

# Annual School Report

2015

*St. Thomas More*



*Ruse*



**CATHOLIC EDUCATION**  
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

## About This Report

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St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Ruse 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:

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Parish Priest: Father Tony Daly

Principal: Paul Croker  
Date: 10 December 2015

## Vision Statement

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In the spirit of truth and love the vision at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is to be a welcoming community committed to upholding the dignity of the individual, where quality learning and teaching is inspired by the message and life of Jesus.

## Message from Key School Bodies

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### *Principal's Message*

In 2015 St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School embarked on a major School Improvement Plan project. This project has provided high quality professional learning for Kindergarten to Year 4 teachers in a series of literacy pedagogy and planning sessions. This professional development is aimed at improving student achievement through implementation of the targeted teaching model based on individual student assessment data.

The school community embraced the "Footsteps of Faith" religious education ethos theme this year. This theme was enlivened throughout the school community by focussing on: "F" for living out our Catholic Faith in Term 1; "A" for affirming and accepting other people in Term 2; "I" for 'I can make a difference' in Term 3; and, "Th" for Thanksgiving in Term 4. It was especially gratifying to see the great response and involvement in fundraising for various local, national and international charities by families of the school throughout the year linked to this theme.

### *Parent Involvement*

The Parents and Friends' Association (P&F) started off the year with an entirely new committee, with everyone focused on building the community spirit, both within the committee executive, as well as, the greater school community. This being my first year at St Thomas More and the first year as a committee, I could only base previous year's activity from opinions and feedback. This year has been full of positive feedback from the greater school community. We instigated incentives to promote parent volunteers and for every event we had abundant support, with all events gaining a high number of parent support throughout the year, with the aim next year to try and have volunteers confirmed in advance of each event.

Some key activities that have been crucial to our success this year include the 2015 School Fete. It was a great day and received great feedback from the community, as well as, bringing \$68 000 in revenue. School discos and a parent and carer fun night all went well, with parents asking for more parent social events as fundraisers to connect with other parents in a relaxed environment. Moving into 2016, the entire new committee is continuing into a second year, giving great continuity and the drive to ensure we top last year's performance in fundraising, as well as, building the community spirit and support from the parents and friends of the school. We have moved to include the Mother's Club into the main P&F executive in 2016 with all Mother's Club activities being supported by current parent helpers with financial and major decisions handled by the P&F Executive.

*Parents and Friends Association, President*

## ***Student Leadership***

At the beginning of the 2015 school year, student leaders attended St Greg's Opening School Year Mass, which was held at Mount Carmel Catholic College.

Student leaders also attended the ANZAC Day Memorial service at the Campbelltown Catholic Club. The school was given a plaque to display, and a veteran played the last post. Students laid a wreath at the ANZAC parade and walked with our school community. Student leaders greeted parents to the school for the Kindergarten Orientation Day and gave the guests a tour of the school. We also welcomed many special guests, parents and friends to our school assemblies, school Masses and community events.

We attended a Sunday Mass at Mary Immaculate School, which was celebrated by Bishop Peter Ingham, Bishop of Wollongong Diocese. There were captains from other schools who also attended the Mass. At the National Aborigines Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week assembly, the St Greg's boys came and performed a dance about their totems. Aboriginal elders came, and many students from other diocesan Catholic High Schools came as well.

We also had a job of helping the Tooth Fairy Dentist who came to our school. Our job was to get the children he needed to see from their classes. Remembrance Day was held at our school. Students from all Grades did readings and we had one minute of silence where we laid the wreath under the Australian flagpole and near the Remembrance Wall. This year has been really fun and exciting for us, as we had the chance to represent our school on many special occasions. We have been given many jobs to do in and out of school.

We have really enjoyed being school captains for 2015 and we would like to wish the best of luck to the new school captains for 2016, because we think that they will have as much fun as we did.

