

Annual School Report

2015



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

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:

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Parish Administrator: Fr Ron Peters

Principal: Jennie Werakso
Date: 11 December, 2015

Vision Statement

‘With Faithful Hearts, St Brigid’s School Community Strives to be an Authentic Catholic Community of Faith, Justice and Learning.’

Our school mission is:

‘To Develop Leaders of Faith, Justice and Learning.’

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message

2015 has been another successful year for the St Brigid’s school. The community remained focused on doing their best for the students in their care, performing well in NAPLAN and being honoured in becoming the first Leader In Me Lighthouse School in Australia. The Parish School community has ensured that it’s mission of developing leaders of faith, justice and learning continued to guide all it does alongside its charism of ‘Welcome, Hospitality and Leadership’.

Parent Involvement

Parents are seen as genuine partners and as such were able to support the school wholeheartedly in the education and welfare of students. A Mission Statement was developed for the Parents and Friends’ Association (P&F) to align with The Leader in Me initiative - ‘Enhancing Synergistic Relationships to Support the Development of Leaders in Faith, Justice and Learning at St Brigid’s’. Parents were generous in volunteering their time to work with children in the classrooms, the Welcome BBQ, school tuckshop, sporting carnivals, student banking, clothing pool, lawn mowing and maintenance, book club, book fair, G’day, and assisting with the design and publication of the 2015 St Brigid’s Year Book. The P&F held fundraising events throughout the year, in order to provide resources for the students and also sponsored the cultural theatre experience program for Kindergarten to Year Six.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

This year was a very successful year for leadership at St Brigid’s with the school becoming a Lighthouse School. Student leadership was encouraged so well, all students were able to step up and lead in an area of strength or passion. School leaders were inducted at a special Mass at the beginning of the year and all Year Six students received a badge of leadership. The Leaders of Faith encouraged students to be the best they could be, set a good example for students, were involved in organising Masses and special liturgies as well as leading prayer at morning assemblies. The Leaders of Justice strove to reinforce the school rules in a positive way and helped organise social justice awareness fundraising for the St Vincent de Paul Society, Caritas, Catholic Missions and Good Samaritan Outreach. They also tried to ensure that there was a positive climate and were proactive in enabling ‘win-win’ situations. The Leaders of Learning encouraged a positive attitude to learning and the need to be continuous learners. The Leaders of Sport created a positive climate of fair play and sportsmanship and celebrated the many success of the school on the sporting field.

Senior School Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Brigid's is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Gwynneville. The school caters for students in years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 251.

St Brigid's was founded by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan in 1951. Nestled in the foothills of Mt Keira the school is approximately five kilometres from the large urban centre of Wollongong. Students are generally drawn from the local village community and represent a variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, which contributes to a good synergy and a strong sense of welcome and community. The school is generally a one-stream school with one bubble class and one extra large class of 44 students with 2 teachers.

The school Vision, 'With Faithful Hearts, St Brigid's School Community strives to be an Authentic Catholic Community of Faith, Justice and Learning' underpins the school's culture and values. The school aims to develop compassionate global leaders who actively live their faith in a meaningful way so that they can: change the world for the better; treat themselves, others and the environment with respect; be independent thinkers and problem solvers and develop a lifelong love of learning. The main role of the school is to support parents as the prime educators of their children, academically as well as spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically. The school therefore aims to provide quality learning and teaching within a Catholic culture and environment where the individuality and uniqueness of all its members are recognised and valued. At St Brigid's there is a strong focus on leadership and bringing out the best in each and every child. At St Brigid's leadership means, 'being the best person we can be in everything, every time, everywhere and being a positive influence for ourselves, others and the world around us particularly in faith, justice and learning'. To support this the school has successfully implemented 'The Leader In Me' initiative along with School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB₄L).

