

Annual School Report

Primary

St. Thomas More



Ruse

2016



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

About This Report

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 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: Father Mark de Battista (Administrator)

Principal: Paul Croker
Date: 15 December 2016

Vision Statement

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

Principal's Message

In 2016 St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School embraced the positive opportunities to highlight and celebrate the cultural diversity of our school community and the many links we have with the local community and Parish of St Thomas More. We enjoyed the major school community celebrations of Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week and the 30th Anniversary of the Parish of St Thomas More, Ruse.

This year "Soar with the Spirit" was our Religious Education ethos theme. This theme helped members of the school community think about these important messages in the world-wide Catholic Church and activities taking place in our local Parish and school community.

SOAR "stood" for -

S - Showing mercy to others (link to the Papal Year of Mercy)

O - Our Parish community (link to 30 years Parish celebration)

A - Affirming the goodness in others

R - Reach out to others in need (link to Mission Week activities)

The school staff were fully involved in the second phase of our major School Improvement Plan project which provided high quality professional learning for Kindergarten to Year 6 teachers in a series of literacy pedagogy and planning sessions. This professional development is aimed at improving student achievement levels through implementation of the targeted teaching model based on individual student assessment data.

Parent Involvement

It was another great year for the St Thomas More community with both new and old parents becoming more involved in school activities.

Along with the many events the Parents' and Friends' (P&F) Association organise for the year, the stand out remained the annual school Fete, with the Fete Committee going over and above again to provide a great day for all that attended. The Fete day was not without its challenges, the rainy weather stayed away, however created soft surfaces for new parking solutions. We still managed as much profit as 2015 with lower revenue.

Other events that were built up and will continue to grow are the Trivia nights for parents, which had a great response in the early part of the year, with the second receiving a smaller number, due to date changes.

We are very excited for the new members of the 2017 P&F Association Committee with some members returning to continue the growth in community spirit and bring new enthusiasm. With two members of the 2016 Executive Committee starting new, very demanding jobs, it has been a testament to the team

work and communication for the whole committee and school staff to overcome work commitments and still bring the events to the school very successfully.

With two years serving the St Thomas More community I'm very proud to see the major playground equipment donation becoming a reality, as well as, all the smaller contributions to the school from the P&F and I look forward to helping as a non-Executive member of the community.

Also, a big thank you to the St Thomas More staff members for their extra time and support, for without this support we would not be able to hold events at the school or effectively communicate to the larger community.

Parents and Friends Association Representative

Student Leadership

As the year came to an end, we reflected on our Year Six experience and can honestly say that it was a blast! Our 2016 journey began with the blessing of our Captains' badges, proudly placed on our shirts by our parents. Our badges became a symbol of leadership and commitment as School Leaders of St Thomas More.

All Year Six students definitely made the most of 2016. We participated in our mock Parliament, the ANZAC Day March, Appin Massacre ceremony and Mini Vinnies. Sporting Events were so much fun too with our Sport Captains all helping our teams immensely by being fun, encouraging and energetic. We certainly can't leave out the memorable Gala Days for Netball, Soccer, Basketball and Cricket, which Year 6 all participated in.

At Saint Thomas More, we also have a very strong belief in deepening our Catholic faith. As students we all participated in regular Masses held at the Saint Thomas More Catholic Parish Church and in our School Hall. We also represented our school at the Annual Year 6 Mass, which was hosted by our Bishop Peter Ingham. We also recently received the Sacrament of Confirmation and we thank God for giving us our gifts.

The Year 6 Camp was awesome! In May, the Year Six students went on a very informative camp to Canberra, the capital city of Australia. The things we learned from the trip were incredible and our teachers were all greatly appreciated for keeping us crazy kids under control.

School Leaders

School Profile

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 371. The school is located in the Parish of Ruse and is under the direction of the Catholic Education Office, 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 Primary School 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 Learning Intervention 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, i-Pads, 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

2016 enrolments	
Boys	180
Girls	191
Total	371
Indigenous	20
LBOTE	81

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

Student Attendance

2016 Attendance	Male	Female
Kinder	93.4%	94.0%
Year 1	91.5%	90.0%
Year 2	93.8%	91.5%
Year 3	92.1%	92.5%
Year 4	92.6%	93.3%
Year 5	92.5%	91.6%
Year 6	94.2%	92.3%
Whole school	92.8%	92.3%

Management of Student Non Attendance

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

There were a total of 21 teachers and 9 support staff at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School in 2016. This number included 16 full-time and 5 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 95%. This did not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2015 to 2016 was 97%.