*Year 6 Student Leaders*

## **School Profile**

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### **School Context**

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Ruse, a suburb of Campbelltown. The school caters for students in Years K-6 in a two-stream configuration and has a current enrolment of 379. The school is located in the Parish of Ruse and is under the direction of the Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong. St Thomas More traditions have been enriched from the foundational charisms of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan and the Marist Brothers. The school endeavours to cater for the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, behavioural and physical education of all students.

St Thomas More has 14 mixed ability classes and a Learning Support Centre, which supports the needs of students with an identified learning disability. As a Parish School, it is intended that the spiritual growth and welfare of the students be carefully integrated within a needs-based education, which is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, Staff and Parents. The school places a strong emphasis on building resilience and operates successful Pastoral Care and Buddy programs. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is committed to the creation of contemporary learning programs, where educational excellence is encouraged, by providing a relevant, stimulating and challenging curriculum that incorporates the use of learning

technologies, such as laptops, iPads, online resources and interactive whiteboards. Students are given many opportunities: academic, sporting, religious and cultural, to discover and make the most of their talents, and they regularly participate in Diocesan and local events. St Thomas More Primary School is a school where students, staff, parents and Parish Priest work and celebrate together in a spirit of true partnership.

### **Student Enrolments as at August 2015 census**

<b>2015 enrolments</b>	
Boys	<b>206</b>
Girls	<b>173</b>
Total	<b>379</b>
Indigenous	<b>19</b>
LBOTE	<b>90</b>

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.stmdow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stmdow.catholic.edu.au) and the CEDoW website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to this Policy in 2015.

### **Student Attendance**

<b>2015 Attendance</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Kinder	93.4%	93.4%
Year 1	92.4%	92.3%
Year 2	91.8%	92.1%
Year 3	94.0%	93.8%
Year 4	93.0%	94.0%
Year 5	94.6%	94.8%
Year 6	91.1%	89.9%
Whole school	92.9%	92.9%

### **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, monitor part or whole day absences. Each class teacher had the

responsibility of recording class attendance rolls each day, via the Sentral Student Roll Marking portal. It is a school expectation that if students were absent from school, a written note explaining the absence was provided to the class teacher, which in turn was documented and archived by office staff. An email to the school explaining the absence was also acceptable. If an explanation for an absence was not received, a reminder note requesting an explanation was sent to parents. If two such notes were not returned, then an “unexplained/unjustified” absence was documented. In the event of a child having an excessive number of unexplained absences, contact with the parents was made by the Principal to investigate the circumstances related to these absences.

If a child left school early they were issued with a pass, which indicated that the school was aware of their absence. Parents were required to apply for Principal approval to exempt their child from school for extended periods. Full and partial absences were documented on Student Reports each Semester.

## Staffing Profile

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There are a total of 21 teachers and 10 support staff at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. This number includes 17 full-time and 4 part-time teachers.

### ***Teacher Standards***

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

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

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

### ***Teacher Attendance and Retention***

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2015 was 98.3%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 98%.

### ***Professional Learning***

During 2015 St Thomas More personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through the School Review and Improvement priorities. Staff professional learning activities included:

- A. St Thomas More whole school development days involving 31 staff.  
These days focused on:
- Planning Day, Policy Showcase and Staff Development
  - School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning and ICLT
  - Staff Spirituality; and
  - School Review and Improvement process (which was an additional allocation in 2015)
- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level (including CEDoW run courses) were:
- Leading the Australian Curriculum (3 staff);
  - Best Start Training (2 staff);
  - Gifted and Talented Conference (1 staff);
  - PLC: Thinking and Learning Conference (2 staff);
  - Early Careers Teacher Professional Development (2 staff);
  - Beginning Teachers Spirituality (2 Staff);
  - Lamplighters – Spiritual Development for Leaders (4 staff);
  - A Light for the World Personal Spirituality Formation Experience (2 staff);
  - Religious Education Coordinator (REC) Conference (1 staff member);
  - Principal/Assistant Principal Retreat (1 staff);
  - CECNSW Indigenous Conference (1 staff);
  - Religious Literacy Assessment (1 staff);
  - Spotlight on Technology (2 staff);
  - Slide to Learn Course: ICLT (1 staff member);
  - ICLT Network (1 staff);
  - MANSW Math's Conference: Stepping outside the square (4 staff);
  - iPads in the Classroom (2 staff);
  - MSPEC reconnector (2 staff);
  - Learning for Leadership (1 staff);
  - System Focus Day (1 staff);
  - SPB4L Training day CEDoW (4 staff);
  - Library Network 1 (staff);
  - School based professional development on Multi-Lit (5 SSO staff). NCCD IP training (18 staff);
  - Mathematics: Number Sense and use of the Continuum (15 staff);
  - English: Diagnostic Assessments, use of the Continuum and English Block (11 staff);

Other individual staff member professional learning activities encompassed:

- Masters in Theology and Religious Education (7 staff);
- Beginner teachers RE PD (3 staff);
- REC retreat (1 staff member);
- Child Protection A and B (1 staff member);
- Pastoral Care training (1 staff member);
- Seasons for Growth (2 staff); and,
- CatholicCare orientation to High School Program (2 staff).

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$212.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$798.

## **Catholic Life & Religious Education**

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St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School adheres to the guiding ethos of a Catholic school as a place of authentic learning where students find meaning and purpose in their life through the integration of faith and culture. Its purpose is to give students every opportunity in life and to assist them to continually grow in faith and learning. Creating vibrant Catholic communities that enable this growth to flourish in every student is the vocational mission of all those who work in Catholic systemic schools and in the Catholic Education Office.

The community of St Thomas More Ruse strives to create an environment, which supports and nourishes each child's faith development and their learning journey, not only in their own local context, but that of the wider community. During 2015, there was a significant focus on Catholic Life and Culture and Assessment in Religious Education. All initiatives were centred around each member of our community sharing their faith with others. A 3 year Faith Formation Plan was developed in order to strategically plan faith formation experiences. The plan caters for the needs of all students, staff and parents. In 2015 the school's Religious Education (RE) team shifted focus towards the Religious Education Curriculum the focus being on "Rich Assessment" in Religious Education. Staff engaged in professional development, as well as, classroom experiences in order to enhance capacity to create rich assessments, which inform teaching and learning.

Sacramental programs were a priority in 2015. In the past, Sacramental Programs were Parish based. The school community (staff, parents and students) were asked to offer feedback and recommendations in regards to the programs. All comments were collected and shared at a school and Parish level. As a result, the school and Parish trialled a shared model where the school and Parish lead the programs together. Since then a new student booklet has been trialled and evaluated and a Sacramental Team has been established. In addition to the Sacramental Team, a Music Ministry Team has been established. Both these Teams are made up of a blend of local parishioners and school staff.

The students of St Thomas More took an active role in sharing their faith. The theme for 2015 was "Footsteps of Faith". Students participated in various activities during the year and these initiatives were:

- Faith in Action activities
- Operation Christmas Child
- Hosting the Mini Vinnies Conference
- Leading Mini Vinnies Fundraisers
- Project Compassion awareness and fund-raising activities

St Thomas More School community also engaged community members in a variety of religious experiences throughout 2015. These included:

- Whole school Masses and Liturgies to celebrate special events and feast days throughout the year, for example; the Feast of St Thomas More, Feast of Saint Mary of the Cross

MacKillop, Holy Week, Catholic Schools' Week, Grandparents' Day and the Feast of the Assumption.