Student Enrolments as at August 2015 census

2015 enrolments	
Boys	124
Girls	127
Total	251
Indigenous	6
LBOTE	84

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.sbgdow.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	94.5%	93.9%
Year 1	94.3%	95.7%
Year 2	92.9%	94.1%
Year 3	95.5%	94.5%
Year 4	94.3%	93.9%
Year 5	93.1%	93.5%
Year 6	92.6%	92.1%
Whole school	94.0%	94.0%

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.

Class teachers mark an online attendance roll each morning, which is scrutinised by the school. Late arrival and early departure of students is monitored by the school office.

For non-attendance at school, parents and carers are required to ring the school and send in a note explaining the absence, detailing the date and reason for absence. Unexplained absences are followed up regularly with an 'unexplained absence note' sent to parents for completion and return to the school for updating of class roll. Extended periods of leave are applied for by parents, consistent with the Catholic Education Office (CEO) Student Attendance Policy. In the event of numerous absences the parents or carers are asked to meet with the principal to discuss supporting the student appropriately.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 19 teachers and 7 support staff at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School. This number includes 9 full-time, 10 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 96.3%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 89.2% with one teacher going on Maternity Leave and one returning from Maternity Leave and one staff member being seconded to the Catholic Education Office during the year.

Professional Learning

During 2015 St Brigid's personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement priorities. These included:

- A. St Brigid's whole school development days involving 24 staff. These days focused on:
- Compliance;
 - Australian Curriculum History and Geography
 - Spirituality
 - The Leader in Me
 - Transition and Tracking
- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses:
- School Review and Improvement (4 staff)
 - Literacy (3 staff)
 - 7 Habits' Signature Training (25 staff)
 - Australian Curriculum History and Geography (19 staff)
 - Australian Curriculum Science (19 staff)
 - Sentral (3 staff)
 - Religion (2 staff)
 - Numeracy (2 staff)
 - Australian Curriculum Science (2 staff)
 - Reading Recovery (2 staff)
 - Beginning Teacher Inservices (1 staff)
 - Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) (3 staff)
 - School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (24 staff)
 - Indigenous Education (2 staff)

- Information Technology (2 staff)
- Best Start (1 staff)
- Library Accessioning (1 staff)
- Emergency Care (19 staff)
- SALT online modules (25 staff)
- Disability modules (25 staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$1 094. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$539.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

St Brigid's Catholic Parish Primary School is committed to its role as a Catholic educational community, where staff, parents and students work in partnership to promote and live the Gospel values. It is these very values that underpin everything we do.

Staff work together to promote the Catholic identity of the school. Prayer and celebration is a pivotal component of our school life and all staff members take responsibility for sharing prayer and reflection during weekly communication and Leadership Team meetings. This is an important part of personal spiritual growth and a time to support members of the school and wider community. The senior student leaders lead a whole school Morning Prayer with all the students, teachers and parents assembled. This includes daily offering and prayers for special intentions, Feast Days or acknowledgement of special days. Special prayers are said for the weeks of Lent and Advent, in preparation for Easter and Christmas. During the month of May the prayer focus is on Mary and throughout October each Grade has the responsibility of leading a prayer based on The Rosary.

Each class take turns throughout the year to lead the school in a liturgy that celebrates and remembers a significant day/person /event e.g. All Saints' Day; St Brigid's Feast Day; Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, ANZAC Day, Butterfly Day, National Aboriginal Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week etc. Whole school celebrations are held to highlight Holy Week, Easter and Christmas. Rich assessment experiences were undertaken in each Grade this year as a way of allowing students to delve deeper into content and show their understanding in creative ways.

Within the classrooms the doctrine of the Religious Education units being taught is displayed to help the students gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of their faith. Sacred spaces are kept current according to the liturgical season and often incorporate symbols related to units of study. These spaces form a focal part of class prayer and celebration.

