

Annual School Report

Primary

2016



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

About This Report

St Therese Catholic Primary School, West Wollongong 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 the 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 Priest: Fr David O'Brien
Acting Principal: Stephen Thorne
Date: 16 December, 2016

Vision Statement

A dynamic Catholic community, educating and empowering learners for life's journey.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal's Message

This year has seen many changes at St Therese Catholic School most notably with the School Leadership Team. These changes have not impacted on the key focus of the school in any way, which is the learning of the students in our care. Consolidation of teaching programs in the NSW Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) syllabus documents, for the areas of Mathematics, English and Science, have continued to be improved, as has the introduction of the new History and Geography syllabus. The School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) initiative has been fully implemented this year, in all playground areas as well as classrooms, with very good results.

This year has continued to see an increase in enrolments across all Grades with many of the new students coming from different countries. These students have been very warmly welcomed by the entire school community and raises our profile as being a very successful multicultural community. Our indigenous students and the Aboriginal heritage of the school were acknowledged through National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week celebrations involving stories, songs, art and craft.

Thank you to all those who have helped to make St Therese the wonderful school that it is today. We have a very supportive Parish Priest who is always ready to offer assistance and guidance when necessary. We have a hard working and dedicated staff who have embraced many changes this year and are willing to go that little bit further for the learning to become more meaningful. The generous Parents and Friends' Association (P&F) continue to organise events that not only raise money, but create fun and build ownership of the school. Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the general community who support the initiatives of the school creating strong links which ultimately benefit the students.

Parent Involvement

2016 has been a busy year for the Parents and Friends Association (P&F) at St Therese. New families were welcomed with a supper at the beginning of the year followed by our P & F AGM. The main executive roles were filled and then proceeded to outline the schedule of events for 2016 with volunteers allocated to the various roles.

Other P&F events this year have included a Mother's and Father's Day stall for the students to purchase gifts as well as a parent Trivia Night that was an opportunity for parents to get together, have some fun and relax. Canteen, in-class support, open days, liturgies, assemblies, sports carnivals and gala days are all ways parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning.

This year the P&F have donated \$4 000 towards gymnastics equipment and musical instruments. They have also committed \$15 000 towards playground improvements which were put on hold this year due to planning delays but are on track for 2017. A committee have also been instrumental in improving the operation of the canteen and revamping the menu on offer.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

At St Therese, Student Council have had many opportunities such as leading prayer every morning, running the assembly each week, organising fundraisers and representing the school in numerous events throughout the year. As Year 6 students, we have had many responsibilities and jobs this year. We would like to thank the staff at St Therese for their support and guidance throughout our journey through Primary School. All Year 6 are ready to begin a new chapter of their life in high school. St Therese is about education, caring for others and learning about ourselves, but most of all we have made friends that we know we will have for life. St Therese Catholic School will be clearly missed by the graduating class of 2016, but never forgotten.

School Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Therese Catholic Primary School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in West Wollongong. The school caters for students in Years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 401. Its foundations were laid by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan back in 1939 who continued to run the school until 1972 when the school came under the banner of the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong. St Therese is a two-stream school offering a broad education. Literacy and Numeracy are very important skills for life and therefore receive considerable focus. However, creativity, fitness, problem-solving and getting along with others, are also crucial to the development of the whole person and are given high priority. As a Catholic School, our way of doing things is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ - loving God and loving our neighbour. We look to the life of St Therese of Lisieux (Little Flower) who was a wonderful example of this in her own short life.

Learning is based on the observed and assessed needs of each child and the variety of learning styles are taken into account when planning. Teachers work and plan collaboratively using technology to enhance learning and engage students in the process. Students are encouraged to be reflective in their learning, creating goals for themselves as they progress. Student safety and pastoral care are very strong in the school, with students reporting a high level of comfort in the safety and care provided.

Student Enrolments

2016 enrolments	
Boys	192
Girls	209
Total	401
Indigenous	3
LBOTE	92

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.stwwdow.catholic.edu.au and the CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. Changes were made to this Policy in 2016.