- Students in Year 3 to Year 6 regularly received the Sacrament of Penance.
- Our Parish Priest visited classes on a regular basis and has begun to address topics related to the religious education curriculum, appropriate to the grade.
- Weekly prayer assemblies, led by each class, to reflect the liturgical life of the Church and the units of study.
- Grade Masses, in addition to whole school Masses held in the school hall
- Lunch time prayer group, and
- Mini Vinnies

The School also had a CatholicCare Pastoral Support Worker (Chaplaincy Program) in place in 2015. This program aimed to support students through the provision of pastoral care services and the promotion of strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of students and pastoral needs of the broader school community. Our Pastoral Support Worker has run programs such as "Seasons for Growth" (based on the "Good Grief Program") and "Mind Up" Mindfulness program, which is designed to develop resilience in children. In addition to this, a social skills group was established. This program aims to develop positive social skills and behaviours, which enable children to interact with others in a positive way. A cooking group was also established for children in our community with a focus on healthy eating and nutritional food preparation.

### **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 St Thomas More School cohort in 2015 consisted of 43 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 24 August 2015 and 51 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.

Data from the Religious Literacy Assessment has been unpacked and an item analysis has been created identifying the weakest to the strongest areas of performance. The items, which will be addressed in 2016 are: Pentecost, Scripture, Parables, Sacraments of Initiation, Advent, Easter and Christmas (Seasons of the Church Year), Types of prayer and Parts of the Mass.

Results of the Religious Literacy Assessment indicate the following in regards to student performance:

Part A: In 2015, 14% placed in the "developing" category, 69% placed in the achieving category and 16% placed in the extending category.

According to Part A data, less students placed in the developing category, less placed in achieving and an increased number of students placed in the extending category.

Part B: According to Part B data, 11% of students placed in the developing category, 54% in the achieving category and 33% in the extending category.

Part B results have shown an increased number of students placed in the developing band. Students placed in the achieving strand have remained the same and a decreased number of students in the extending category.

Overall according to the 2015 data, 11% of students placed in the developing category, 58% in the achieving category and 30% in the extending category.

## **School Review and Improvement**

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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 components reviewed and rated in 2015**

- **Key Area 3**
  - 3.2 Provision for the diverse needs of learners
  - 3.6 School Climate, learning and environment and relationships
- **Key Area 4**
  - 4.2 Professional Development of staff
- **Key Area 6**
  - 6.1 Parent Involvement
- 6.2 Reporting to the Community

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

- **Key Area 2**
  - 2.3 Reporting Student Achievement
- **Key Area 3**
  - 3.1 Curriculum Provision
  - 3.4 Planning, programming and evaluation
  - 3.5 Assessment

These School Review and Improvement components have been chosen for next year as they are integral to the School Improvement Plan project commenced in 2015. Work completed in these components will ensure that improved student learning achievements are sustained by teachers as they adopt new high quality pedagogical strategies and undertake more detailed teaching programs planning and assessment professional practices.