The whole school community has many opportunities to come together to celebrate Mass -beginning and end of year; Year Six graduation; Feast days; 'Grandparents, Godparents and Good Friends Day'. Staff and students also attend weekly Parish Mass on a rotational basis. This is an opportunity for students to take an active role in the preparation and presentation of the Mass. They learn how to proclaim the Word of God; help with singing parts of the Mass; lead the prayers of the faithful and present reflective movements to deepen their understanding. Parents are actively encouraged to attend and celebrate with the students and staff at all liturgies and Masses.

Staff members are actively encouraged to attend the personal growth and spirituality sessions offered by the CEDoW. Several have been part of the 'Lamplighters' and 'Shining Lights' program and new staff have taken part in 'Igniting the Fire'. There is a very active and dedicated Lamplighters Team that led the staff in spiritual formation and growth.

Each year deep thought is given to the needs of the staff, when preparing the annual Staff Spirituality Day. This year 10 staff were able to travel to Western Australia to make a pilgrimage to the outback with the aid of Sr. Anna Warlow.

The Religious Education Coordinator (REC) actively participates in REC conversation meetings; networking days and the annual REC conference. They organise school liturgical events and help support the teaching and programming of Religion in the classrooms. They ensure that the storytelling component of the Religious Education Curriculum is effectively implemented.

The school is in partnership with the Lumen Christi Pastoral Region Sacramental Team in the preparation of the children to receive the Sacraments. Meetings, lessons, retreat days and Sacramental Masses are all fully supported by the school community. The school RECs are part of the Sacramental Team and as teachers of the Sacramental classes, fully involved in all aspects of this faith journey.

As part of the school's 'Faith in Action' plan various charity organisations are nominated for the school community to support throughout the year. In excess of \$25,000 has been raised this year for the Good Samaritan Outreach, St Vincent de Paul Society and Catholic Missions. Students are also encouraged to raise awareness and funds when they see a need and held a variety of fundraising stalls and competitions. There is also ongoing support for the Vinnie's Van by several committed staff members.

Year 6 Gathering with the Bishop

The Year 6 Prayer and gathering with the Bishop was held at St John Vianney's Co-Cathedral, Fairy Meadow. This initiative was a wonderful occasion, which brought together many school communities in the Diocese of Wollongong to celebrate a special Mass with Bishop Peter.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment framework of *Knowing, Working with, Applying and Valuing the Tradition* informs and shapes assessment in RE across K-6 with a focussed system collection of data in Year 4. 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 27 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 24 August 2015 and 27 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *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:

- Knowledge of the colour used for the Seasons of Lent
- Correctly sequencing the events of the Emmaus story
- Identifying symbols associated with Pentecost

- Correctly sequencing parts of the Mass
- Describing different types of prayer

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:

- Interpret the underlying message of parables
- Identify the colours associated with the Season of the church for Advent, Easter and Christmas

Students in Part B displayed improvements in their ability to work with and apply their religious knowledge.

For Part A, 7.4% of students were placed in the developing level, 81.50% in the achieving level and 11.10% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 13.80% of students were placed in the developing level, 79.30% in the achieving level and 6.90% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 15.40% of students were placed in the developing level, 76.90% in the achieving level and 7.70% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement is an ongoing 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 (SRI) components reviewed and rated in 2015

The overarching goal for SRI this year was that the staff is a proactive Professional Learning Community focussed on improving student outcomes.

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
 - 2.1 Educational Potential
- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
 - 3.4 Planning, Programming and Evaluation
 - 3.7 Professional Learning
- **Key Area 4: Human Resources, Leadership and Management**
 - 4.2 Professional Development of Staff
 - 4.3 An Ethical Workplace Culture
- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finances and Facilities**
 - Financial Management

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

- 6.2 Reporting to the Community

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

The following areas have been selected for focus in 2016 to ensure emphasis on student learning and teaching and professional development of staff and to ensure growth as a Professional Learning Community.