Student Attendance

2016 Attendance	Male	Female
Kinder	94.7%	94.6%
Year 1	94.3%	92.3%
Year 2	95.5%	91.6%
Year 3	93.7%	93.9%
Year 4	94.6%	94.0%
Year 5	94.2%	94.0%
Year 6	94.5%	93.4%
Whole school	94.5%	93.5%

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.

Non-attendance is not a large problem at St Therese, however late arrival can be an issue with some families. Regular reminders are placed in the newsletter regarding the Attendance Policy. Through electronic roll marking, class teachers as well as the Senior School Support Officer can keep track of attendance and identify absences that are unexplained or excessive. The appropriate documentation is sent to parents to provide the opportunity to give reasons for absences. Where the school is concerned about ongoing absences or lateness, parents are invited to discuss this with the Principal. Documentation is kept in the individual student's file. All absences require some form of notification to the school or class teacher either before or after the period of absence. This is usually in the form of a note but it can be via electronic means or even a phone call to the school office. Class teachers refer to absences during Stage Meetings if it is felt that absences are having an impact on the student's learning. Full day and partial absences are recorded on the student's reports for both Semester 1 and Semester 2.

Application for exemption may occur using the Attendance Policy of the Catholic Education Office. Where leave is for more than 10 school days, expectations for learning during the leave are recorded on the Exemption Certificate.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 23 teachers and 9 support staff at St Therese Catholic Primary School. This number includes 14 full-time, 9 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 2016 was 93%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2015 to 2016 was 91.7%.

Professional Learning

During 2016 St Therese 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. St Therese Catholic Primary School whole school development days involving 32 staff.

These days focused on:

- CEO and School Policies and Procedures;
- Staff Spirituality and Formation Retreat at Fitzroy Falls
- Indigenous Spirituality Staff Day

B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEDoW run courses:

- School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB₄L) -(4 staff)
- Literacy Block Inservice -(K-6 teaching staff)
- Pilgrimage Experience -(1 staff)
- Learning Technologies -(2 staff)
- Technology - Using Google to engage students and create opportunities for collaboration (2 staff);
- Formation in Faith and Religious Education including Masters of Religious Education and Masters of Theology (2 staff),
- Lamplighters & Shining Lights (Spirituality) – (6 staff);
- Reading Recovery (Ongoing Professional Learning) – (1 staff);
- Understanding and Managing Behaviour Online Modules- (3 staff)
- The Successful 1:1 Primary iPad Classroom – (6 staff);

- Learning Technologies Network Meetings (2 staff);
- Spotlight on Technology -(2 staff)
- Religious Literacy Assessment Marking – (1 staff);
- Laudato Si Staff meeting and Audit -(25 staff)
- Indigenous Education -(1 staff)
- Andrew Chin Concert- (32 staff)
- Life Education Van -(14 staff)
- Christmas Art Competition -(8 staff)
- System Focus Day-Compliance for Programming Stage 2 -(8 staff)
- Sentral Student Management System training – (2 staff);
- Leading Primary Curriculum Implementation (History and Geography) – (1 staff);
- SALT Compliance CEO Wollongong Work Health and safety for Schools and Offices– (32 staff);
- Library Network Meetings – (2 staff);
- Sport Network Meetings -(2 staff)
- First Aid Training - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Anaphylaxis - (32 staff); .
- Reading Recovery Support Teacher Day – (1 staff);
- MiniLit Course -(1 staff)
- Soundwaves Spelling Program -(14 staff)
- 5 Steps to Fluency Reading Program -(5 staff)
- Best Start Training -(1 staff)
- Transition to Kinder -(1 staff)
- Assistant Principal and Religious Education Coordinator Days – (2 staff);
- PD Delegates for Accreditation (4 staff)
- Asthma Training- (25 staff)
- CPR and Emergency Care Training -(25 staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$419.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$707.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

The Catholic life of St Therese is valued by all of the community. We maintained strong ties with the Parish through representation on the Parish Pastoral Council and through the involvement of our Parish Priest in school celebrations, prayer and decision-making. The school linked with the Parish Youth Coordinator, to support the new initiative of the 'Messy Church Program. This initiative has targeted the pre-schooler age group as well as school age students.