Professional Learning

During 2016 St Thomas More Catholic Primary School personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review and Improvement Plan priorities.

These Professional Learning activities included:

A. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School whole school development days involving 30 staff.

These days focused on: Curriculum Planning, Programming Policy, Staff Development in Maths pedagogy and Staff Spirituality.

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

- Mini-Lit (11 staff)
- BOSTES seminar: Consistent Teacher Judgement (1 Staff)
- Best Start Training (2 staff)
- SPB4L Framework Overview (1 staff)
- Collaborative Classrooms - Mastering DOW Cloud (2 Staff)
- Setting up your online classroom with DOW Cloud (1 Staff)
- MANSW Mathematics Conference (5 staff)
- Online Dyslexia Course (5 staff)
- Religious Literacy Assessment (2 staff)
- Specialist Primary Learning Support Centre Teachers Network Services (1 staff)
- Leading Curriculum Implementation – HSIE (1 Staff)
- MSPEC school team day (2 Staff)

- System Focus Day Primary (1 Staff)
- Gifted Education Network Meeting (1 Staff)
- PETA: Supporting struggling readers and organising the Literacy Block (2 staff)
- Transition to School Playgroup (3 staff)
- Indigenous Games (1 staff)
- REC Retreat (1 staff member)
- AP/REC Day: Mission (2 staff)
- World Youth Day (1 staff)
- iPads in the Classroom (1 staff)
- Spotlight on Technology (2 staff)
- Shining Lights Personal Spirituality Formation Experience (1 staff)
- Spotlight on STEM (1 staff)
- Learning in Leadership (1 staff)
- Library Network 1 (staff)
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) Meetings (18 staff), and
- CatholicCare orientation to High School Program (2 staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$393.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$1 075.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

During 2016, there was a significant focus on Catholic Life and Culture, and Assessment in Religious Education. Our theme for the year was “SOAR with the Spirit”.

Not only was there a Term by Term focus but the Staff Faith Formation day was based on our 2016 theme. The acronym “SOAR” had a specific focus for each Term.

S = Showing mercy to others

O = Our Parish Community

A = Affirming the goodness in others

R = Reach out to others in need

S = Showing mercy to others (link to Papal Year of Mercy)

Pope Francis had declared that a period of 12 months in 2015-6 would be the “Year of Mercy”. During this year of Mercy, we were called to show kindness and compassion to each other. Jesus showed mercy to all. By showing compassion to those in need He gave them hope. We have aimed to be more like Jesus and have tried to show compassion to the suffering of others.

O = Our Parish Community

In 2016, we joined in celebrating 30 years in our Parish of St Thomas More. As a community, we continued to grow in truth and love together as one family. The school and Parish came together, united with faith and hope, to share our gifts, as we engaged in various celebrations.

A = Affirming the goodness in others

A community must continuously grow. This can only be done if those within the community support and encourage each other. We must strive to find goodness and joy in others. When someone in our community is being the Face of God, then we should proclaim this and allow that light to continue to shine. We helped to spread the light in 2016.

R = Reach out to others in need (link to Mission Week/Caritas activities)

Pope Francis said that “We should always be in a state of Mission”. This year we learnt to not only to recognise those in need around the world, but to recognise those who may be near to us. Jesus handed down his mission to the apostles. Today we are his disciples and we are called to spread his love and compassion in the world and with all who walk with us. We had many opportunities to do this during the Lent, Mission Week and the Christmas Appeals in 2016.

Students participated in various activities during the year. Some of the initiatives were - showing mercy activities, shared Parish celebrations for the 30th Anniversary at the Parish, Mission Week “Sport-a-thon” and Project Compassion Appeal.

During Lent, the Mini Vinnies team set a \$500 target to raise by the end of the season. As a school community we raised over \$700.

