2007

Annual Report

St Patrick’s Primary School, Griffith

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**Introduction**

As a Catholic Primary School we are committed to helping our pupils to learn about and live our faith. This is a challenge as increasingly our society is devaluing the need for religious instruction. With around twenty percent of our students being non catholic our challenge is increased. However, all receive the same spiritual education with the exception of receiving the sacraments and we have the same expectations of each family – that they fully support the Catholic ethos and Religious Education Programme of the school. Happily, this is the case and we have a very harmonious and tolerant school community.

As a staff we believe that we are making a concerted effort to help our students find and nurture their gifts and talents. We value effort and achievement and provide a comprehensive curriculum to challenge all our students. We also provide opportunities for physical, cultural and social development as well as emphasising the academic and spiritual dimension.

2007 has been marked by many highlights and marvellous achievements. Many are recorded in this Report but a fuller account can be found in our weekly newsletter located on our school website.

**1. The School**

The School

St. Patrick’s Primary, Griffith, provides education to the children of Sacred Heart Parish as well as the pupils enrolled from the surrounding villages and towns.

The School aims to provide an affordable catholic education to all pupils enrolled irrespective of their faith background or family circumstances.

We are committed to being a community of faith, learning, care and service, embracing our culturally diverse population and living up to our motto, “Do all things well.” We strive to implement our Vision and Mission statement

Religious Education

Religious Education in 2007 again was very busy yet rewarding. We are fortunate to have three priests in our parish – Fr Michael, Fr Rafe and Fr Anthony. Fr Rafe continues to support teachers and students in Sacramental years while Fr Michael provides us with beautiful celebrations. Liturgies and masses play an important part of Religious Education. Daily prayer in classrooms is also of importance.

The Sacramental Programmes of First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation are very always well supported by our Parent and Parish Community. The presence of Bishop Gerard Hanna, prior to, and at Confirmation is very special to the Confirmation candidates and their families. He speaks openly and honestly to the students deepening their understanding of Confirmation.

Raising money for the missions and good works are an important part of St Patrick’s school life. In particular money is raised through special events for Caritas, Marist Brothers and Mercy Sisters as well as our local St Vincent De Paul Society. The SRC organized fund raisers for these charities. We also supported St Vincent DePaul in providing items for their Christmas Hampers. Each class generously donated much needed items.

Infant classes have special liturgical celebrations throughout the year. Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Easter and Christmas are all celebrated through music, drama and readings. These Liturgies have amazing support from our parent community.

The internet is fast becoming a major resource tool for teachers when looking for information on units being taught in their classroom. The suggestions from the Resource Centre in Wagga have been invaluable.

We continue to work on building up resources for “Sharing Our Story” and we are very grateful to the Wagga Diocese Religious Education Department for their generosity in providing the resource: “To Know, Worship and Love”.

A Religious Education notice board in the staffroom hosts information for all the feast days and other important events throughout the liturgical year. Teachers are able to access the informative material in their classrooms.
The Diocesan Policy on Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education can be found at CSO Documents, Forms & Policies

The Arts
The Creative Arts Centre has been refurbished by the P & F Association and a lot of voluntary work by parents was undertaken. Professional painters finished the project and a great sound system was donated by Sacred Heart Parish. The end result is a fantastic venue for our students and classes are using the facility on a regular basis.
All classes are expected to fulfil the curriculum outcomes for the Creative Arts Syllabus. Grade Assemblies, Choral opportunities – our choirs won three sections at the Leeton Eisteddfod, guitar groups and a school band were highlights but the major Cultural event was the Primary School musical “Hits and Misses” performed to three sell out audiences at the Griffith Regional Theatre (over 1500 people). This combined music, singing dance and drama involving all students from Years 3 to 6. Audience reaction was extremely positive and our pupils thoroughly enjoyed their time on a professional stage. Credit goes to our staff who wrote, produced, choreographed, arranged the music and lighting as well as designed the costumes. What a team!

Sport
The school Cross Country took on added interest this year with the event being held in the confines of the school grounds and the adjacent Council Park.
Parents once again came to the fore with their help and the infants classes came out and watched events making it a whole school experience. Our Groundsmen deserve many thanks for their dedication and ideas that helped develop this day.
2008 will see our K-2 classes competing on the day on a modified course.

McAuley House (Gold) took out the overall points scores in the Cross Country and Athletics while Marcellin (Blue) won the swimming point score.
Jarrod Hill (Cricket and Football) along with Thomas Keenan (Cross Country) took out the major Individual Sports Awards for 2007.
The school was blessed to have a Year Six that led the way in many sporting and social endeavours and showed great leadership to the younger classes.