The school took an active part in the Parish Sacramental Programs, coordinating classes, providing group leaders, conducting Sacramental Reflection Days and organising the celebrations. Each Grade attended a Sunday 5pm Parish Mass throughout the year. At these Masses the children were responsible for the Readings, Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, Prayer of the Faithful and Offertory Procession.

Catholic Schools Week was celebrated with a whole school liturgy on Monday 7 March followed by a day of workshops with Andrew Chin. At 5.30 parents and children came together for a school concert with Andrew Chin leading.

St Therese attended the Year 6 celebration of Eucharist with Bishop Peter Ingham. The Mass was celebrated at All Saints Catholic Church, hosted by Nazareth School Shellharbour, on Wednesday 15 June with the schools from the southern Illawarra area.

Fundraisers were held to support the work of St Vincent de Paul within the Parish through our "Target 1000" items for Christmas Hampers for the needy, together with a cash donation of \$700 and the Rug up for Winter Appeal, which raised \$600. Support was given to the Vinnies Van during winter in the form of supplying non- perishable food items, winter clothing and toiletries. A cash donation of \$668 was presented to the Vinnies Van Coordinator to help over the Christmas period.

We supported Catholic Missions with a donation of \$900 from Mission Month collections and holding a Crazy Sock Fundraiser during World Mission Month. We have worked hard to support Caritas Australia. Through Project Compassion and Pancake Day Fundraiser we raised \$1 000.

St Therese responded to the needs of those suffering in the Sudan Crisis with a donation of \$300 to provide orthopaedic support and crutches for children.

Students are encouraged to live the life of Christ in their daily dealings with others. This is done through Religious Education and the example of their teachers and parents. All classes use the Wollongong Diocesan Religious Education Syllabus. All teaching staff from Kindergarten to Year 6 further developed pedagogical practices to improve the way in which they teach and assess Religious Education. Teachers' link knowledge and tradition with the children's own lives, allowing them to journey in their personal relationships with God.

Curriculum initiatives in Religious Education include the integration of the Understanding Faith Online Resource in every classroom on the Apple TVs, as well as individual use in Stage 3 on 1 to 1 iPads. All Stage 3 students participated at the school level in the Christmas Art Competition. Six finalists were submitted to the CEO for initial judging. Two students were successful in having their work exhibited at the Wollongong Art Gallery.

The message of *Laudato Si* impacted on the staff and students with new environmental initiatives. The school has introduced four types of recycling in all rooms in the school and playground. The organic waste is composted and used to feed the active worm farm.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment framework of *Knowing, Working with, Applying and Valuing the Tradition* informs and shapes assessment in Religious Education across K-6 with a focused 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 2016. The school cohort in 2016 consisted of 54 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 29 August 2016 and 58 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *Mary, Mother of God: First Among the Saints* and was completed during the first five weeks of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

Students in Part A 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 events of Holy Week; and
- knowledge of the events in the life of Moses.

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 an awareness of when the Emmaus story takes place in the liturgical year.

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

For Part A, 9.60 % of students were placed in the developing level, 55.80 % in the achieving level and 34.60 % were in the extending level.

For Part B, 11.90 % of students were placed in the developing level, 62.70 % in the achieving level and 25.40 % were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 21.60 % of students were placed in the developing level, 52.90 % in the achieving level and 25.50 % were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement 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 2016:

Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education

1.2 Religious Education

Goal: The school will be working towards the embedding of rich assessment tasks and sound pedagogy in Religious Education programs. Staff will be supported to have a clear understanding of the curriculum and plan for need through differentiation.