During Mission Week, the Mini Vinnies Team planned and lead a school “Sport-a-thon”. They set a goal of \$500 but hoped for \$1000. Our school community raised over \$5000 - an amazingly generous result. We shared the money with Catholic Missions, Bahay Tuluyan in the Philippines, an Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory and a local refugee support organisation.

The Sacramental programs have continued to be a central focus as part of the Catholic Life and Mission of St Thomas More. The shared partnership model has continued to operate, where staff and Parishioners share in leading and delivering the programs. The Music Ministry Team has continued to grow and has assisted in all Masses.

St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School community engages community members in a variety of religious experiences. These include:

- 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.
- Our resident Priest has visited classes on a regular basis and addressed topics related to the Religious Education curriculum, appropriate to each Grade.
- Weekly prayer assemblies, led by each class, to reflect the liturgical life of the Church and the units of study.
- Grade Masses and Liturgies (in addition to whole school Masses).
- Lunch time prayer group, and
- Mini Vinnies

The CatholicCare Pastoral Support Worker (Chaplaincy Program) has continued during 2016. This Program aims to support students through the provision of pastoral care services and the promotion of strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of students and the pastoral needs of the broader school community. Pastoral care is defined in the Agreement with the Commonwealth as "the practice of looking after the personal needs of students, not just their academic needs, through the provision of general spiritual and personal advice."

Our Pastoral Support Worker facilitated programs such as "Seasons for Growth" (based on the "Good Grief Program") and the "Mind Up" Mindfulness Program, which was designed to develop resilience in children. In addition to this, a social skills group was established. This program aimed to develop positive social skills and behaviours, which enable children to interact with peers in a positive way.

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 2016. The school cohort in 2016 consisted of 56 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 29 August 2016 and 56 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.

Students in Part A performed above the Diocese in the following areas:

- Baptism
- Identifying Jesus' example of service to others
- The Sacrament of Penance
- Identifying the correct liturgical colour for the season of the Church's Year
- Naming the Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

The students performed below the Diocese in the following areas of Religious Literacy:

- Identifying key scripture and linking the scripture to the Liturgical Year
- Naming and identifying traditions and practices during the Season of Lent
- Recalling the events of Pentecost
- Identifying the Season of Advent as a time to prepare for the birth of Jesus.
- Identifying key symbols, signs and rituals of the Season Easter
- Identifying and sequencing the story of the Good Samaritan

The performance of each Year 4 cohort student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

Part A: In 2016, 1.9% placed in the "developing" category, 55.8% placed in the achieving category and 42.3% placed in the extending category.

Compared to 2015 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: In 2016, 23.6% of students placed in the developing category, 50.90% in the achieving category and 25.50% in the extending category.

Compared to 2015 Part B results, there are an increased number of students placed in the developing band, the number of students placed in the achieving band has reduced, and a decreased number of students were in the extending category.

Combining Parts A and B, 23.10% of students placed in the developing category, 50.90% in the achieving category and 25% in the extending category for Religious Literacy.

20 out of 56 students placed in the extending band, 9 of those students placed in the top 5%. 22 out of the 56 students scored above the Diocesan average.

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

1.1 Vision and mission

Goal: To establish a shared vision based on an Instructional Intent Statement and the Soar with the Spirit religious ethos theme.

Key Area 2 - Students and their Learning

2.3 Reporting Student Achievement

Goal: By the end 2016 the St Thomas More staff will have a deeper understanding of the A-E grade scale for reporting so that its implementation has integrity.

2.5 Pastoral care

Goal: To complete the SPB4L Agreed Policy and Procedures Guidelines document, distribute to all staff members and establish protocols for consistent application.

Key Area 3 - Pedagogy

3.1 Curriculum Provision

Goal: By 2017 St Thomas More staff will create and implement a quality curriculum which is enhanced by student centered learning environments so that pedagogy stimulates the motivation and imagination of students and teachers.

3.4 Planning, programming and evaluation

Goal: Develop a professional culture and shared understanding of quality programming, collaborative planning and reflective evaluation.

3.5 Assessment

Goal: By the end of 2016 St Thomas More staff will have a shared understanding of the principles of assessment.

Key Area 4 - Human Resources Leadership and Management

4.2 Professional development of staff

Goal: For all staff members to attain higher levels of knowledge and expertise in Quality Literacy Pedagogy and Programming through participation in the School Improvement Project (SIP) professional learning sessions during 2016.

4.5 Overall compliance with legislation and other requirements

Goal: For all Classroom Teaching Program Compliance requirements to be correctly attained by staff members when utilizing "google docs" format.

Key Area 5 - Resources, Finance and Facilities

5.4 Financial management

Goal: To respond to the findings and recommendations for financial business improvements of the Diocesan Financial Audit with alacrity and effectiveness.

Key Area 7 - Strategic Leadership and Management

7.1 Planning for improvement

Goal: To successfully implement the Professional Development Plans (PDPs) procedures with St Thomas More teaching staff.

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

Key Area 1 - Catholic Life and Religious Education

1.4 Parents, Parishes and the broader Church

Goal: In 2017 implement an effective process to communicate the Religious Education Curriculum and Catholic Life Mission activities of the school to parents and caregivers. In 2017 establish a Religious Education Committee with parent representatives.

Key Area 2 - Students and their Learning

2.2 Rights and Responsibilities

Goal: All students to clearly name the 4 School Rules and what they look like in the classroom by the end of Term two.

Key Area 3 - Pedagogy

3.6 School Climate, Learning and Environment and Relationships

Goal: There will be a fully implemented school based procedures (MSPEC and Gifted and Talented Agreed Practice Policies) to enhance continuous improvement in teaching and learning based on the Instructional Intent Statement.

3.7 Professional Learning

Goal: By the end of 2017, Staff will work effectively in stage based Professional Learning Teams to develop skills and understanding in the areas of English and Mathematics.

Key Area 4 - Human Resources Leadership and Management

4.1 Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Staff

Goal: Introduction of comprehensive "New Staff" Orientation Sessions for Literacy and Numeracy Agreed Practice Policies and effective facilitation of on-going support for professional implementation.

4.3 An ethical Workplace Culture

Goal: Implementation of comprehensive induction and mentoring programs for all newly appointed Staff Members.

4.4 Succession Planning

Goal: Year level Staff members will be invited to attend Leadership Team Meetings throughout the year to provide each person with a wider view of school administration and to share the learning outcomes data for their Year level.

Key Area 5 - Resources, Finance and Facilities**5.2 Use of Resources and Space**

Goal: Introduction of SPB4L procedures and equipment for student "playground" games and activities.

5.3 Environmental Stewardship

Goal: Active involvement of St Thomas More Primary School students in Energy and Resources "minders" initiatives to reduce environmental impact.

Key Area 6 - Parents, Partnerships, Consultation and Communication**6.3 Linkages with the Wider Community**

Goal: To establish inclusive links with local Men's Shed organisation and Bunnings (Ltd) Garden Project initiatives.

Key Area 7 - Strategic Leadership and Management**7.2 Innovation, Development and Change**

Goal: Implement new Literacy and Numeracy Pedagogy and Intervention Leaders (Chris, Alison and Cassie) Team in 2017.

These School Review and Improvement components have been chosen for 2017 as they complement the professional learning opportunities provided to staff members in 2016 and further the school improvement planning processes that are enabling strong gains in student learning growth.

Work completed in these SRI components will ensure that high quality pedagogical strategies are being utilized by teaching staff and improved student learning achievements are being maintained at high levels.