Over many years the boys have been able to enjoy inter-school competitions like Rugby League’s Mortimer Shield.
It was pleasing this year that our girls were able to take part in the Jackie Murphy Netball Challenge against other Diocesan and Independent Schools.

Development Officers from many visits added interesting skills sessions to classes from Kindergarten to Year Six and this has led to a wide variety of activities being continued in all classes.

Term Four Sport is a time when students select their own activity.
Swimming lessons allow many of our Year Two, Three and Four students to develop their skills and confidence in the water.
Ten Pin Bowling was introduced this year while Yoga and Relaxation Skills was popular with those that took part.

Our school is lucky to have an Executive that allows teachers to develop and share their skills outside the confines of our school.
To this end, five teachers took part in Diocesan and MacKillop Managerial roles.

The Infants Athletics Carnival is growing in popularity each year.
Students have a wide variety of activities to participate in due to the imaginative ideas of the staff.

As the year draws to an end, the students are seeing a golf putting course coming alive in the school grounds and this will be an asset as teachers continue to strive to help develop hand-eye co-ordination activities.

School Initiatives
There are a range of initiatives to support learning across the school such as Jolly Phonics in Kindergarten, Language Classes, continuing the MIA Writing Project K-6, Sena Maths Project with Years 1,3 4 and 5 which is Diocesan sponsored as well as the Diocesan funded Literacy Project with Years 3 and 4. Others are listed elsewhere in this Report.
Orientation day
New Kindergarten pupils experienced a routine day with little lunch, big lunch and playtime. Parents have a meeting where all the important issues regarding the school are outlined and information is given to help parents and their child with the transition to school. Liaising with the Child Care Centres and Preschools is also carried out before children are put into classes. On Orientation Day, while the Year 6 students went to Marian College each Grade moved up to the next grade for the day. This created not only a lot of fun and excitement but assisted in the transition process.

School Policies
The following policies are available at St Patrick’s and/or on the Wagga Wagga Diocesan Website.

- Enrolment Policy
- Student Welfare/Discipline Policy

Grievance & Complaints Procedure
The school has adopted an approach to resolving complaints and grievances that is based on procedural fairness. It recognising that parents/caregivers and students must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory way.

Parents/students with a complaint are encouraged in the first instance to contact their class teacher. If the need then arises contact with the Principal and the Catholic Schools Office may be appropriate.

Link www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/

School Council
A big thank you to all the parents of the school, for their continuing support and guidance throughout the year. Your involvement in the School Council, P&F and help in the classrooms and canteen, freely assisting the school, students, teachers and staff is greatly appreciated. When it comes to our children, we all have something to offer by being actively involved in our school community. Through your generosity our School is greatly enriched.

With the support of the P&F, Father Michael and the Parish, parents and further Government funding, we have been able to greatly expand the maintenance and upgrades to the school. These include the fencing, additional computers and printers for the school, finalising the painting of the whole school, additional carpeting and the development of the Creative Arts Centre.

With much of the long term maintenance of the school up to date, the school continues to be in a very sound position for the medium term.

Thank you to the retiring Council members, your input and support has been greatly appreciated. Additionally a very warm welcome to the incoming Council members and I hope you find your time rewarding and beneficial to St Patrick’s School.

Finally I would like to add a personal thanks to our Principal Robert Keady, Assistant Principal Christine Calabria and all our Teachers and Staff who have done a wonderful job developing, preparing and supporting our children as they progress through to high school. A Job well done.

Andrew Mott
Chairperson
St Patrick’s School Council
2. Information on Key School Programs

Curriculum Focus
At St Patrick’s all teachers are expected to cover the NSW Board of Studies Syllabus in each of the Key Learning Areas as well as the Diocesan Religious Education Programme. Teachers are able to use a variety of teaching and learning activities to achieve the syllabus outcomes and these are set out in their class programmes.

Early in November we submitted our English Policy to a panel from the Catholic Schools Office as part of the Board of Studies School Registration requirement. Teachers were also required to submit their class programmes, assessments and samples of student work.

The school policies and the implementation by teachers were deemed to be of a high standard and meeting Registration requirements.

The remaining KLA Policies will be developed according to the Diocesan timetable.

Our Assessment Policy as an overarching policy is being implemented. Teachers are expected to assess pupil learning levels before commencing units of work.

