

Annual School Report 2015 School Year

St Mary's Primary School



Bowraville

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About this report

St Mary's Primary School, Bowraville is registered by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The *Annual Report to the Parish School Community* for this year provides the parish 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 to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school's Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office. This *Report* has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW BOSTES requirements for Registration.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The *Report* must be available on the school's website by 30 June 2015 following its submission to the BOSTES.

The contents of this *Report* may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this *Report* may be obtained by contacting the school on (02) 6564 7369 or by visiting the website at www.bwplism.catholic.edu.au



1. Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

The primary purpose of St Mary's Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. St Mary's offers students a quality Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the students to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school's mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students' achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2015. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards, in the school office and on class webpages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that St Mary's has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school's academic achievements. In 2015:

- Our students achieved at significantly higher rates in NAPLAN than similar schools throughout Australia.
- We received good news on the Year 6 Religious Education test where three students were awarded Credit and three awarded Participation certificates. This was a great result from a cohort of six students.
- One student was a finalist in the Moran Contemporary Photographic Prize in Sydney.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school's cultural program and community involvement. In 2015:

- The school community welcomed many visitors and conducted cultural activities of 'Connecting to Country' with a range of schools from across the state of New South Wales.
- St Mary's students opened many community events delivering Welcome to Country speeches in the local Aboriginal language, Gumbaynggirr.
- Our students participated in the Toast Urunga River Festival where they performed stilt-walking and drumming exhibitions. They were involved in the local radio station, broadcasting live messages and music to the community.
- The students participated in the 100th Anniversary of ANZAC Day march and service.
- Our senior students from Years 5/6 accepted an invitation to camp at St. Ignatius College Riverview.

Students performed well at various sporting events throughout the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights. In 2015:

- All students participated in the school's athletics carnival with a team of representatives progressing to Zone honours.
- All students participated in the school's cross country carnival and the school hosted the Zone Cross Country.
- All students participated in the school swimming carnival.
- A number of students represented our school with distinction at both winter and summer sports trials held across the diocese.

There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Mary's is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

Mr Brendan Kiely
Principal



1.2 A Parent Message

This year we have had the introduction of a new Principal and two new teachers to the school. This year has seen many great gains within St Mary's school. There has been significant Professional Learning for staff over the year especially in their understanding of Mathematical concepts so as to ensure our students are engaged, enabled and empowered.

Significant work has been done in embedding a professional culture within the school. The School Review and Improvement (SRI) process has led to rich discussions and collaborative conversations to determine the direction of St Mary's school over the next 5 years.

The school continues to make strong connections with the parent community and has assisted in organising appropriate parent education. We saw the partnership between NSW Mid North Coast Health and the school give parents and carers the education, community support and welfare they needed. The parent body in Kindergarten has grown this year which has led to an increase in involvement within the school through such activities as Mother's Day stalls, Father's Day stalls, Raffles, World Car Rally Tent, and Festival assistance.

The school continues to foster inclusion for indigenous families through the annual indigenous family faith retreat and enculturation throughout our beautiful school Masses and parish celebrations. The continuation of Gumbaynggir language into classroom lessons enables our indigenous students' culture and traditions be kept alive.

Michelle Flanders
Friends of St Mary's, St Mary's School Bowraville

2. This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Mary's is located in Bowraville and is part of the Nambucca Valley Parish which serves the communities of Nambucca Heads, Macksville, Taylor's Arm and Bowraville. School families are drawn from the towns and communities of Bowraville, Nambucca Heads and surrounding hinterland areas.

Last year the school celebrated 111 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest Fr Shelwin Fernandez is involved in the life of the school.

St Mary's is a parish school with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through activities such as:

- Participation of classes in weekly Masses on a Tuesday.
- Participation in monthly Parish Masses. The school provides opportunities for the students to more actively engage with the parish by providing altar servers for these Masses.
- Parishioner participation and support of Parish Masses.
- Involvement in Parish Sacramental programs.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text "To Know, Worship & Love". Catholic life and culture permeate school life with 2.5 hours of religious education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school's prayer life. The aims and direction of our parish school are guided by *Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework*. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate the essence of this statement into all aspects of school life. Religious Education is given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.



2.2 School Enrolment

St Mary's caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL 2015	TOTAL 2014
Male	3	3	2	2	2	3	1	16	21
Female	5	1	1	3	2	3	5	20	23
Indigenous count included in first two rows	4	3	1	5	4	3	2	22	28
LBOTE (Language background other than English) count included in first two rows	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2.3 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care monitor attendance each day. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term by the principal. The school uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher immediately the child returns to school. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2015 was 86.9%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

	Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Attendance rates by Year group	86.4%	89%	95.3%	83.1%	88.9%	88%	84%

2.4 Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile		Number of Teachers
1.	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	7
2.	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0
3.	Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.	7
4.	Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.	3
5.	Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.	10
6.	Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school.	7

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance figure is 97%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO. The school saw the transfer of a new Principal and the replacement of two teaching staff members.

2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the school and the local community.

The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways.