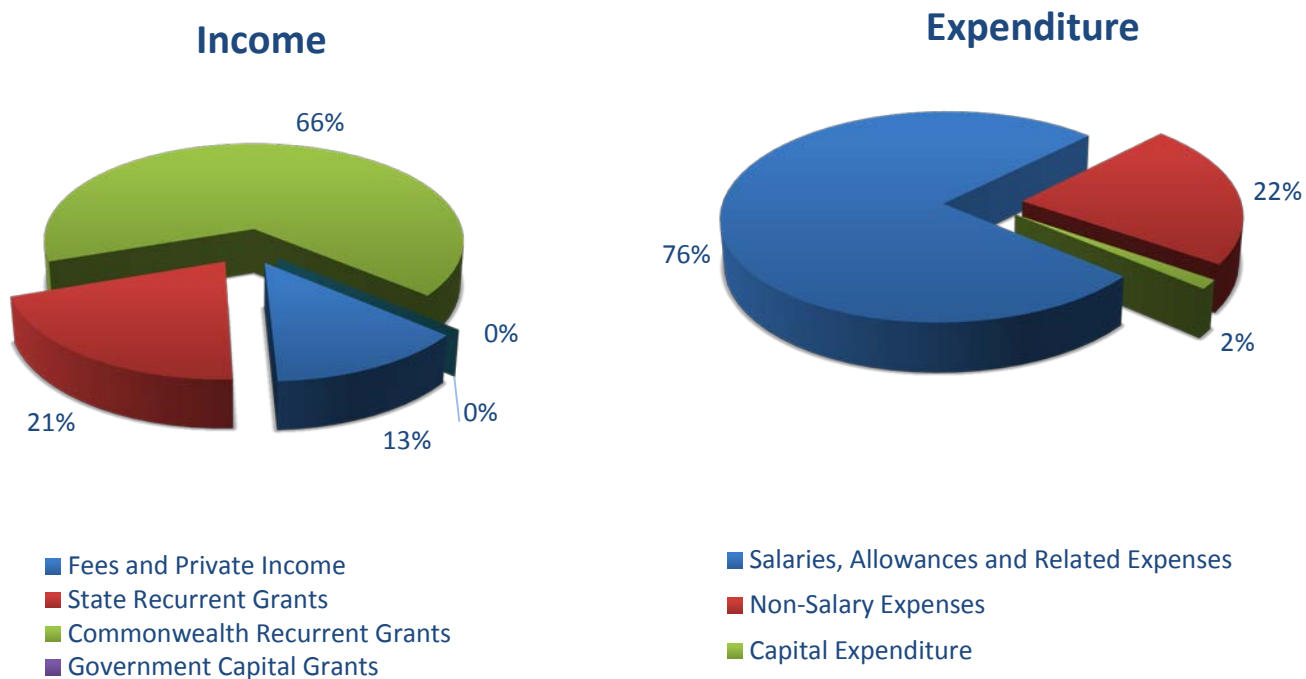
Financial Summary

Major school expenditure this year included - new Home Reading Books for lower Year levels and in-class reading resources; purchases of a wider range of Mathematics equipment for space and measurement strands of the Maths Syllabus, together with appropriate storage facilities in the school library; and, further acquisition of new Information and Communication Learning Technologies (ICLT) equipment throughout the classrooms.

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

Towards the end of 2016, significant funds were expended from the Parish SEDSO buildings and maintenance account to create a “new” student entrance into the Administration block and a much improved disabled access ramp to the Front Office.

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



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 Catholic Primary School. In 2016, the focus was on obtaining consistency throughout the school by using SET and EBS data to identify and inform decision-making processes within the school. This was achieved by ensuring the SPB4L handbook was updated with current information for staff and families, by allowing all staff members of St Thomas More the opportunity to question their understanding, whilst being a part of the decision making process, and by ensuring the expectations were apparent to staff, students and families alike. The continued use of the Sentral computer student administration system across the school made it much easier for recording and analysing the behaviours and, just as with learning, provide support to either enhance or remediate behavioural issues, as required.

The Stewardship Awards were titled “Soar with The Spirit” in light of Showing mercy, celebrating 30 years in our Parish, Affirming others and Reaching out to others. Students received this award for displaying a variety of Christian values inside and outside of the classroom environment.

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 2016 the school pastoral care focus was again “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 for student academic achievement, as well as, student behaviour were a major part of this.

In 2016 the school continued to have access to a very involved school counsellor (provided by CatholicCare) and a Pastoral Support Worker (PSW, also provided by CatholicCare). St Thomas More provided a variety of programs that supported students academically, socially and emotionally. With the assistance of the aforementioned professionals, the school was able to run a number of programs to provide support for children socially and emotionally. These programs included ‘Seasons for Growth’ (facilitated by the PSW), Mindfulness, Self Esteem and Social skills groups in Year 4 and Year 1 (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’ and ‘Good Sports/Great Mates’ program also ran this year, allowing the opportunity to work on building stronger relationships, developed through shared activities in and outside of the classrooms. With the assistance of our PSW, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School has continued to provide “care meal” support for families in our school community where needed.