## **Financial Summary**

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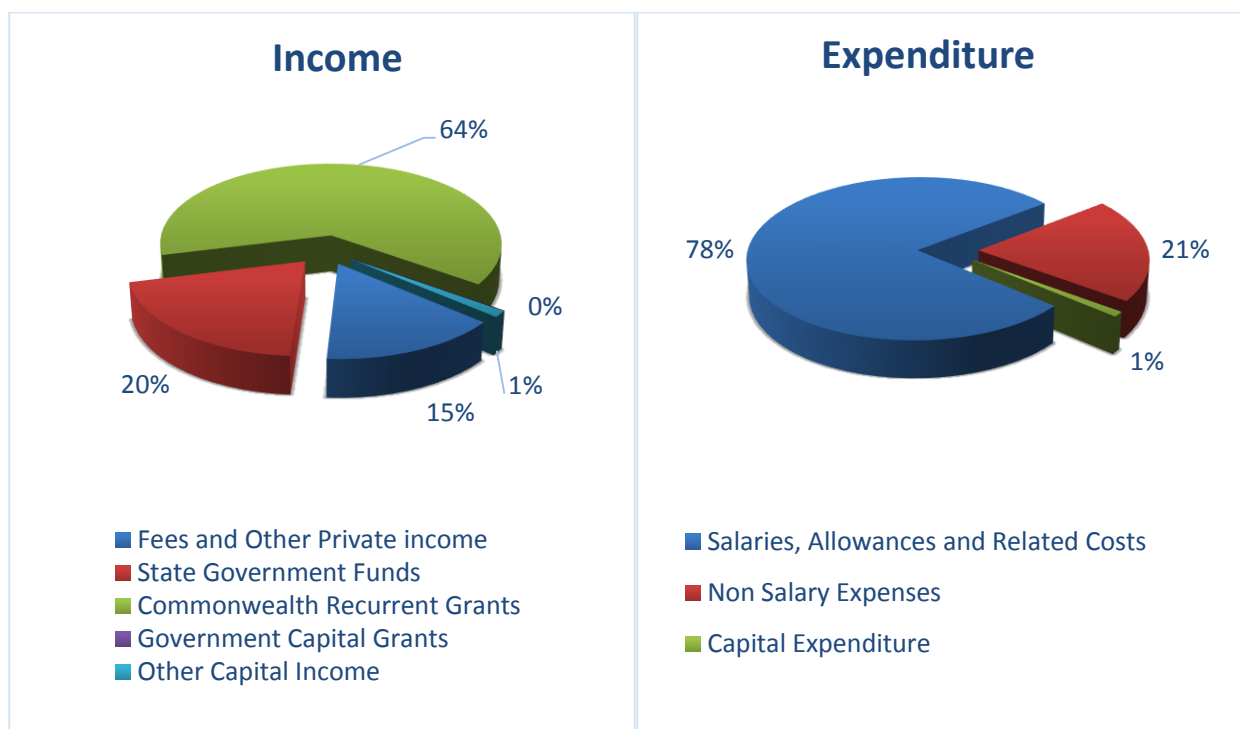
Major school expenditure this year focused on the further acquisition of new Information and Communication Learning Technologies (ICLT) equipment throughout the classrooms. New ICLT equipment included data projectors in classrooms, Apple TV connections, a data projector and screen in the prayer room and additional iPads. These new ICLT resources are being very well

utilised to enhance learning programs in all key learning areas. Again, new Home Reading Books for lower Year levels were purchased with funds provided to the school from the Mothers' Club.

A grant received from the Campbelltown Catholic Club has been placed in the Parish Building Fund account to accumulate savings for the future installation of air conditioning for the school hall.

In the latter part of 2015, significant funds were expended from the Parish SEDSO buildings and maintenance account to rectify door hardware and fire safety equipment in the school buildings that were identified as non-compliant after a Fire Safety Audit.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Ruse 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

School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) remains the driving force for providing a positive learning environment for all students at St Thomas More School. In 2015 the focus was on the school rules and how they are interpreted within each area of the school playground. Banners and posters were printed for each area to provide the children with the visual representation of how each rule applies to each area of the playground.

The St Thomas More Behavioural Support Policy was updated this year with attention to streamlining procedures. Student recognition has been refined with updates made to the positive award system. Playground Champion Awards and Merit Certificates reward supportive or positive classroom and playground behaviours, as well as, academic achievements. The pastoral care award this year was the *Footsteps of Faith* award, with the emphasis being on Faith, Action and Thanksgiving. Children received this award for displaying Christian values.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School has a proud tradition of providing pastoral support to members of our community. Student Welfare is paramount in the ethos of Catholic Education and to the very nature of our school. In 2015 the school pastoral care focus was “Making a Difference.” The aim was to provide each child with the support required to access the curriculum as fully as possible and to be completely supported in all aspects of school life. Tracking procedures of student academic achievement, as well as, student behaviour was a major part of this. This year the school had access to a very involved school counsellor (provided by CatholicCare) and a Pastoral Support Worker (PSW).

St Thomas More provides a variety of programs that support students academically, socially and emotionally. With the assistance of the aforementioned professionals, the school has been able to run a number of programs to provide support for children socially and emotionally. These programs include “Seasons for Growth”, Mindfulness and Social skills groups in Year 3 (facilitated by the PSW), as well as, the Kindergarten Transition to School program and Embracing the Transition to High school program, which focuses on the emotional side of getting ready for high school (facilitated by the school counsellor).