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

- 1.2 Religious Education

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

- 2.3 Reporting Student Achievement

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**

- 3.5 Assessment

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

- 4.4 Succession Planning

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

- 5.3 Environmental Stewardship

- **Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management**

- 7.2 Innovation and Change

Financial Summary

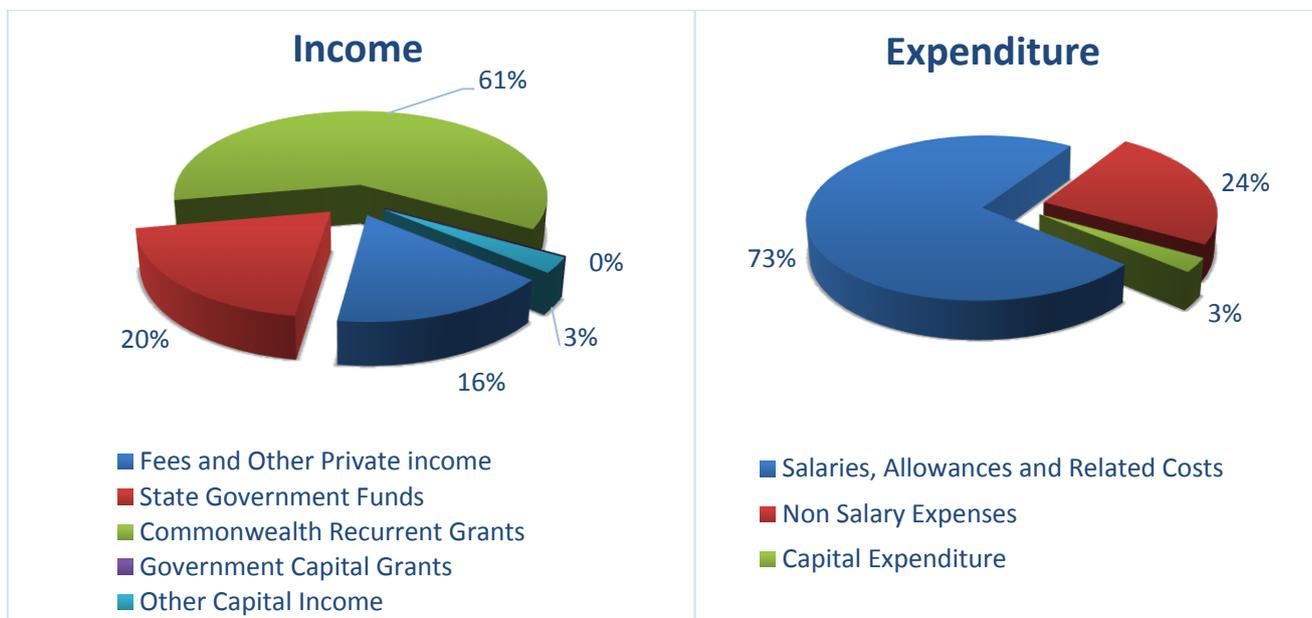
The school used the School Enhancement and Debt servicing Obligation (SEDSO) funds to continue repaying the loan on the newer ground level classrooms.

SEDSO funds were used to renovate the student toilets at a cost of approximately \$46 000. During the school holidays shade sails will be installed in the main playground at an approximate cost of \$28 000. Synthetic turf will also be laid in the Chrysalis Park playground at an approximate cost of \$46 000. A boundary fence was replaced at a cost of \$1 346.

An amount of \$14 652 was spent on resources to support Literacy, Numeracy, other Key Learning Areas and Indigenous Education.

The P&F have donated \$10 000 to replace the interactive whiteboards in the primary classes with Smart TVs. This will be completed in the new school year along with removal of chalkboards and installation of felt walls for display.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Gwynneville 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

Pastoral Care initiatives

As part of 'The Leader in Me' Leadership Program, Stephen Covey's 7 Habits were explicitly taught and integrated into all learning and teaching programs. All classes had access to resources such as the Teacher's Guide and student workbooks. This year, St Brigid's was the first Catholic school in Australia to become a Leader in Me Lighthouse School, for outstanding effort in developing student leadership. This enabled the school to move forward in teaching the newest habit, Habit 8; Find Your Voice. This habit teaches children to use their voice to teach and inspire others. The Leader in Me Program assisted staff in 2015 to bring out the best in every child academically, emotionally, spiritually, physically and socially.

During 2015, St Brigid's School continued to implement School-wide Positive Support for Behaviour Learning (SPB4L). The school is committed to providing quality Catholic learning and teaching to all the students entrusted in its care. This framework supports long-term success, both socially and academically and aims to explicitly teach expectations for positive behaviour K-6 both in the non-classroom and classroom settings. SPB4L and the structures in place have successfully supported a safe and predictable school environment for all students over the past seven years.

A CatholicCare counsellor worked at the school one day per week and provided student counselling when required to students and families, as well as group intervention work in class. A buddy system existed between Kindergarten and Year 6, which assisted the younger students with their introduction to primary schooling and provided them with mentors and a support system. A number of Social Skill programs were introduced into the playground, including 'Social Skills Board Games' and the 'Let's Play' aimed at some students who sometimes found it difficult to understand their own emotions and to develop social skills. A number of class group sessions were run by CatholicCare to assist mindfulness being incorporated into positive relationships.

Positive behaviour was recognised and encouraged through the School Merit Award system, good news calls, the school-wide token system, uniform award, whole class and school reward programs as well as Leader of the Week initiative. All students received recognition for their achievements throughout the year.

The school tuckshop incorporated a positive approach to healthy eating by offering healthy food alternatives to the students, while regular exercise assisted in improving the children's fitness. Live Life Well @ School (LLW@S) aimed to get students, more active, more often, as well as focusing on healthy eating habits.

During Term 2, the students were involved in an 8 week Soccer program with "The Soccerman". During Term 4, the students were involved in a Gymnastics sport program, where preliminary gymnastic skills and fundamental movement experiences were addressed. The school's Scope and Sequences for Personal Development, Health and Physical Education were also updated.

Pastoral Care also included the provision of a just and equitable education for every child, regardless of ability or any other factor. Through effective assessment of student needs, teachers were able to differentiate the curriculum to cater for the needs of those students who were struggling in some areas, as well as the average and above-average students.

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 CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2015.

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

Introduction

St Brigid's Primary School is a learning community where each child is valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Learning is viewed as a lifelong process and is seen as part of the core business of the school.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Syllabus implementation

The BOSTES syllabus documents, along with the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Curriculum form the basis of the courses of study devised and implemented by classroom teachers. This year saw the formal implementation of the BOSTES Australian Curriculum for Science. It was a year of consolidation as teachers used the new syllabus to implement quality learning and teaching. There was ongoing professional development to ensure teachers were comfortable and familiar with the new structure and features of the curriculum. 2016 will see the implementation of the new BOSTES Australian Curriculum for History and Geography.

Staff used the Literacy and Numeracy continua to plan, assess and report on student achievement. All classes taught the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education curriculum, utilising the resources of CEO Sydney RE online.

Assessment and reporting

The school continued to implement Assessment and Reporting procedures, which complied with Federal Government requirements. Student reports, containing the Common Grade Scale were sent home in June and December. Teachers continued to utilise class Assessment Plans, which linked to their teaching program and individual work samples. Staff ensured that feedback and assessment for, as and of learning occurred. Anecdotal records and professional teacher judgements were also collected as evidence of student progress.

Technology supporting learning

The school maintained its commitment to promote all aspects of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The students were regularly given the opportunity to improve their computer and iPad knowledge and skills, whilst completing carefully designed technology tasks. The development of a Stage ICT Scope and Sequence, ensured specific ICT skills were being taught and revised each year. ICT was integrated in all Key Learning Areas.