Teachers are required to have a Class Programme that implements School/Diocesan and Board of Studies requirements. These programmes are supervised by the School Executive. Programmes have an organizational and KLA section. They contain a timetable, assessment plan, class profile, an outline of how the class generally operates as well as linkage to the school Vision and Mission Statement.

The school is using the Diocesan Report to parents.

Programs to Support Learning
Italian was continued as the L.O.T.E. component in 2007 with all children being involved with Italian lessons on a weekly basis. Our Italian language teacher is employed by Co. As. It – a branch of the Italian government. The programme continues to be family and community based with emphasis on the importance of the extended family in the Italian culture.

A highlight for this year was the mini concert for Italian National Day.

Equity Programs
Commonwealth and Diocesan funding have been provided for Equity Programmes to improve the learning opportunities for our Aboriginal students and the large number of students for whom English is a second language.

Students having LOTE support were assessed and placed from phase 1 (New Arrival students) to Phase 4 (competent literacy learners working at grade level). The LOTE teacher’s role has been to devise programmes that develop oral and written literacy skills and assisted with understanding Australian culture.

Five children were funded for Aboriginal Education and all were supported in the classroom with a Teacher.

Riding For The Disabled continued every Monday in Terms 2 and 3 with two of our Special Needs children participating.

Programs to Support Students
Students with Special Needs are an integral part of our mainstream school. In 2007, 23 children with disabilities received support. Of these, 5 were funded for Autism, 2 for Cognition and multiple disabilities, 1 for Hearing Impairment and 15 for Language Disorders. Children worked in the classroom with a Teacher Assistant or were withdrawn, depending on their area of need. Twelve of the children who were funded for language participated in the Learning Support language Classes. Individual Education Programme meetings for students with disabilities were held twice a year in consultation with Parents, Education Officer, Teacher, Teacher Assistant and Special Needs Co-ordinator.

In Terms 1 and 2, children in the Year 1special Language Group benefited from intensive in-class support in Receptive and Expressive Language, Phonemic Awareness and Phonological Awareness, 4 days per week for 40 minutes each day.

The Talking and Listening Programme also continued throughout the year for
Kindergarten children who had difficulty acquiring Literacy skills. Two groups of 6 children were withdrawn for 45 minutes 3 times per week for intensive work in Receptive and Expressive Language, Phonemic Awareness, as well as CAP and text reading. As children became confident in this area, class teachers would replace these children with those whose needs were greater, thus ensuring that those with the greatest needs were targeted.

Learning Support Language Classes continued in 2007. In Term 1, a Phase 3 group continued with support while in Terms 2 and 3, two groups of Phase 2 children continued and two groups of Phase 1 children began their programme. Another 2 children are no longer eligible for Language Disability funding as a result of the programme.

Small groups of Year 4 children benefitted from intensive work in Phonemic Awareness and Reading in Terms 2 and 3, while children from Years 5 and 6 were withdrawn in Term 4 with a greater emphasis on Spelling and Writing.

Gifted and Talented
Students were selected to participate in PIP (Personal Interest Projects) using a variety of identification strategies. These included past participation in PIP, teacher nomination (both present and past teachers), peer nomination, performance in external testing such as BST and university testing.

A new and exciting element to the Gifted Programme in 2007 was the introduction of formalised testing to selected kinder students. The K-BIT (Kaufman Brief Intelligence test) was administered to students in term 2 with 6 Kinder students being selected to participate In the programme. It is hoped that the same programme will continue in 2008.

The overall scaffold of the PIP programme utilises Pirozzo’s matrix (a blend of Multiple Intelligences and Bloom’s Taxonomy), Topics covered in 2007 included: Myths and Legends, the Greenhouse Effect, Water Conservation, Zoology, Codes and Ciphers and Etymology.

Reading Recovery
During the year, twelve children (including 3 students with ESL background and 1 with funding) were able to access a series of individualised lessons in the Reading Recovery Program to assist them in the reading and writing process.

These children began with an average reading text level of 6 and completed the program with an average instructional level of 17. Children returned to their classroom within the average range of class readers as is the program’s aim.

As a result, the year 2007 has been a most successful year for students who were targetted by the Reading Recovery Program.

Technology
The Technology Committee continued with their strategic plan for 2007. Primary classes were provided with a new PC each. A number of classes established mini hubs to establish computer banks in their classrooms. A ceiling mounted projector was installed in the Technology Centre enabling Interactive technology to be used.

A number of professional development courses were offered on Microsoft Office as a learning tool, Interactive whiteboards and curriculum integration.

A Scope and Sequence is being developed for each grade containing the minimum expectations of skill mastery for each pupil. This will be used as a checklist and passed on to the next year’s teacher.