The “Better Buddy” program also ran this year. Year 4 students were paired with Kindergarten students. Strong relationships developed through shared activities in and outside the classrooms. The younger students learned that they could rely on the older students to help them in all aspects of their schooling.

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](http://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

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### Curriculum and Pedagogy

Syllabus implementation: In Semester 2 K-2 staff were involved in English Curriculum Development around use of diagnostic assessments and quality English Pedagogy. As well, 2015 saw the implementation of the new Science and Technology Syllabus and all teachers began using this document for planning and implementing their teaching programs. To assist teachers with the implementation, new resources were purchased to support students with their learning.

Staff prepared for the implementation of the new Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) Syllabus, which includes Geography and History. Staff attended a number of meetings and plenary sessions to ensure the smooth transition in 2016. A whole school HSIE Scope and Sequence was developed. Staff will commence teaching from the new syllabus in 2016.

Technology supporting learning: 2015 saw the introduction of 1:1 iPads in Stage 3 classrooms, which, after some early concerns expressed by parents, has gone on to have a successful and well received first year. A recent parent survey returned interesting and very positive feedback with comments such as “no lost homework!” and “my daughter is doing things on her iPad that I could never have dreamed of doing.” There has been excellent support from the ICLT team from the Catholic Education Office and some staff members participated in the “Successful Primary iPad Classroom” Course which provided a great platform for innovative classroom practice.

Pods of iPads and MacBook’s are available to all classes and are used in a variety of ways, all of which support specific areas of learning. Many teachers use iPads as part of the Literacy Block “task board” student learning activities. Interactive white boards remain a feature in all classrooms.

With the ever increasing amount of internet based classroom data management requirements, the Parents’ and Friends’ Association agreed to purchase a pod of iPads which would be made available to staff. This has been a very successful venture. Staff are able to enter student attendance details, record behaviour management incidents and most importantly have access to teaching apps, all without having to be at a desk in front of a computer.

### ***Cross Curriculum***

Mathematics: throughout 2015 Mathematics has continued to be a focus at St Thomas More. Teachers have continued to use the 4 key elements of a quality Maths Session - Number Sense (Revising and Consolidating previous concepts), introduction of new concepts, consolidation of these concepts and reflection on their learning. Teachers were involved in 4 hours of professional learning on the use of Guided Groups in Mathematics and have begun working with these to target student specific needs.

Indigenous Education: this year the profile of indigenous students has been raised. Students participated in community activities such as the Sorry Day service and NAIDOC Week activities. More opportunities have been provided for these students to make cultural links. The whole school was given access to an amazing collection of aboriginal artefacts. Students from all Grades were able to touch and feel kangaroo skin capes, wood carved weapons and gathering implements and hear wonderful stories about aboriginal legends. Visiting dancers have allowed students to participate in a variety of cultural activities. The school is beginning to develop personal relationships with a number of local elders and several of the local aunties visited Year 3 and helped them paint a Grade set of clapping sticks which were then used in our NAIDOC assembly. NAIDOC celebrations were held early in Term 3 and some elders of the local Dharawal community were invited to share a hot lunch with staff. Visiting performers from St Gregory's College and John Therry Catholic High School also attended the NAIDOC assembly to which all of our indigenous families were invited, followed by a prayer service and lunch. The school received a wonderful response from families and the community with the event being a huge success.

Creative Arts: Creative Arts was alive and well at St Thomas More in 2015. The students had the opportunity to be involved in a variety of activities: Choir (led by the school’s specialist Music teacher), Creative Arts lessons focusing on Music, Drama and Dance, and Wakakirri.

This year a squad of 105 students were involved in Wakakirri, under the direction of a 3 teacher team, with wonderful support from the parents of students involved. The theme for 2015 was “A Toy’s Story”, which followed the story of toys once the humans had gone to bed. The squad

performed at The Riverside Theatre in Parramatta in August receiving rave reviews. 2015 also saw yet another wonderful Christmas Carols evening organised by staff members. The theme of the evening was “Follow the footsteps of Christmas Around the World” and showcased each Year level in song and dance.