Cross Curriculum

Literacy

Literacy continued to be a significant focus area at St Brigid's in 2015. There were continued professional learning opportunities for staff focusing on quality pedagogy. This professional learning was aligned with the English Syllabus ensuring the integrity of the syllabus was maintained. This year there was a deliberate focus on using the Literacy Continuum to monitor and track student progress in comprehension. Staff had multiple opportunities to participate in targeted professional learning to support them in understanding the importance of Comprehension (Super 6 Comprehension Strategies) and being able to use the continuum effectively to plot student progress.

In Kindergarten, teachers undertook the Kindergarten Best Start - Index for Learning. The assessment for each student on entry into Kindergarten, mid-year and end of the year has enabled learning to take place at the student's instructional level and assisted teachers to develop achievable targets for specific students. The monitoring and tracking of students was continued using the cluster of the Literacy and Numeracy continuums.

A significant part of Book Week celebrations at St Brigid's was the involvement of all students in literacy-based experiences involving short-listed texts. There was also a performance from a drama company based on one of the shortlisted Books as well as an opportunity for all students to visit the local community library.

In 2015 St Brigid's once again participated in the New South Wales (NSW) Premier's Reading Challenge. The experience encouraged students' love of reading and provided an opportunity for students to participate in a State-wide initiative.

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 continued to refine their practice and collaboratively shared experiences to ensure quality learning and teaching across the school.

The introduction to the Numeracy Continuum enabled specific skills to be taught and consolidated, to ensure students were progressing along the Numeracy Continuum. Students were grouped, according to their position on the continuum, and guide lessons were held, to ensure individual needs were catered for. All teachers assessed, tracked and monitored student achievement in order to set numeracy learning goals for students.

Meeting the needs of all students

Diversifying learning

Diversification of learning is very much a priority for St Brigid's. Some of the strategies teachers have used during 2015 included:

- self-directed learning (personal interest projects);
- Gifted programs
- rich questioning techniques;
- open-ended tasks;
- tiering of tasks;
- self-paced instruction; and
- Bloom's Taxonomy.

Gifted Education

This year, students in both Stage 2 and 3 also participated in the Diocesan online program Stretching Potential through Learning in Interactive and Challenging Environments in the Diocese of Wollongong (SPLICED). This involved students working through challenging tasks in an online environment. Students were also offered other opportunities:

- University of New South Wales (UNSW) Competitions;
- maths Challenge; and
- holiday workshops at the University of Wollongong (UOW) and other competitions.

Special Education Needs

This year, the school's MSPEC Committee (Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns) has monitored the progress of students identified by teachers as having Educational or Pastoral Concerns. This involved classroom teachers completing relevant documentation and meeting with the MSPEC Committee on a regular basis (once per term) to discuss the needs of students and possible strategies that could be implemented. Teachers also liaised with outside professionals such as psychologists, occupational therapists and speech therapists when needed.

Reading Recovery continued to operate successfully, supporting the literacy learning needs of fourteen Year 1 students in 2015. These students will be monitored throughout their primary education using a range of standardised assessment tools and quality teaching input, ensuring their learning continues to progress.

The school continued to follow its Indigenous Education Plan, which specifically addressed ways in which the Diocesan Policy is being implemented. In addition funds were used to purchase new Indigenous resources including books and works of art. Indigenous students received additional assistance on an individual basis from an appointed School Support Officer (SSO). Support was allocated on a needs basis and was delivered within the context of the classroom. The SSO worked

collaboratively with teachers and the Indigenous Education Officer from the Catholic Education Office. National Aboriginal Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week was celebrated with all students being involved. The Acknowledgement of Country Statement, which recognises the traditional owners of the land where the school is situated, continued to be a feature of school assemblies and gatherings. Indigenous students were also involved in singing the national anthem in the Dharawal language at various events.