Respect and Responsibility
The school follows the Commonwealth Government’s directive regarding displaying the Values for Australian Schooling posters and the National Safe Framework in a prominent place. Our School Vision and Mission Statements state clearly.

A Values and Drug Forum was held for parents and teachers in March organised by the School Council. The Council appointed a committee to analyse the feedback. This was reported to the school community in the school newsletter during Term 3.
Student Achievement

Statewide Tests and Examinations
The table below indicates the percentage of students who have achieved national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

Year 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>97.4</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basic Skills 1998 to 2007
Our school has participated in BST Literacy and Numeracy since 1998 and in the BST Writing since 2001. The school monitors the BST Trend Data each year and uses that information to inform its learning and teaching practices for the upcoming year.

Students engaged in a wide range of learning activities, competitions and projects from Kindergarten to Year 6. These ranged from school level through to competing against students across the state. A number of these achievements (e.g. Sport) are listed elsewhere in this Report.

Achievements included:
- Australian Schools Mathematics
- Competition – open to students from Years 3-6. Students gained 10 Distinctions and 20 Credit Awards.
- Australian Schools English
- Competition – 10 Distinctions and 26 Credit Awards
- Cultural Achievements – Our School
- Choirs performed at a range of venues and were successful at the Leeton Eisteddfod in a number of categories. Many students also competed individually in Dance, Drama, Verse, Public Speaking and Musical sections.
- The School Spelling Competition was held in Term 4. Years 3-6 competed for class and grade championships then combined into Years 3 and 4 for the Junior and Years 5 and 6 for the Senior Championships.
- School Chess Championship. Weekly competitions for Years 2-6
- culminated in the School Championship across the school including Kindergarten. 120 students participated.
- A Guitar Group and School Band was formed by Mr Pendlebury
- ‘Four Decades of Hits and Misses’ was performed to 3 appreciative audiences at the Griffith Regional Theatre by students in Yr 3-6 in September.
- Student Opportunities included:
  - Year 5-3 day excursion to Ballarat and Bendigo.
  - Year 6 excursion to Canberra and the Snowy Mountains for 4 days.
  - School Discos hosted by the P & F.
  - International Pupils Day celebrations.
  - Education Week – Open day and activities.
  - Book Week – Book Fair, book Parade and visiting author
  - Grade Assemblies
  - Class/Grade/School Liturgies
  - Buddy Support Programmes.
  - Guest speakers and visiting shows.
  - Student Representative Council.

Staff Achievement

Professional Learning
The emphasis of Professional Learning for all teachers at St Patrick’s has been English and cross grade assessment design. All class teachers attended and participated positively in developing their knowledge and teaching of English to their students. This also included continuing with the Writing Project begun in 2005 and having the Year 6 teachers mark the BOS Ella Writing papers with Marian College staff.

Jolly Phonics was introduced to the Kindergarten classes and presenters brought from Sydney to in-service the K-2 staff during a professional development day in November. Professional Learning using rubrics and cross grade criterion testing for School Reports was ongoing. Preparing for the English Policy Registration in November was intense and the extremely positive feedback from the Review Committee was very gratifying. All staff renewed their CPR Certificates as well as many gaining their Senior First Aid.

All Staff attended meetings on Harassment, Child Protection, Chemical Safety and Anaphylaxis which were run by Diocesan Staff.
Seven staff members are undertaking the twelve month Diocesan run Literacy training course. Many staff including casual teachers undertook a 5 week technology course run in our Technology Lab by a trainer from Sydney. Staff were involved in spiritual renewal, technology courses, special needs training for autism as well as taking on managerial roles at Diocesan and MacKillop sport carnivals.

3. School Renewal

SRF Overview 2007

Vision and Mission
As a staff we need to continue to search for ways to live and learn about our Catholic faith. This includes:
- Staff masses
- Teachers being credited to teach RE
- Supporting the Parish
- RE Professional Development Day
- Making explicit what our school stands for. E.g. Values Forum
- Developing a plan to involve students of other faith traditions, other Christian traditions or no faith to recognise and respond to these circumstances.

School Programs and Operations: Policies and Curricula
- English Policy to be developed for Curriculum Review
- Implementing the recommendations from the School Registration Report including using the Foundation statements, more ICT training and support and a year plan for staff development.
- Continuing to work with teachers to show how they use assessment for learning, and assessment of learning, to inform their teaching and increase students’ learning.
- Religious Education teaching to be a priority.
- Review all programs that support learning to ensure they meet the needs of students, are well planned with appropriate assessment activities and are ongoing.
- Teachers’ programming – look at ways for simplifying, ensuring collaboration and regular review.