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

Curriculum and Pedagogy

English and Mathematics: Throughout 2016 staff were engaged in regular meetings to work on the school's agreed practices for English and Maths, discuss student data and plan for student learning based on the data in the areas of English and Maths. Teachers implemented two assessment periods throughout the year in Term One and Term Three to collect assessment data in the areas of English and Mathematics, and use this data to track student progress. Teachers set individual goals for students and created plans to meet these goals.

Syllabus implementation: 2016 saw the implementation of the new HSIE Syllabus for History and Geography. All teachers began using the HSIE (History and Geography) Syllabus document for planning and implementing their teaching programs. To assist teachers with the implementation, new resources were purchased to support students with their learning.

Technology supporting learning: 2016 saw the continuation of 1:1 iPads (BYOD program) in Stage 3 classrooms. Students continued to use their iPads to make learning meaningful and improve links between school and home, by allowing parents instant access to students' work. Students were introduced to Google classrooms during 2016, which allowed teachers to post classwork, homework and assignments in a central place for students to access at school, and at home, and again make parent access to their child's work easier.

Pods of iPads and MacBooks were available to all classes and were used in a variety of ways, to support specific areas of learning. Many teachers used iPads as part of the Literacy Block "task board" student learning activities. New iPads were purchased at the beginning of 2016 for K-2 classes, so each class now has access to 6 iPads. Interactive white boards remain a feature in all classrooms. Staff have continued to make excellent use of the iPads purchased by the Parents' and Friends' Association in previous years for their professional use in the classroom. These have allowed teachers to attend to administrative tasks, as well as, plan teaching and learning activities for their class.

Cross Curriculum

Harmony Wall Celebrations: During the 2016 Catholic Schools Week we embarked on painting a "Harmony Wall". Our wall has the motto "I Belong, You Belong, We Belong" which was the motto of the 2016 Catholic Schools Week and also incorporates our school motto – "Live in Truth and Love". The red and green colours of the wall stand for extremes of the Australian outback and the orange for the harmony between all Australian people. Each child in the school was represented by their handprint, as we are one community made up of many individuals.

In 2016 the profile of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was highlighted. Students participated in community activities, such as the Sorry Day Service and NAIDOC Week activities, and more opportunities were provided for these students to make cultural links through their activities with two Aboriginal Education Assistants. The school was also able to develop personal relationships with a number of local elders from Dharawal community by having them visit the school on various occasions and inviting them to share morning tea with the Indigenous students.

The school also embarked on the creation of an Indigenous Recognition Wall. The wall contains the Torres Strait Islands flag and the Aboriginal flag. The centre of the wall has the lyre bird, which is the totem

symbol of the Dharawal Aboriginal people, on whose land our school is built. The Indigenous families of the school were invited to place their handprints on the wall and the children of the school painted dots to connect our cultures together.

Creative Arts were alive and well at St Thomas More in 2016. The students had the opportunity to be involved in a variety of activities: Choir, Creative Arts lessons focusing on Music, Drama and Dance, and the end of year Christmas Concert.

Meeting the needs of all students

At St Thomas More students are offered a differentiated curriculum to ensure that they reach their best possible academic results. Learning is diversified through the implementation of small group intervention, individual learning plans for both Literacy and Numeracy, Personalised Plans for those children needing more support, oral language groups, MultiLit and MiniLit. The curriculum is also differentiated for those students who need extension. These students are offered opportunities to be part of the Diocesan SPLICED (Strengthening Potential through Learning in Interactive Challenging Environments) program.

The school's MSPEC (Managing Students Pastoral and Educational Concerns) committee supports teachers as they support children with learning needs. The teacher collects data and work samples in order to present children to the committee. All stakeholders then work collaboratively to improve the learning opportunities for these children with specific learning requirements and needs.

The Learning Support Centre caters for children with a variety of additional needs. A full time teacher and a Support Officer work in the Centre. English, Mathematics and Religious Education and social skills are the main components taught in the Centre.