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

At St Thomas More the students are offered a differentiated curriculum to ensure that they reach their best possible academic results. Learning is diversified through the implementation of individual learning plans, as well as, small group intervention. The School Support Officers work in collaboration with the teachers to assist the students to complete individualised goals.

The Learning Support Centre caters for students with a variety of additional needs. A full time teacher and School Support Officer work in the Centre. English, Mathematics, Religious Education and social skills are the main components taught in the Centre. All students in the school with Special Needs have an Individual Learning Plan that is devised collaboratively each Semester by the classroom teacher, the Learning Support Centre teacher and the parents. Teachers and parents meet twice a year to discuss and amend these plans as necessary.

Late last year one teacher was trained in the Multi-Lit program and was able to come back and train three School Support Officers. Together they take 2 students each, 4 times a week through a Phonics and Sight Word based program. There are now students involved from all Grades. In 2015, 24 students completed (or are completing) the program. In addition to Multi-Lit, there are 7 Oral Language groups a week catering for 1 to 5 students, most of whom receive two 30 minute lessons a week. The focus is on receptive and expressive language skills, on memory, vocabulary development and comprehension.

Year 1 students in need were targeted with a Reading and Writing Support program. The enrichment opportunities for the students at St Thomas More included groups that occur during lunchtimes and within teaching time. These included: environment gardening group, choir, fitness group, Thinking Club, Art Club and Kid’s Club.

At St Thomas More there is a process for identifying students who are Gifted and Talented. All children from late Year 2 to Year 6 (and any new enrolments) are tested on the AGAT General Ability Test. Children who score within percentile 7,8 or 9 are then Tested on the Slossan test. Children who then score over 120 will be included in the Gifted and Talented program that runs one day per week. This program is a combination of an extension group for Mathematics, Murder Under the Microscope and the CEDoW SPLICED program.

These children also form part of our Meeting Students Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) group, which includes children with special educational needs, as well as, Pastoral and Behavioural needs. An MSPEC committee has been formed and meets weekly to discuss the special needs of individual children and to devise learning plans to assist them to learn and to contribute successfully to the life of the school.

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

The ‘Sporting Schools Program’ (funded by the Australian Sports Commission) assisted the school during 2015. Purchases were made to allow students to participate in free, fun, healthy, organised sports activity sessions which promote a healthy lifestyle. Students also participated in the Australian Football League (AFL) skills clinic run by AFL Team, Greater Western Sydney

development officers. Each class was able to participate in AFL modified games and skills. A 6 week after school program was also held during Term 2 in 2015. Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) needs were well catered for through weekly Physical Education lessons. All Years K to 6 children participated in the School Cross Country Carnival and the Annual Athletics Carnival held at Campbelltown Stadium. Year 3 to Year 6 children, and selected Year 2 children, participated in the Annual Swimming Carnival, which was held at Bradbury Swimming Centre.

Selection trials were held, and children were chosen, to represent St Thomas More Catholic Primary School at the Western Region Carnivals after each of these events. Staff also prepared children for participation in a number of Diocesan and local sporting events including cricket, basketball, netball, soccer, and rugby league. A number of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School students had the opportunity to represent at Diocesan, MacKillop and State level.

Year 5 and Year 6 children had the opportunity to participate in the School Public Speaking Competition, with one student being chosen to represent St Thomas More Catholic Primary School at the Annual Diocesan Regional Public Speaking Competition and he was placed second overall.

During 2015, the children had the opportunity to learn keyboard, guitar, singing or drums through the 'Music Bus' program. This program has continued to gain popularity among the children. Children also participated in weekend competitions and concerts organised by the 'Music Bus' company. 'The Christmas Story Art Competition and Exhibition' invited children in Years 5 and 6 to express and use their artistic talents in a special competition coinciding with the Advent and Christmas season.

