

Annual School Report

2015



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

About This Report

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Helensburgh is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) and managed by Catholic Education, Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW). The CEDoW 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 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 CEDoW. This Report has been approved by CEDoW to ensure compliance with all the BOSTES NSW 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 2016.

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

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
1 McMillan Street
Helensburgh NSW 2508

Ph: (02) 4294 1588
Fax: (02) 4294 3473
Email: info@hchdow.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.hchdow.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Bede North
Principal: Mrs Kerrin Cronin

Date: 20 November 2015

Vision Statement

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School: Learning to Learn, Live and Love.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal's Message

This Annual Report provides a snapshot of Holy Cross Primary School's teaching and learning journey, the school's participation in many events and student outcomes for 2015. Some highlights of the year include: the launch of the school's new Vision and Mission Statement; the ongoing development of frameworks to facilitate staff engagement in professional conversations, peer observations and goal setting initiatives to improve teaching and learning and the continued successful implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Framework (SPB4L) which supported the development of appropriate behaviour and improved student outcomes. The school continued to develop Parish and parent partnership as a highly valued element of an environment for student success. The students were great ambassadors for Holy Cross in 2015.

Parent Involvement

The Parents' and Friends' Association (P&F) 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 2015 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 "One World" School Fete, School Disco, Mother's and Father's Day Stalls, Grandparents Day, a Photoshoot Fundraiser, the Holy Cross P&F "007" Ball as well as various morning teas. 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, purchasing books for the Parent's library and subsidising the Year 6 leadership program. The Pastoral Care program continued to operate and the parent volunteer register was well supported. School events to promote parent engagement were well attended.

Parents and Friends Association President

Student Leadership

At the beginning of the year students in Year 6 were invited to become members of one of the Student Leadership Teams that aligned with the school's new vision; Leaders of Learning, Leaders of Living and Leaders of Loving. As a member of a team, students were given the opportunity to actively contribute in decision making processes of the school, take on leadership roles, act as effective role models for younger students and offer responsible service to their school and peers. In 2015 Year 6 students supported a variety of school activities including Catholic 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. Students in Year 6 participated in a leadership program attending a 3 day excursion to Berry Sport and Recreation Centre. This provided opportunities to enjoy the benefits of an active lifestyle, develop social skills, independence and focused on building leadership skills.

School Leaders

School Profile

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 166. 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 is 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 focused 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 as at August 2015 census

2015 enrolments	
Boys	83
Girls	83
Total	166
Indigenous	3
LBOTE	2

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 and the CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to this Policy in 2015.

Student Attendance

2015 Attendance	Male	Female
Kinder	94.7%	95.0%
Year 1	92.7%	91.4%
Year 2	94.8%	92.2%
Year 3	89.8%	92.6%
Year 4	93.6%	91.2%
Year 5	92.3%	90.2%
Year 6	88.9%	91.2%
Whole school	92.6%	92.0%

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 Sentral administration system. Non-attendance requires, from parents/caregivers, either an electronic message, a note or a phone call to the office. 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 for 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

There were a total of 10 teachers and 5 support staff at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School. This number includes 8 full-time, 2 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 2015 was 95.33%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 100%.

Professional Learning

During 2015, 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: Being Present to Others;
 - Curriculum Development: Numeracy (Problem Solving); History and Quality Teaching and Learning Programming and Planning
 - Student Support – data gathering, classroom management, classroom environment; and,
 - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).
- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses:
- Religious Literacy Diocesan Marking Day (1 staff);
 - Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Middle Leader and Senior School Support Officer Retreats and Network Days (5 staff);
 - Leading Libraries Network Meeting (2 staff);
 - Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) Team Re-connector Day (4 staff);
 - The Successful 1:1 Primary iPad Classroom (1 staff);
 - Professional Learning Communities (4 staff);
 - Leading Primary Curriculum Implementation: Mathematics, History, English, Science, Religious Education (5 staff);
 - Learning for Leadership (1 staff);
 - Road Safety Stage 3 Professional Development (1 staff);
 - Early Career Teacher Mentoring Day (2 staff);
 - Lamplighters Faith and Spiritual Formation (4 staff);
 - Shining Lights Faith and Spiritual Formation (3 staff);
 - Men's Retreat (3 staff);
 - Australian Council for Educational Leadership (ACEL) Conference (1 staff);
 - Igniting the Fire Spiritual Program (1 staff);
 - Mission – One Heart Many Voices REC Conference (1 staff);
 - Teacher Training in Best Start Administration (1 staff);
 - Leading Indigenous Education (1 staff);
 - Child Protection Training (1 staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$540. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the Catholic Education Office with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$844.

Catholic Life and Religious Education

Throughout the year significant school 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 while providing an opportunity for teachers, parents, parishioners and students to share their gifts for ministry. The school and Parish worked in partnership to connect and engage with families as students and staff from the school led selected Sunday and Wednesday Masses. Highlights included the Opening School Mass, Holy Week Liturgy, the Sacraments and school Sunday Masses. The school community participated in ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies. Student representatives attended the launch of Project Compassion and Catholic Missions Fundraising Appeals. Students from Year 5 and Year 6 participated in the Cardinal's Christmas Art Competition. The Parish Priest had 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, appreciating the support and guidance of the Parish Priest. This year a goal was to publish and begin to embed the school's revised Vision and Mission into school life. Staff and students worked collaboratively to develop a logo and a school vision song, 'Learn, Live, Love' was composed. The new Vision and Mission was launched with great celebration as part of the school's feast day, Triumph of the Cross. This event included an open day for families and parishioners to visit classrooms and work with students to design a take home cross.

Another goal for 2015 was to embed storytelling in Religious Education programs and practices to improve student understanding of Scripture and Church tradition. Teachers participated in professional development around Catholic pedagogy focusing on storytelling. Plans for a dedicated storytelling room were developed. Individual and whole staff faith formation, including communal prayer, formed part of regular school life. Key staff attended the first year of the Diocesan 'Lamplighters' and 'Shining Lights' adult faith and spirituality formation programs. Teachers continued to lead prayer and meditation experiences as part of classroom Religious Education instruction. Whole school singing was also scheduled as a means of engaging all students in joyful prayer and celebration as they prepared for various Masses and events throughout the year. Environmental stewardship continued to be promoted within the school community via various gardening projects supported by an expert ecologist funded by Peabody Mines. Gardening Club operated at lunchtime where members cared for Yalunga Garden and the vegetable patch. Students also had the opportunity to participate in environmental projects as part of curriculum based learning. The staff and student Faith and Justice Teams 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 Year 6 student Faith and Justice team led charitable works projects promoting awareness for social justice and opportunities to stand in solidarity with the less fortunate. The staff, students and parents were involved in outreach programs in the community through participation in the Culture, Activity, Friendship and Education (CAFE) Club run by Neighbourhood Aid.

The school community donated the following amounts to various organisations:

Caritas - \$300; Catholic Mission - \$885; St Vincent De Paul Winter Sleep out - \$200. The school community also made in excess of \$1 000 worth of food donations to support St Vincent de Paul 'Vinnies Van' and Christmas Appeals. The school supported the Parish Sacramental Program. Eighteen students received their First Holy Communion and twenty-five students received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Nineteen students received the Sacrament of Penance. Four students from the school were Baptised.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the Diocese in 2015. The school cohort in 2015 consisted of twenty-five Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 26 August 2015 and the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit 4.6: *One With God's Creation*, 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 ways that they continue the ministry of Jesus;
- Demonstrate an understanding of Jesus' teaching on the practice of giving;
- Recall and sequence the key events of the Emmaus story;
- Write a prayer of thanksgiving of being made in God's image;
- Identify a gift and describe how they share their gift with others;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the Commandments and relate to own life; and,
- Demonstrate an understanding of an image from the scriptures.

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:

- Demonstrate understanding of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness;
- Demonstrate basic understanding of the Sacrament of Penance;
- Identify the key times of the Liturgical Year;
- Identify the Season of Lent as a preparation for Holy Week and Easter; and,
- Demonstrate an understanding of responding to and placing their trust in God.

For Part A, 12% of students were placed in the developing level, 65% in the achieving level and 23% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 6% of students were placed in the developing level, 67% in the achieving level and 27% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 11% of students were placed in the developing level, 66% in the achieving level and 23% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement

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 2015:

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

- 1.1 Vision and Mission

- Goal: to publish and begin to embed the school's revised Vision and Mission into school life.

- 1.2 Religious Education

- Goal: to embed storytelling in Religious Education programs and practices in K-6 to improve student understanding of Scripture and Church tradition.

- 1.3 Catholic Life and Culture

- Goal: to build the capacity of key staff to lead faith formation.

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

- 2.1 Educational Potential

- Goal: to expose students to engaging learning experiences to meet their individual needs in Mathematics, specifically guided instruction.

- 2.5 Pastoral Care

- Goal: to develop consistent approaches across K-6 to student learning, support and management.

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**

- 3.2 Provision for the diverse learning needs of students

- Goal: to establish and refine processes and practices to monitor, track, regularly review and communicate student progress in identified areas of need.

- 3.5 Assessment

- Goal: to build the capacity of staff to work with and analyse the "right" data to inform the "right" action in identified areas of need i.e. Reading, Comprehension and Place Value.

- 3.7 Professional Learning

Goal: to collaboratively develop a Professional Learning model that aligns with system Professional Development and Planning (PDP) and improves student outcomes.

- **Key Area 4: Human Resources, Leadership & Management**
4.5 Overall Compliance with legislation and other requirements

Goal: to devise a system to document and review key policies and procedures.

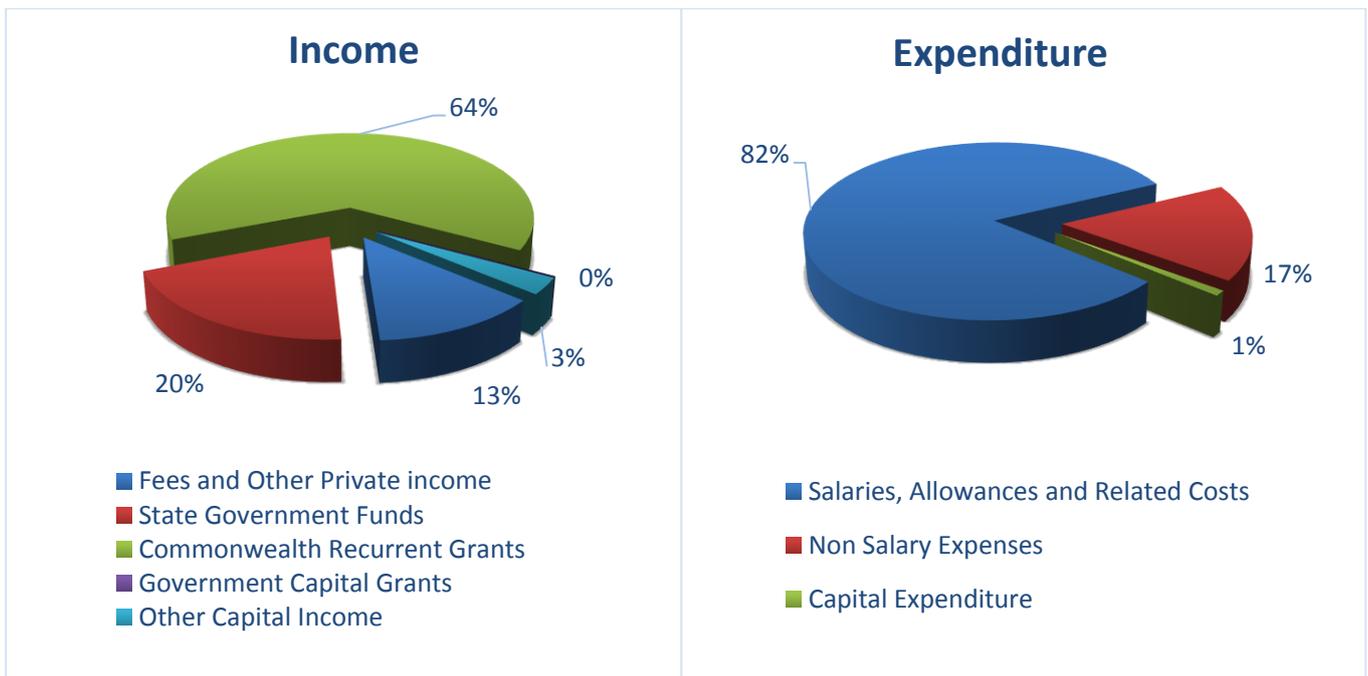
School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2016:

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
 - 1.1 Vision and Mission
 - 1.4 Parents, parishes and the broader Church
- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
 - 2.1 Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
 - 2.5 Pastoral Care
- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
 - 3.1 Curriculum Provision
 - 3.2 Provision for the diverse learning needs of students
 - 3.5 Assessment
 - 3.7 Professional Learning
- **Key Area 4: Human Resources, Leadership and Management**
 - 4.2 Professional Development of Staff
- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**
 - 5.1 ICT Resources
- **Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**
 - 6.1 Parent Involvement

Financial Summary

During 2015 the school continued to provide students with access to the Reading Eggs software program for Kindergarten to Year 2 and the HOTS 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 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.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, Helensburgh for the year ended 31 December 2015. This data is taken from the 2015 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.



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 SPB4L framework, now in its fourth year at Holy Cross, has continued to make a significant impact within the school. During 2015 the focus was to continue to embed SPB4L in non-classroom and classroom areas through the use of specifically taught behavioural expectations and to implement consistent practices in each classroom based on the four school rules. The provision of more streamlined methods for documenting and reporting student behaviour was a focus for members of the SPB4L team. The Diocesan Sentral software suite assisted the school to make informed decisions and guide the direction of the SPB4L framework. The consistent and purposeful monitoring of behaviour in all school settings led to improvements in the school's ability to cater for specific needs and to implement a variety of interventions. The SPB4L team and staff worked on revising the Positive Behaviour Support policy. This policy will be reviewed in 2016.

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. In Term 1 a counsellor from CatholicCare facilitated the 'Everyday Peacemakers' program in K-2 and the 'Friends Forever' program in Year 3 and Year 4. In Term 3 all students took part in the Mindfulness program which gave students an opportunity to learn skills that promote their ability to focus and make informed decisions. The CEDoW Youth Liaison Officer and school counsellor were instrumental in organising a combined Transition to High School workshop for Year 6. A school-wide social skills program called 'Bounce Back' was used throughout the school.

A buddy system operated for Kindergarten and Year 6 students that assisted the younger students with their induction to primary schooling and provided them with mentors and a support network. A Kindergarten Orientation and Transition Program took place to familiarise the 2016 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. 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.

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Learning and Teaching

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

A continued focus throughout 2015 was the implementation of the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics and Science. This enabled the redevelopment of the school's scope and sequence for these Key Learning Areas (KLAs). The BOSTES syllabus documents in Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), 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.

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. The 'Best Start' assessment was administered to all Kindergarten students at the beginning of the year to ascertain their understanding in Literacy and Numeracy. Reports were sent home to parents and the results were discussed with parents early in Term 1.

The use of the Literacy and Numeracy Continua assisted teachers to track student progress and plan for targeted intervention. Teachers collected data regularly throughout the year. Data was used to inform learning and teaching programs, shape intervention and continued to develop a school culture that promoted and valued data. The use of Data Walls for Reading Texts, Comprehension, Writing, Early Arithmetic Strategies and Place Value provided the stimulus for regular staff discussions about student growth.

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. 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 continued to use the Diocesan Sentral software package modules in Student Profiles, Attendance, Well Being, Parent Interviews, Reports and Continuum Tracker.

The use of Google Drive to collaborate and share documents was implemented in all classes. Students continued to have access to individual Google accounts supported by the CEO. Staff transitioned to using a range of Google suites including Google Mail.

Holy Cross launched a 1:1 iPad initiative with parents and staff in Term 3. The iPad program will be implemented in Year 4 in 2016 with training and boot-camps planned for early Term 1, 2016.

A technology maintenance register was generated to track ICT needs, manage costing and set future budget requirements.

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. All staff undertook professional development in Running Records which provided opportunities for collaborative discussion on the analysis of reading behaviours to inform teacher and student learning goals.

Numeracy Strategies

Improving student outcomes in numeracy continued to be a high priority during 2015. The development of effective numeracy teaching practices, in alignment with the Diocesan Quality Teaching of Numeracy Guidelines was a focus. Teachers refined 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 Early Arithmetic Strategies and Place Value. All teachers assessed and monitored student achievement in order to set numeracy learning goals for students.

Staff participated in professional development on guided instruction and problem solving in Mathematics. Peer observations of guided instruction lessons formed part of teachers' ongoing numeracy development. Class teachers have continued to focus on the implementation of quality Mathematics lessons that have incorporated specific elements of: Number Sense, Unit Introduction, Consolidation and Reflection, Guided Groups and Individual Intervention. Teachers in each Stage have taken part in peer observation and mentoring sessions involving colleagues from other schools to evaluate and reflect on quality practice during Mathematics lessons.

Forty-five students participated in the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge. The Home Reading Program continued to have a positive impact on student engagement in 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 and is supported by the school's Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns Team (MSPEC). The role of this Team was to meet with classroom teachers to develop strategies and, when necessary, intervention plans to support the ongoing learning of both staff and students. Intervention plans were developed for students

with identified needs using the Diocesan Planning Tool. The MSPEC Team met regularly with class teachers to discuss, plan and action strategies to assist the academic, social and emotional needs of students.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

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.

Competitions

Students were provided with many opportunities to engage in learning beyond those offered in the school curriculum. Students in Years 3 -6 were given the opportunity to participate in the University of New South Wales (UNSW) competitions, receiving awards of High Distinction, Distinction, Credit and Merit in areas of Science, English, Writing, Spelling, Mathematics and Computer Skills. Year 5 and Year 6 students represented the school in the Catholic Development Fund (CDF) sponsored Diocesan public speaking competition. Students also participated in the Cardinal's Christmas Story Art competition, the Catholic Schools Week video competition and the University of Wollongong Science Fair. Students from Stage 2 and Stage 3 also performed in the Northern Illawarra Catholic Schools (NICS) Showcase of Talent.

Sport

During 2015 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, netball and 'dragon' tag. Students were selected to represent the school in South Coast and Diocesan carnivals, with one student selected to represent MacKillop in Rugby Union. In Rugby League the junior boys won their division at the Paul McGregor Shield and progressed to the Regional All Schools Rugby League Carnival. The senior girls Rugby League team won the Sam Hammond Shield and participated in the All Schools Rugby League State Cup. Students had an opportunity throughout the year to participate in backyard league, hockey, netball and gymnastic workshops.

Student Achievement

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 2015, twenty Year 3 students and fourteen Year 5 students sat for the NAPLAN tests. Trend data for Year 3 indicated improvement with no Year 3 and Year 5 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 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.

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.

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.

NAPLAN 2015: % in Bands		YEAR 3			YEAR 5		
		Bands 1 and 2	Bands 3 and 4	Bands 5 and 6	Bands 3 and 4	Bands 5 and 6	Bands 7 and 8
Reading	School	0%	45%	55%	0%	71%	29%
	National	13%	39%	48%	20%	47%	33%
Writing	School	0%	15%	85%	0%	57%	43%
	National	9%	44%	47%	19%	62%	19%
Spelling	School	15%	45%	40%	7%	57%	36%
	National	16%	43%	41%	17%	50%	33%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	0%	35%	65%	0%	50%	50%
	National	13%	35%	52%	18%	46%	36%
Numeracy	School	5%	60%	35%	14%	64%	21%
	National	17%	49%	34%	18%	55%	28%

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 2015: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	100%	100%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	100%	100%
	National	96%	92%
Spelling	School	100%	100%
	National	93%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	100%	100%
	National	95%	93%
Numeracy	School	100%	100%
	National	94%	95%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

In 2015 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:

1. What do you most value about being a member of Holy Cross Catholic School?
2. What do you most appreciate about this school being Catholic?
3. What do you value most about how your child learns at Holy Cross?
4. If you could preserve or maintain three aspects of the school for the next five years, what would they be?
5. If you could have three wishes that ensured a more successful school from 2015 onwards, what would they be?

The responses are summarised below:

Parents

Commendations:

- The focus on community;
- The friendly and welcoming staff;
- Students are happy and enjoy learning;
- Quality teachers;
- Great faith education program;
- Strong culture of positive values;
- Child-centred learning;
- Feedback is highly valued; and,
- Strong links between parish and school families.

Recommendations:

- Continue to develop a focus on quality teaching and learning;
- Sustain the balance between male and female teachers; and,
- Maintain the small school feel by continuing to focus on the needs of the individual.

Students

Commendations:

- School gala days and excursions are fun;
- The playground is big;
- Exciting learning;
- Kind teachers;
- Great technology to help with learning;
- A non-bullying place;
- Canteen and the yummy food;
- P&F Committee who help organise things;
- Science Fair and Christmas Art Competition; and,
- Gardening Clun because we learn about what we grow.

Recommendations:

- A room to work on assignments;
- Make the school K-12;
- A mini farm that classes can take care of;
- More fundraising for poor people; and,
- Keep up to date with technology.

Staff

Commendations:

- Staff well-being is promoted through a culture of mutual support;
- Teachers are dedicated, focused and passionate;
- Authentic and creative liturgies;
- Culture of high expectations and the belief that every child can learn;
- Responding to data has impacted on student performance and growth;
- Students are enthusiastic and eager to learn;
- There is a sense of fun and enjoyment;
- The school is a community of authentic faith witness; and,
- Literacy and numeracy blocks ensure focus, well organized teaching time.

Recommendations:

- Create more time for collaborative planning and professional learning;
- Enrich a culture of critical reflection and improvement using data;
- Embed targeted teaching in every classroom; and,
- Continue to build community partnerships.



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