The updated School Environment and Management Plan (2012-2015) continued to be implemented throughout the school community. This plan provided a clear direction for a variety of environmental initiatives that were carried out by the students. A large emphasis was placed on encouraging the students to take responsibility for the implementation of the plan. This was mainly achieved through the actions of the Environment Club, which involved over thirty students from Years 3 to Year 6. Major environmental achievements at St Brigid's in 2015 included a waste audit of all buildings and playground waste. Based on this data the school continued to promote nude food, waste free lunches and staying Bin Free on the playground. This meant all general waste brought from home was taken home, with a larger recycling bin becoming of a feature of the playground along with compost buckets.

Self-directed learning

Students in both Stages 2 and 3 have participated in self -directed learning experiences (personal interest projects) and rich assessment tasks in religious Education, where they have identified areas of interest, devised open-ended rich questions and then set about researching their interest area and creating a presentation. This culminated in students showcasing their project to their peers and receiving feedback from their teachers.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

Competitions

The students from Kindergarten to Year 6 were provided with many opportunities to participate in a variety of competitions both inside and outside of school and were very successful. Many students participated in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) tests in Mathematics, English and Science. Students also participated in the Christmas Story Art competition and the University of Wollongong Science Fair. This resulted in 2 Year 4 students winning the K – 12 competition wide 'Best Earth and Environment Project Award'. Many students also participated in the Music Bus where they were taught how to read and write music and how to play different instruments.

Public Speaking

St Brigid's conducted a Public Speaking Competition for students in Stage 3. All students participated with the winner from each class going on to represent the school at the regional level during Term 4. All students are empowered to use Habit 8, 'Find Your Voice' and use it to influence others in a positive way.

Choir and Band

Students participated in the School Band and Choir and performed at many school celebrations, Crown Street Mall and at the Xavier Centre.

Sport

The students participated in a variety of sporting opportunities at school, Diocesan, MacKillop and State levels. The students participated in gala days, which included soccer, rugby league, netball and basketball. Many students represented the school at the regional swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals. A number of students achieved success where they were awarded age champions. Two students were recognised for their achievements at the Catholic Development Fund Sports Awards. Sport Carnivals that were held this year included swimming, cross-country and athletics. These events were about building team spirit, allowing participation for all students and allowing them to feel safe in an active and supportive environment.

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.

Overall NAPLAN results were again very strong, with only a few students below the National Minimum Standard in Reading and Writing in Yr. 5. The Year 5 and Year 3 cohort all achieved averages higher than the Diocesan and National averages in most aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. The school average for actual learning growth in Reading, Writing, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy was above State level. Areas for growth and investigation for the school are spelling, based on the results in Year 3 and the percentage of students achieving actual growth.

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%	26%	74%	10%	37%	53%
	National	13%	39%	48%	20%	47%	33%
Writing	School	0%	13%	87%	2%	51%	47%
	National	9%	44%	47%	19%	62%	19%
Spelling	School	3%	32%	65%	2%	49%	49%
	National	16%	43%	41%	17%	50%	33%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	3%	29%	68%	0%	39%	61%
	National	13%	35%	52%	18%	46%	36%
Numeracy	School	6%	35%	58%	12%	39%	49%
	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%	96%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	100%	98%
	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

Data from an online parent survey was collated and indicated a high level of satisfaction with every aspect of schooling. An overwhelming majority of parents agree with the direction the school is taking and continue to be supportive. The school's charm of welcome, hospitality and leadership scored highly and is embedded well into the culture of the school.

The Leader in Me (TLIM) initiative also scored highly and comments were numerous around the positive influence of TLIM in the school, in the classroom and in the home. The climate of welcome, collegiality, collaboration, care and shared leadership continue to be major strengths for staff at St Brigid's. Staff continued to enjoy a strong degree of satisfaction with how the school as a whole is operating, nurturing the Catholic faith and supporting student learning.

A climate of pride, care and friendliness continued to be major strengths amongst students at St Brigid's. The overwhelming majority of students feel proud of their school, understand their rights and responsibilities and feel safe and supported by the school.



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