Key Area 3: Pedagogy

3.6 School Climate, Learning Environment and Relationships

Goal: The community will reflect upon the spirit of collegiality, shared goals and responsibility for achievements, success and sustained improvement in teaching and learning. We will work to implement the contemporary vision for learning, articulated in the school Vision and Mission Statements.

Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management

4.3 An Ethical Workplace Culture

Goal: The workplace will be characterised by a hard-working culture of respect and collegial support for each person as we work together equitably for the good of all students.

Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities

5.3 Environmental Stewardship

Goal: A greater awareness of the importance and implications of environmental stewardship will be achieved through an integrated approach to teaching and learning about it.

Key Area 6: Parents, Partnerships, Consultation and Communication

6.1 Parent Involvement

Goal: A welcoming school community where parents are valued and encouraged to be an active participant in their child's learning with open, honest two way communication.

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2017:

Key Area 3: Pedagogy

3.1 Curriculum Provision

Goal: Introduction of the Sound Waves Spelling Program from Years 1 to 6 as well as initiating the MiniLit program to support at risk students from Years 1 to 4.

3.3 Teaching Practices

Goal: Greater collaboration between class teachers and Middle Leaders to support more effective group work in Literacy and Numeracy.

3.7 Professional Learning

Goal: All teachers will be given the opportunity to shadow colleagues in another school setting with time to reflect on some positives they can incorporate into their own teaching.

Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities

5.2 Use of resources and space

Goal: Updating furniture in Stage 2 classrooms as well as transforming the Little Bank into a more interactive creative play area.

Key Area 6: Parents, Partnerships, Consultation and Communication

6.1 Parent Involvement

Goal: Further develop the Transition to Kindergarten program to allow for greater parent and student interaction.

Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management

7.1 Planning for improvement

Goal: Development of a master plan for the St Therese School site.

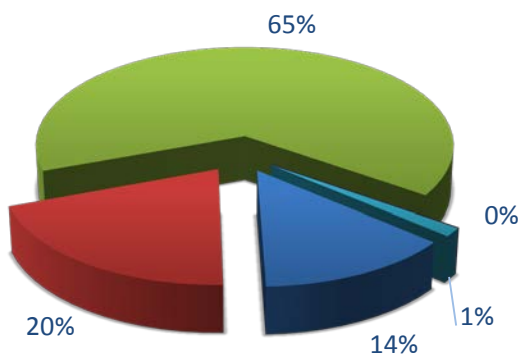
Financial Summary

This year \$12 000 was spent on new laptop computers for use in the classrooms. \$3 000 was spent on gymnastics equipment and \$1 000 on musical instruments. \$20 000 has been set aside for the purchase of new desks in Years 3, 4 and 5 classrooms. These desks have been ordered and will arrive early in the new year.

We were successful in applying for a number of Sporting schools grants throughout the year. These grants totalled \$12 890 allowing the school to purchase new equipment as well as bring in expert coaching staff for the areas of tennis, hockey and gymnastics.

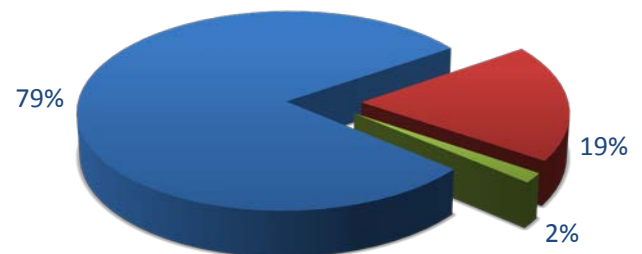
The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Therese Catholic Primary School, West Wollongong for the year ended 31 December 2016. This data is taken from the 2016 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.