All students in the school with special needs have a Personalised Plan that is devised collaboratively between the classroom teacher, the Learning Support Centre teacher and the parents. Teachers and parents meet twice a year to discuss and amend these plans.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

The 'Sporting Schools Program' (funded by the Australian Sports Commission) assisted the school during 2016. Purchases were made to allow students to participate in free, fun, healthy, organised sports activity sessions which promote a healthy lifestyle. Students participated in an Australian Football League (AFL) skills clinic run by AFL Team, Greater Western Sydney, and a Gymnastic skills clinic. These programs were conducted over six week periods in Term 2 and Term 3.

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 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 levels.

We had two students attend the annual Sporting Awards evening held by the Catholic Education office where both boys received the Red Sport Medallion. One student also received the Para Athlete Award for 2016, an award that has not been handed out for 20 years.

Year 5 and Year 6 children had the opportunity to participate in the School Public Speaking Competition, with one student from each Grade being selected to represent St Thomas More Catholic Primary School at the Regional Public Speaking Competition held at a neighbouring school.

During 2016, the children had the opportunity to learn keyboard, guitar, singing or drums through the Music Bus program. This program continued to gain popularity among the children. 'The Christmas Story Art Competition and Exhibition' invited children in Years 5 and 6 to express and use their artistic talents in a special art competition coinciding with the Advent and Christmas season.

Each Grade had four 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 in their classes. This year the talents of the St Thomas More School choir and Learning Support Centre students were also showcased at assemblies.

The School Choir and all students K-6 participated in a wonderful End-of-Year 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 Christmas and the talents of the students.

Student Achievement

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

NAPLAN

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

In May 2016 52 students from Years 3 (22 boys and 30 girls) and 46 students from Year 5 (22 boys and 24 girls) completed the NAPLAN assessments. In Year 3, 98% of students were above national minimum standards in Writing, 89% in Grammar and Punctuation, 86% of students in Reading, 85% in Spelling and 83% in Numeracy. Year 5 had 94% of students above national minimum standards in Writing, 85% in Reading, 85% in Spelling, 89% in Grammar and Punctuation, and 78% in Numeracy.

Growth data was available for Year 5 students and it showed the following results. 98% of students achieved growth in Numeracy, 91% showed growth in Reading, 98% showed growth in Spelling, 95% showed growth in in Writing, and 87% showed growth in Grammar and Punctuation.

Teaching staff has 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.

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	13%	46%	40%	15%	54%	30%
	National	12%	37%	49%	16%	47%	35%
Writing	School	2%	56%	42%	7%	74%	20%
	National	6%	43%	49%	18%	63%	17%
Spelling	School	12%	60%	29%	11%	63%	26%
	National	12%	39%	46%	17%	51%	30%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	8%	63%	29%	15%	63%	22%
	National	10%	36%	53%	15%	47%	36%
Numeracy	School	17%	60%	23%	22%	63%	15%
	National	13%	49%	36%	17%	53%	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 2016: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	88%	92%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	90%	94%
	National	96%	93%
Spelling	School	90%	92%
	National	94%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	88%	92%
	National	96%	94%
Numeracy	School	90%	92%
	National	96%	94%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

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

100% agreed that the school helps their child develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 100% agreed that the school provides various opportunities for parents/carers to become involved. 70% felt their child is challenged to maximise his/her learning outcomes. 64% felt the school strives to meet their child's individual learning needs. 66% believe the school provides appropriate information about their child's progress. 86% know that the school offers a range of co-curricular activities. 95% felt teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child. 86% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children. 75% believe the school effectively communicates information about activities and events.

Staff

92% 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. 92% believe the school challenges students to maximise their learning. 92% believe the school strives to meet the individual learning needs of students. 92% felt the school provides appropriate information to parents/carers about student progress. 100% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children.

Students

90% of students stated they were proud of their school. 92% think the school helps them understand their Catholic Faith. 94% of students believed their teacher encourages them to learn to the best of their ability. 92% of students stated that they understand their rights and responsibilities at school. 82% of students feel safe at school. 85% of students believe that if they had a problem at school, there are people who they can approach for help. 91% of students agreed there are sporting and other activities they can enjoy.



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