The values of respect and responsibility lie at the heart of Catholic schools, and underpin all policies and procedures. St Mary's Wellbeing and Discipline policy is central to everything we do. Staff continually review and discuss this policy. In addition, students, teachers and parents are regularly reminded of the school's commitment to these and other school values by newsletter items, assembly messages and by the nature of our interpersonal relationships.

During 2015, the Breakfast and Bus Program has continued. The students have access to free morning tea, fruit break, lunch and afternoon tea and travel to and from school on the school bus at no personal cost. Uniforms were sourced by the school and are stored on the school premises for parent purchases.

An emphasis is placed on the explicit teaching of respect and responsibility through programs and initiatives such as a reflection on behaviour through the Restorative Justice Program, and a whole school focus on Making Jesus Real throughout the school. Students and staff contribute generously to social justice appeals, including St Vincent de Paul and Caritas.

Students have participated in Community Services activities such as the radio station, stilt walking and drumming ensembles which performed at community events. In 2015, the school implemented a number of initiatives that promote respect and wellbeing of both students and parents. These included, the annual Indigenous Family Faith Retreat, Community yarning circles, Proclaim activities and Making Jesus Real initiatives. Many of the awards presented to the students throughout the year are indicative of these values.

2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:



- In 2015 the school participated in the School Review and Improvement (SRI) process supervised and supported by the Catholic Schools Office. SRI offers the school the opportunity to review all aspects of school life and plan ahead for the next 5 years. During SRI a number of staff, parent and student surveys and open meetings were conducted to gauge the opinion of all members of the school community.
- The Insight SRC Insight School Improvement Survey was used during this process enabling parent, student and staff to provide feedback to the school in a confidential manner. The result of the survey allowed for the school to begin planning and implementing strategies around the survey's data and adopt appropriate processes in light of the recommendations. This process assisted in developing the Strategic Management Plan for 2016 – 2020 and the Annual School Plan.

3. Teaching and Learning

3.1 School Curriculum

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies and Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

Across the school, teachers endeavour to implement the *gradual release of responsibility model* especially in literacy and numeracy. This is achieved through modelled, shared, guided and independent tasks. The teachers work within the teaching philosophy of "I do, We do, You do". Additionally students are informed of the learning intentions and success criteria through the use of WALT (We are learning to) and WILF (What I am looking for) statements. This is supported through age appropriate "I can" statements.

To enhance personalised learning, student progress is plotted along the literacy continuum to track student improvement and identify the learning needs of each student. The school continues to work towards developing 21st century pedagogy. This pedagogy will underpin learning across the school, Kindergarten to Year 6. This plan has been supported by the purchase of furniture to facilitate collaboration and communication between students. This has further been enhanced through the integration of Stage 2 & 3 classes and the introduction of flexible learning spaces.

3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 6 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 6 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

In Year 3, students who achieve Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieve at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

At St Mary's, school and student performance is closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and SMART 2 Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Mary's students in each band compared to the State percentage.



Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6

BAND	6		5		4		3		2		1	
	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School
Reading	30.5	0	19.5	0	21.0	0	19.0	50.0	5.7	33.3	4.3	16.7
Writing	15.9	0	38.5	0	23.0	16.7	16.4	50.0	4.3	16.7	1.8	16.7
Spelling	27.1	0	20.1	16.7	20.8	0	18.4	50.0	9.6	0	4.0	33.3
Grammar and Punctuation	32.1	0	20.4	16.7	23.6	16.7	12.6	0	7.3	33.3	4.1	33.3
Numeracy	18.8	16.7	19.3	0	23.8	16.7	21.1	16.7	12.6	33.3	4.4	16.7

Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8

BAND	8		7		6		5		4		3	
	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School
Reading	17.5	0	20.5	0	21.8	0	20.7	16.7	15.0	66.7	4.6	16.7
Writing	6.2	0	15.2	0	31.5	0	32.6	16.7	8.7	50.0	5.8	33.3
Spelling	12.9	0	27.0	16.7	25.2	16.7	20.0	16.7	10.4	33.3	4.5	16.7
Grammar and Punctuation	18.1	0	20.6	16.7	21.5	0	22.5	33.3	10.7	33.3	6.6	16.7
Numeracy	14.1	0	16.6	16.7	25.6	0	25.3	0	15.3	66.7	3.0	16.7

The data provided in the tables above has been further analysed. Even though 17% of Year 3 and Year 5 students fell below minimum national standards in Numeracy, 100% of Year 5 students had identified growth in Numeracy overall. In Reading 66% of students in Year 5 are at the minimum national standards. These promising results reflect the impact a number of initiatives. The school has implemented a range of teaching strategies to improve student understanding in literacy and numeracy, in particular, a focus on explicit teaching, teacher modelling and the consolidation of the Mathematics Quick Smart program and the introduction of the STAR reading program.

The analysis of 2015 NAPLAN results has identified Reading, Writing, Spelling and Numeracy as focus areas of future improvement. The percentage of students achieving minimum standards has followed previous years' achievements and is indicative of the focus placed on individualised student learning programs and intervention strategies adopted by the school.