Income



- Fees and Private Income
- State Recurrent Grants
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants
- Government Capital Grants
- Other Capital Income

Expenditure



- Salaries, Allowances and Related Expenses
- Non-Salary Expenses
- Capital Expenditure

Student Welfare

Student welfare at St Therese is based on respect for oneself and others. We look to the example of Jesus, St Therese and Mary MacKillop as models of pastoral care. Student rights and responsibilities are acknowledged and discussed, especially at the beginning of each year to set the scene for a life-giving year for each student. Classroom rules and procedures are jointly constructed and agreed upon by both students and staff. In 2016, the Student Code of Conduct was continued to reinforce expectations of fair and respectful behaviour towards others. At the beginning of each Term, Setting Everyone Up For Success is established and the Student code, rules and responsibilities are reviewed in every classroom.

School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB₄L) has become embedded in all that we do in areas other than the classroom. The three school rules: Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe are known and understood by all students, parents and staff. The students are very aware of what being respectful, responsible and safe looks like, sounds like and feels like in each of the non-classroom areas of the school. In 2016, SPB₄L has been extended to include classroom areas as well as all other aspects of the school. Classroom rules will be aligned to the school rules and students will regularly be reminded of what is expected of them at St Therese.

Personal Development continues to be a major focus at St Therese. Along with the usual units of work in this area, students in Years K - 3 participated in a Mindfulness Program run through CatholicCare in 2016. Years 4-6 participated in this program in the previous year. Year 5 also participated in the Kindness Program. This program aims to make students more aware of their feelings and the feelings of those around them.

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 2016.

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

Learning and teaching at St Therese Catholic Primary School is focused on catering for the needs of individual students. All members of the school community, including teachers, support staff, students and parents, are encouraged to see themselves as lifelong learners. Through a positive, supportive environment and the development of interesting learning experiences, students are encouraged to become engaged and to make the most of the opportunities provided to them.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

The NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) Curriculums, as well as the Wollongong Diocese Religious Education Curriculum underpins the development of all teaching programs at St Therese Catholic School. Teachers use the NSW BOSTES Primary Curriculum Foundation Statements when planning quality learning and teaching experiences and reporting student achievement.

Professional development has been provided for staff to be trained in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Teachers are using the English, Maths, Science and Technology Curriculums and History and Geography was introduced this year. Further training has been offered for the implementation of History and Geography in 2017. Stage 3 teachers have had extensive support to be able to implement the 1:1 iPad strategy. Both teachers and students have had a very steep learning curve to maximise the potential of the learning device. Through sharing and collaboration, other teachers are also gaining skills and strategies to use in their own classrooms with their own iPad and large screen television.

Assessment for, as and of learning are ongoing experiences for teachers and students and are all based on the BOSTES syllabus outcomes. A wide range of assessment tools are used and student learning is closely monitored by teachers to allow students to demonstrate authentic learning. Honest, constructive feedback to students is crucial to meaningful learning for all students.

Cross Curriculum

Literacy Strategies

In 2016, St Therese Catholic Primary School continued to strive to promote good Literacy skills for the students and cater for their individual needs. Beginning 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 student progress was continued, using the clusters of the Literacy Continuum.

By becoming more familiar with using the Literacy Continuum, all teachers were able to cater for a diverse range of abilities and ensure all students and their learning needs were being better addressed. The Staff have continued to develop their shared understanding of Literacy across the school. This has been enhanced and supported by Professional Development and opportunities both within the school and externally. This includes further knowledge for teachers such as Australian Curriculum development, Literacy and Library Planning Days and school based teacher support. NAPLAN Smart Data had been used to identify key areas of student performance strengths and weaknesses. All teachers were able to access and use NAPLAN results to help improve Literacy across the school.

St Therese Catholic Primary School has had a Reading Recovery Teacher in 2016 employed as 0.8 FTE (Full Time Equivalent). Fourteen students have benefitted from access to this program this year. Together with the Reading Recovery Support teacher and teachers from Kindergarten to Year 3, there has been continued planning, monitoring and support for the students currently on the program. Data is collated each Term and entered onto a spreadsheet which at the end of the year, is sent to the CEO Reading Recovery Tutor. Students now in Years 4, 5 and 6 previously on Reading Recovery, are monitored by their classroom teachers.