Leadership, Administration and Management
- Role statements for staff members need to be updated.
- Development of a Staff Norms and Charter.
- Developing and implementing marketing strategies to increase enrolments especially in kindergarten.
- Implementing electronic roll marking.
- Ensuring statutory compliance elements are updated. E.g. CPR, Child Protection

Professional Learning
- All eligible need to attain their accreditation to teach RE
- Challenging teachers to adapt to the changing curricula and educational demands and needs of the children. The school needs to develop an in-service plan to assist staff and teachers to develop a professional learning plan to ensure professional growth.
- ICT support particularly with using Castnet.

Facilities and Resources
- A plan developed in conjunction with the School Council to ensure that facilities are maintained and resources upgraded taking into account the implications of reduced income due to the Drought.
- ICT plan as proposed by the school ICT Committee – introducing Smart Board technology and upgrading primary PCs.
- Upgrading the Creative Arts Centre to make it more user friendly.

School Improvement Targets
In 2008 we will:
- Prepare HSIE and PD Health and PE for BOS Registration
- Have “Jolly Phonics” used in all K-2 Classes
- Employ 2 In-school Coordinators to assist the Curriculum Co-ordinator with teaching and learning.
- Revise our staff meeting organisation to allow for greater emphasis on teaching and learning.
- Cable all classrooms for ceiling mounted projectors and work to provide greater staff mastery with Information technology.
4. School Overview

School Enrolment

Enrolment Policy
The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established an Enrolment Policy which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of this policy can be found at CSO Documents, Forms & Policies. The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

Student Enrolment Profile:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Indig’</th>
<th>LOTE*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>253</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background Other Than English

Structure of Classes

The following table is the number of students within each grade at St Patrick’s School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each grade there are three classes – a total of 21 classes.

Staff

Teacher Standards

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:
A) have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution
B) have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution but no formal teacher education qualifications
C) have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St Patrick’s Staff is made up of:

- Full time teachers 21
- Part time teachers 13
- Teacher Assistants 6
- Library Assistant 1
- Secretary 2
- Canteen Supervisor 1
- Grounds men 2
- Cleaner 1

St Patrick’s Staff are made up of 7 (+2 grounds men) male staff. The rest are all female.

The teaching staff is experienced with the majority having over 10 years of teaching experience. One teacher is seeking accreditation with the NSW Institute of teachers. One permanent teacher is on maternity leave.

In addition to the 6 Key Learning Areas and Religious Education, St Patrick’s School also provides students with support programs designed to assist learning. Each program has a specialised teacher.
- ESL
- Reading Recovery
- Special Needs – Language Classes
- Italian
- Library
- Music – voluntary Choirs, guitars and a band
- Talented Students- Personal Interest Program

Resources & Facilities

- Carpeting of 601/2/3
- Replace printers Grade 3- 6
- Improve classroom ICT resources
- Additional Resources for RE.
- Update classroom readers
- Complete Primary Toilet Block refurbishment
- Paint 100 and 700 Blocks and Technology Centre
- Renovate and paint Creative Arts Centre
- Install underground watering system in the Primary area.
- Install underground watering system in the Primary area.
- New computer in each Primary classroom.
Parent Involvement and Participation
There have been many opportunities for the parents to be involved in the school. Elected parents onto the School Council have a responsibility to the parent body to ensure that the financial health of the school is safeguarded and that the school is moving forward to the satisfaction of parents. The council planned and hosted a Values and Drug Forum after surveying the parent community and presented the feedback. Council provided parents with the issues raised at the forum.

The P and F association have been very active and a large number of parents have taken leadership roles for social and fundraising events. An example was the renovation of the Creative Arts centre organised and paid for using both voluntary and professional labour by the P and F.

Parents are active and welcome in classrooms and involved across all aspects of the school.

Community Use of School Facilities
The Community has access to the school’s facilities with approval by the school Principal.

Community Satisfaction
The following information has been provided to the school/college. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction our community has with St Patrick’s.

Parents
My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at St Patrick’s. The results were gained from a survey sent home in the School newsletter.

Strongly Agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree
80%
20%
0%
0%

Students
Student information was gained by asking students in their classrooms. About one third of classes supplied information for this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
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Financial Statement Summary
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About This Report
This report was prepared by the Principal, members of the School Executive and teachers with responsibility for specialist learning areas.