b>YEAR 5</b>		
		<b>Bands 1 and 2</b>	<b>Bands 3 and 4</b>	<b>Bands 5 and 6</b>	<b>Bands 3 and 4</b>	<b>Bands 5 and 6</b>	<b>Bands 7 and 8</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>School</b>	14%	38%	48%	11%	57%	32%
	<b>National</b>	15%	39%	46%	15%	39%	46%
<b>Writing</b>	<b>School</b>	5%	38%	57%	11%	79%	11%
	<b>National</b>	13%	48%	39%	13%	48%	39%
<b>Spelling</b>	<b>School</b>	24%	24%	52%	11%	50%	39%
	<b>National</b>	17%	40%	44%	17%	40%	44%
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>School</b>	5%	38%	57%	4%	43%	54%
	<b>National</b>	14%	36%	50%	14%	36%	50%
<b>Numeracy</b>	<b>School</b>	9%	45%	45%	11%	82%	8%
	<b>National</b>	15%	48%	37%	20%	54%	26%

### Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

Students are considered to be achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) if they are in the lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) or if they have been exempt from NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

NAPLAN 2014: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	100%	96%
	National	94%	93%
Writing	School	100%	93%
	National	94%	90%
Spelling	School	100%	96%
	National	93%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	100%	96%
	National	94%	93%
Numeracy	School	100%	93%
	National	95%	93%

### Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

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In 2014 the school sought the opinions of students, teachers and parents using a process known as "Appreciative Inquiry". This process has been used successfully around the world in many organisations including schools and the business workplace. Appreciative Inquiry works from the assumption that there is something positive about every organisation. It allows the strengths of a school to be celebrated and highlights areas that require further development. The five questions asked were:

- What do you most value about being a member of Holy Cross Catholic School?
- What do you most appreciate about this school being Catholic?
- What do you value most about how your child learns at Holy Cross?
- If you could preserve or maintain three aspects of the school for the next five years, what would they be? and,
- If you could have three wishes that ensured a more successful school from 2014 onwards, what would they be?

The responses are summarised below:

### **Parents**

#### *Commendations:*

- The positive relationship between staff, students and parents;
- The care and sensitivity with which students' needs are catered for;
- Staff are approachable;
- Feedback is welcomed, valued and acted upon;
- The active involvement of the Parish Priest;
- Opportunities for parent engagement in student learning;
- Quality and professional staff;
- The Religious Education program is engaging for students; and
- The caring and nurturing community.

#### *Recommendations:*

- Continue to implement the SPB<sub>4</sub>L framework; and
- Continue to promote student involvement.

### **Students**

#### *Commendations:*

- The way the staff care for students;
- The helpful teachers;
- There are many opportunities to share learning with parents;
- Everyone knows the four school rules;
- Everyone is made to feel welcome;
- The many opportunities provided for boys and girls to participate in sporting events, go on excursions and compete in competitions;
- Special days to make school life fun;
- The access to technology; and
- Opportunities to lead and be involved in school life.

#### *Recommendations:*

- More computers, iPads;
- More canteen days; and,
- A variety of equipment on the playground.

### **Staff**

#### *Commendations:*

- Student-centred decision making;
- Collegial working staff relationships;
- Opportunities provided for professional development;

- Access to technology;
- The team approach;
- Friendly and supportive environment where it is enjoyable to come to work each day;
- Opportunities are provided to engage with the Parish;
- The continuation of the implementation of the SPB<sub>4</sub>L framework; and
- Student engagement and involvement in learning goals and progress.

*Recommendations:*

- Continued professional development of staff to build capacity;
- Commitment to ICLT as a tool to enhance learning; and,
- Investigate ways to engage with the wider community.