Numeracy Strategies

In 2016, the school priorities have focused on quality practice in Mathematics, with particular focus on using Guided Groups based on continua data, learning plans and targeted teaching as Best Practice.

In May, 2016 all Year 3 and Year 5 students participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). At St Therese, we aim to extend the students' achievement past the minimum standards. The results provide valuable information about Literacy and Numeracy skills that need to be targeted. We believe students' needs are best served when they are addressed within their programs of study and all staff are able to use the NAPLAN results to support teaching and learning. NAPLAN Smart Data has been used to identify key areas of student performance strengths and weaknesses. There have been noticeable improvements in the Year 5 Numeracy results.

All K-6 teachers have continued to track and monitor all students throughout the year using Sentral. Ongoing data has been collected in Week 5 and Week 10 each Term for analysis. Using this data staff have developed Individual Numeracy Intervention Plans to target specific individual needs.

The students have benefitted from Information Technology equipment such as iPads and laptops. Students skills and knowledge were enhanced using online programs Studyladder, Sqwirk, Maths Mentality and Rainforest Maths.

At St Therese Catholic Primary School we had 87 students participate in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) University Exams for Mathematics.

Indigenous Education

Indigenous perspectives are incorporated into student learning across all Grades from Kinder to Year 6. NAIDOC Week was marked this year with a special day of activities focusing on Aboriginal artefacts, storytelling and painting. A Guest Speaker focussed on Aboriginal activities. Staff also embarked on an Indigenous cultural tour as part of their Spirituality Staff Development Day, visiting local, significant Indigenous sites.

Meeting the needs of all students

Gifted Education

Gifted Education has continued to be included as a learning focus at St Therese this year. Teachers have continued to use a variety of procedures and tools to identify gifted students. Data collected from both the identification process and teacher differentiation continues to be gathered and tracked using Sentral. The implementation of a variety of differentiation techniques and some acceleration techniques has continued to support student needs throughout the year. In 2016 Identified students in Years 3-6 were able to work in small groups focusing on challenging tasks with a specialist teacher.

Special Education

Personalised Plans (PPs) and the Catholic Education Commission (CEC) planning tool are utilised to support the educational requirements of students who have additional learning needs. The PPs identify strategies and suggestions from specialist reports, as well as psychometric assessments. They are evaluated and updated each Term with parent meetings conducted in Terms 1 and 3. Teachers regularly liaise with speech therapists, vision support organisations, occupational therapists, itinerant support teachers, medical practitioners, counsellors, educational psychologists and support personnel from the CEO in order to best fulfil the requirements of all students. Each fortnight teachers meet with the MSPEC Team to discuss individual student needs. This year a Speech Pathologist was engaged to conduct initial assessments with a number of Kindergarten students as well as providing some useful feedback to Kindergarten teachers after observing some lessons. Information gained has proved valuable in improving the strategies to support identified students and well as the students in general.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

St Therese once again competed in the Catholic Development Fund (CDF) sponsored Diocesan Public Speaking Competition having representatives from both Years 5 and 6. With very strong and confident competition, we finished second in the Year 6 age group. Students were given opportunities to attend Art Workshops at the Wollongong Art Gallery. These workshops focused on teaching art skills and creativity. One hundred and eighty-eight students from Year Two to Year Six participated in the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools (ICAS) in the areas of Mathematics, English, Computer Skills, Spelling, Writing and Science. A number of Credits and Distinctions were awarded to the students within each of the competitions. A number Christmas Art competitions were entered with some amazing works produced by the students, some of whom took out awards at various levels. This year students from Year 5 entered the NAIDOC Week short story competition.

Sport

2016 has been an exceptional year for Sport for the students at St Therese with record participation in many of the sports offered. Throughout the year we held the Competitive Swimming Carnival, Cross Country Carnival, Athletics Carnival and a Novelty Swimming Carnival at Port Kembla. Many students went on to represent St Therese at the Diocesan Carnivals with great success. Some of the students represented the Diocese of Wollongong and ultimately MacKillop with distinction.

Throughout the year, St Therese participated in many of the Diocesan Gala Days, including the Wishart/McGregor Shields, All Schools Rugby League Carnival, Basketball, Soccer and the Paul Kelly (AFL) Cup. This year's AFL Boys Team made the Paul Kelly Cup State Final at SCG with great success. Hotshots tennis has continued its close association with students from St Therese where a coach is on hand to provide tips and encouragement every Friday during lunchtime.

Students who meet the criteria are encouraged to participate in the Diocesan trials for a wide range of sports. As a result of their participation, we have had many students selected in Diocesan teams travelling to many locations around NSW to compete. At the Annual Diocesan Sports Awards, St Therese was well represented with seven students receiving recognition of their achievements, receiving either a Primary Medallion or a Primary Red Award. St Therese was successful in applying for three Sporting Schools grants which enabled students to participate in tennis, gymnastics and hockey with qualified instructors and teachers.

Band/Choir

A specialist music teacher has provided opportunities for students to join either the band, if they already play an instrument, or the choir. Opportunities were made available for the students to perform on a number of occasions including Nowra Eisteddfod where they experienced great success.

Excursions

Every Grade this year has had the opportunity to attend an excursion outside the normal school environment. These ranged from walking excursions into Wollongong through to day trips to Sydney, Botanical Gardens and Wollongong University Early Learning Centre. Year 6 had the opportunity to attend a three day trip to Fitzroy Falls Outdoor Education Learning Centre where they were engaged in leadership building activities.

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.

NAPLAN is seen as an important part of an overall assessment program at St Therese. The school aim is to extend the students' level of achievement well past the minimum standards. NAPLAN Smart Data has been used to identify key areas of student performance strengths and weaknesses.

In 2016, Year 5 showed strong growth, from their Year 3 results, across all areas especially in Numeracy. The trend data was all very positive with very strong improvement in Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. St Therese finished well above the State average in all 6 areas of assessment. The Year 3 data was mixed with trend data in three areas improving whilst in the remaining three areas there was some decline. We were below State average in Numeracy, but well above in Reading, Grammar and Punctuation.

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 2016: % 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	10%	27%	63%	8%	44%	48%
	National	12%	37%	49%	16%	47%	35%
Writing	School	2%	37%	62%	10%	67%	23%
	National	6%	43%	49%	18%	63%	17%
Spelling	School	12%	43%	45%	10%	61%	30%
	National	12%	39%	46%	17%	51%	30%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	7%	20%	73%	8%	52%	39%
	National	10%	36%	53%	15%	47%	36%
Numeracy	School	15%	48%	37%	8%	49%	43%
	National	13%	49%	36%	17%	53%	28%

National Band Distributions are calculated by ACARA based on the total number of students in each cohort, including those who did not complete NAPLAN. School Band Distributions have therefore been calculated also using the total number of students in each cohort, including those who did not complete NAPLAN. As such, the total percentage across all Bands may not add up to 100% as the students who did not complete NAPLAN are not allocated a Band.

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 2016: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	97%	98%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	98%	100%
	National	96%	93%
Spelling	School	97%	98%
	National	94%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	97%	98%
	National	96%	94%
Numeracy	School	97%	97%
	National	96%	94%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Staff and parents were provided with an opportunity to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of St Therese Catholic School as part of the discernment process in appointing a new Principal. Some of the key strengths that were identified, and hoping to maintain, were an improvement in the look of the school, good clear communication and a general warmth and care for the students. Staff identified the online programming and behaviour management processes as being positive as well as the implementation of SPB4L into the classrooms.

Some of the challenges identified were continuing to raise the standards of teaching practice, sustainable canteen management, keeping up-to-date with technology and building staff morale after a period of changed leadership.

The overall comments from both staff and parents were very positive and supportive of the direction that the school is going. The students have a sense of pride in their school and are generally happy to be at St Therese Catholic Primary School.



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