Each Grade had 4 opportunities during the year to demonstrate their learning for the school community through the leading of school assemblies. These assemblies were an opportunity to share the learning that had occurred at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. This year the talents of the St Thomas More School choir and Learning Support Centre students were showcased in an end of year assembly.

The School Choir and all Years K to 6 students participated in a wonderful Christmas Concert attended by approximately 1,000 parents and relatives in the latter weeks of the year. Bright colourful costumes, excellent dance choreography and enthusiastic singing enabled the school community to celebrate the true meaning of the Advent/Christmas season.

## **Student Achievement**

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

## **NAPLAN**

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

In May, 2015 - 52 students from Years 3 (30 boys and 22 girls) and 48 students from Year 5 (28 boys and 20 girls) completed the NAPLAN assessments.

In Year 3, 96% of students were above national minimum standards in Reading and Grammar and Punctuation. 98% of students were above national minimum standards in Writing, Spelling and Numeracy. Year 5 had 94% of students in Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation and 100% of students in Reading and Numeracy above national minimum standard.

Students in both Grades performed well in reading with a higher number than State average in Bands 5 (Year 3) and 7 (Year 5). Year 5 had more than state average in Band 7 for Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation.

Growth data was available for most Year 5 students and it showed the following results. 100% of student achieved growth in Numeracy. 98% of students showed growth in in Reading. 96% of student showed growth in Spelling. 91% of students either maintained their Year 3 standard, or showed growth in Grammar and Punctuation and Writing.

Teaching staff have access to this data and will work towards improving results in all areas through analysing student results and identifying areas of need.

### **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	10%	48%	42%	4%	63%	33%
	National	13%	39%	48%	20%	47%	33%
Writing	School	10%	56%	35%	13%	71%	17%
	National	9%	44%	47%	19%	62%	19%
Spelling	School	15%	52%	33%	15%	44%	42%
	National	16%	43%	41%	17%	50%	33%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	10%	60%	31%	13%	46%	42%
	National	13%	35%	52%	18%	46%	36%
Numeracy	School	19%	63%	17%	13%	65%	23%
	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.

<b>NAPLAN 2015: % AT or ABOVE NMS</b>		<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>YEAR 5</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>School</b>	96%	100%
	<b>National</b>	95%	93%
<b>Writing</b>	<b>School</b>	98%	94%
	<b>National</b>	96%	92%
<b>Spelling</b>	<b>School</b>	98%	94%
	<b>National</b>	93%	93%
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>School</b>	96%	94%
	<b>National</b>	95%	93%
<b>Numeracy</b>	<b>School</b>	98%	100%
	<b>National</b>	94%	95%

## Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

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Parents and carers, staff members, and Years 4 and 6 students were surveyed to provide each group with the opportunity for input into areas affecting learning and teaching, and the general environment of the school. The information provided will be used to assist with future planning, improvements to policies and updating curriculum programs.

### Parents

One hundred percent agreed that the school helps their child develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 92% agreed that the school provides various opportunities for parents/carers to become involved. 87% felt their child is challenged to maximise his/her learning outcomes. 80% felt the school strives to meet their child's individual learning needs. 84% believe the school provides appropriate information about their child's progress. 75% know that the school offers a range of co-curricular activities. 88% felt teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child. 94% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children. 90% believe the school effectively communicates information about activities and events.

## **Staff**

One hundred percent of staff members agreed that the school helps students develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 100% felt that students understand their rights and responsibilities. 80% believe the school strives to meet the individual learning needs of students. 100% felt the school provides appropriate information to parents/carers about student progress. 90% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children.

## **Students**

Ninety two percent of students stated they were proud of their school. 100% think the school helps them understand their Catholic Faith. 95% of students believed their teacher encourages them to learn to the best of their ability. 98% of students stated that they understand their rights and responsibilities at school. 80% of students feel safe at school. 95% of students believe that if they had a problem at school, there are people who they can approach for help. 96% of students agreed there are sporting and other activities they can enjoy.