3.3 Teacher Professional Learning

All teachers have been involved in professional learning activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the professional skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2015 were:

Staff Professional Learning Activity	Date	Presenter
Staff Development Day – Australian Curriculum NSW – History & Geography	6/10/2015	Leader of Pedagogy, Principals, Leader of Curriculum - St Mary's & St. Patrick's schools
Staff Development Day – Australian Curriculum NSW - Mathematics	5/3/2015	Anita Chin
Staff Development Day - SRI	20/7/2015	St Mary's school Leadership Team
Staff Spirituality Day	20/4/2015	Leadership Teams – St Mary's & St. Patrick's schools

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

Activity	Staff numbers	Presenter
K-2 Early Learning Plans	1	CSO Education Services Team
EMU – Extending Mathematical Understanding Project	3	Associate Professor Ann Gervasoni at Monash University
K-6 Science & Technology Workshop	2	CSO Education Services Team
Teacher Assistant Professional Learning Workshop - Mathematics	4	Danny Rankin – Additional Needs Consultant

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at \$7170 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by the CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

4. School Policies

4.1 Policy Review

School policies are reviewed regularly. The table below lists the school policies and notes any additions, changes or upgrades made during 2015.

Policy name	Status in 2015 (No change, new policy, changes made)	Access this policy at:
Anti-Bullying policy	No change	School Intranet
Behavioural Policy	No change	School Intranet
Work Health & Safety policy	New Policy - Updated	School Intranet
Child Protection Policy	New Policy - Updated	School Intranet
Critical Incident Policy	No change	School Intranet
Curriculum Policy	No Change	School Intranet

Enrolment Policy	No Change	School Intranet
Excursion Policy	No Change	School Intranet
Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy	New Policy - Updated	School Intranet
Parent Complaint Policy	No Change	School Intranet
Students with Additional Needs	No Change	School Intranet

4.2 Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at St Mary's Primary school requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.

Children who turn five by 30 June are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school's website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

4.3 Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

The school's Pastoral Care Policy promotes the wellbeing and rights and responsibilities of all students. This policy reflects the mission of the Catholic Church and is concerned with all students and staff having the right of respect, the right to learn or teach and the right to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

All students and staff have the responsibility of contributing to a safe, fair and positive learning environment in the classroom and on the playground. To live out this policy the school has adopted various programs aimed at helping and encouraging students to value themselves and experience wellbeing.

These programs focus on effective strategies of resilience, self-esteem, social relationships, anti-bullying, drug awareness, health and personal safety. The school's Pastoral Care Policy has been developed in consultation with staff, parents and students.

4.4 Discipline Policy

The principles of restorative justice are embedded in the school's Behaviour Management Policy. These principles include acknowledging the inevitability of conflict and hurt in relationships, working towards healing by repairing relationships, learning and growing from experience.

The policy is regularly communicated to all members of the school community. Students, staff and parents have a clear understanding of the expectations articulated through this policy and are supportive of the need to provide a safe and caring learning environment.

The policy acknowledges teacher and student rights and responsibilities, and is based on the Gospel teachings of love for self and others.

The school does not sanction corporal punishment or allow parents to administer corporal punishment in the school.

4.5 Complaints and Grievance Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly, and confidentiality is always maintained. The policy is available at the front office or from the school's website.



5. School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five-year Strategic Plan. 2015 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school's main goals and priorities were to:

Catholic Faith and Culture

Maintain a focus on building the Catholic Community within an Aboriginal Spirituality context.

Participate in School Masses

Support and investigate other areas of collaboration between parish and school Such as Invitation Days to Elders

Continue with programmes which nurture and support children during times of the emotional or domestic challenges they experience every day

.Provide professional development for the staff with Nick Grainger

Teaching and Learning

Continue staff development around the Australian Curriculum – History and Geography

Increase student performance through differentiated lessons

Embed 2nd tier intervention into the learning timetable.

Implement QuickSmart, STAR Reading program, and EMU (Extending Mathematical Understanding)

Provide staff professional development with a focus on teachers as continuous learners and leaders of learning and the Anita Chin Modules. EMU – Extending Mathematical Understanding

Organisation and Administration

Strengthen an inclusive and positive workplace culture

Implement an Indigenous Educator Worker (IEW) meeting each week

Support an eco-friendly culture within the school

Implement a bush tucker garden and yarnning circle

Develop a whole school Behavioural Management Process and Procedures Policy, highlighting the parents', staff and students' rights and responsibilities

Offer professional development for the staff with Peter Miles

Relationships

Review and consider innovative timetable strategies to support the introduction of professional learning communities

Maintain and promote a positive presence with parents and further develop relationships within our local community. Provide professional development for parents from Health Care Professionals

Send invitations to pre-schools throughout the year

Celebrate 'Elders' day' during NAIDOC Week.

Embed 'Connecting to Country' school culture through maintaining inter-school visits.

Host Year 9, 10 & 11 Mission Students from Catholic Colleges in Sydney.

6. Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2015 is presented below:

