

St Mary's Primary School

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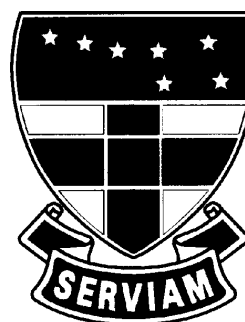
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Parish Priest: Monsignor Ted Wilkes

Parish: Sts Mary and Joseph's Cathedral

Principal: Mrs Suzanne Fern

**ST MARY'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL
ARMIDALE NSW**



Annual School Report 2012

Mission/Vision Statement

St Mary's Catholic Primary School lives and celebrates the Gospel values in the rich traditions of the Catholic faith. It is a place where students are nurtured and empowered to become independent lifelong learners. St Mary's is a harmonious community where all members are valued and respected. St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a sacred place where we live Christ's mission in word and action. With Christ as our guide and inspiration we welcome all and encourage each other to grow spiritually. We are rich in stories and tradition providing a strong foundation for life. Educational excellence drives our successful and dynamic learning community. We nurture innovative approaches to teaching and learning ensuring opportunities for individual achievement. Learning is collaborative and student centred focusing on meeting current and future needs. Students have pride and confidence in their work and are challenged to reach their potential. St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive community that embraces compassion and respect for all. We work and grow together in a happy, secure and healthy environment where every individual has a sense of belonging. We are enriched by strong partnerships with families, parish and the wider community as we prepare our students to be effective leaders of tomorrow.

About this Report

Registration.

St Mary's Primary School is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale, the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990. The annual report provides parents and the wider school community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2012 and gives information about 2013 priorities. This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. This Report is sent to the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale for validation with the requirements of the Education Act 1990 before being forwarded to the Board of Studies. Following its submission to the NSW Board of Studies the report will be presented to the parent body and be available on the CSO website by 30 June 2013. The school consultant also validates that the school has in place appropriate processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for

Principal's Message

2012 commenced very well with the school facilities feeling fresh, new, tidy and visually appealing. Many parents comment on how great the school looks. We started the year with 299 students including 57 new students but had 297 for the Census.

St Mary's continues to provide a positive learning and caring family environment where parents, students and staff work cooperatively in partnership to build a strong educational community. Together we strive to ensure all children are nurtured and loved as they grow and learn. St Mary's is a happy school that celebrates a love of life. Through the dedication of a committed and professional staff the school has set many new directions, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning and the faith development of our students. Our teachers are also learners who work hard to provide the best quality education for the children in their care. They promote

a love of learning in their classrooms and encourage, support and challenge each student on their learning journey.

Throughout 2012 we have consolidated initiatives commenced in 2011 including: • Our Positive Behaviours for Learning focus, • 7 Kinds of Best, • Codes of Cooperation, • Professional Learning Teams and • Targeted Intervention. We were also nominated as an Aboriginal Focus school with additional requirements and expectations for meeting the requirements of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan. Sound systems have been installed in all classrooms thanks to funding received through the CSO Aboriginal Education funds. Our Aboriginal Family Forums have been well attended and enabled us to work with parents and students to set learning goals each term. A 'UNE 4 Me' Day in 2012 was attended by 8 of our Aboriginal students to enable them to enjoy a positive experience at the University campus. Two Waa Gaay residential camps for Aboriginal students identified with learning potential were held at Dubbo and Echidna Gully with 4 of our Aboriginal students selected to attend and 4 teachers also attending as part of their professional learning. At the beginning of 2012 we were able to tally the funding shortfall between the CBGA and BER Grant monies and the actual costs of our building projects. Substantial contributions by the Parish and the CSO covered most of this outstanding amount. The school's ongoing responsibility was to then identify and cost all existing and anticipated major building and maintenance requirements of the school for the next 5 or so years. Our P&F had committed to raising \$45 000 over the three years of our building projects and this donation was substantial in covering much of the additional building and maintenance work completed during the year. 2012 also saw the installation of a solar electrical system in one of our buildings as part of the National Solar Schools Program.

Camp Australia finalised the establishment of an After School service in our refurbished Hall at St Mary's in 2012. This service has been well utilised by St Mary's parents and is also a major attraction for new parents enrolling their children at St Mary's.

Life is busy and exciting at St Mary's with many extra cultural and sporting opportunities available. All students are involved in the annual Student Art Show, school choirs, cultural performances and excursions as well as learning Indonesian. Many also take on individual music tuition, join the school orchestra or compete in the very successful school chess club. St Mary's Chess teams have a formidable reputation at local, regional and state levels thanks especially to our volunteer Chess Coach. Our vibrant library is a popular destination with increasing numbers of students every year participating in the Premier's Reading Challenge. St Mary's students love their sport and excel through

representation in local teams as well as at Diocesan, Polding and State level. Representative sporting opportunities include swimming, cross country, athletics, orienteering, rugby, netball, touch football and even horse sports.

Many students in Years 4 – 6 also have the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities including Tournament of Minds and Brain Olympia each year. In 2012 one of our TOM teams won through to the State Finals in Sydney and one of our Brain Olympia Teams tied for first place in that competition. Student Leadership opportunities are provided early at St Mary's with students from Kinder to Year 6 being given the opportunity to lead as members of the Student Representative Council each year. Our Year 5 & 6 student leaders enjoy the opportunity to learn more about leadership through participation in the Young Leaders Day in Sydney, the Impact Student Leadership Conference in Tamworth and the Year 6 Excursion to Canberra each year. These experiences empower our students to grow in pride and confidence.

Our extended kinder orientation program and our friendly experience days' program for older students ensure new children are secure and confident when commencing at our school. St Mary's Starting School Expo provides parents of children commencing kindergarten in any Armidale school with valuable advice on how to help their child prepare for 'big school'. A number of local professionals generously give their time every year to provide quality presentations. Our Expo is also well supported by many local businesses who display a range of products required by first time school students.

Parents enrolling their children at St Mary's often comment that they chose our school because of its spirit of community. St Mary's is a welcoming and inclusive community where individuals and relationships are valued and respected. Our Class Parents ensure new families quickly feel that important sense of belonging. St Mary's is enriched by strong partnerships with families, parish and the wider community. We teach and embrace compassion and reconciliation. St Mary's again enjoyed much parent support in 2012. The very tangible support and spirit of cooperation that exists at St Mary's is evident daily in the generous contributions of many enthusiastic people.

Our 2012 Welcome BBQ and Fireworks went off with a bang with one of the largest number of families attending in years. A highlight of our year was our Catholic Schools Week celebrations including our Student Art Show, P&F Fete, Grandfriends Day and Preschool Open Morning. This week was particularly busy with numerous functions but sufficient helpers for each event guaranteed a very successful celebration of Catholic education

in Armidale. Literacy & Numeracy week was held in Term 3 and we celebrated with Open classrooms and a family Picnic Lunch. Parent Literacy & Numeracy Workshops were held for groups of interested parents. Science Week was also celebrated in Literacy & Numeracy Week with Mrs Menz & O'Connor students leading all students K-6 in a series of exciting Science lessons.

At the end of an extremely busy year we sincerely thank both the Parish and Parent community for the extraordinary support they have given us throughout the year. Monsignor's support of myself and our school has been invaluable and he will be missed as he moves to his new Parish in Tamworth. The Parish has also been very generous in their financial support

Likewise the P&F have been tireless in their fundraising efforts this year. The parent community have been asked for help throughout the year and have been generous with their support of the Fete, P&F Revue, Working Bees and other social functions. Another successful P&F Revue saw very polished performances that were well received by packed audiences. We sincerely thank the many parents and friends of St Mary's school community who work together to create these fantastic shows.

St Mary's has actively participated in community events and continued to enhance its outstanding reputation within the general community. St Mary's is a proud participant and supporter of many Armidale community events including the ANZAC Day March, Autumn Festival Parade and the Armidale Eisteddfod.

As we recognise and commemorate our strong and proud history we look forward to the future with much excitement. We now have Interactive Whiteboards and iPads in all classrooms and continue to ensure teachers receive appropriate professional development to support them in using this technology to maximise student learning outcomes. Active support from our School Board and Parents & Friends Association has ensured the upgrading of our ICT facilities designed to meet the current and future needs of St Mary's students

2012 has certainly been a successful and productive year for St Mary's. Congratulations and thank you to all members of St Mary's school community on a productive and enjoyable 2012.

Parental Involvement

The changes around our school over the past 2 years have been astounding. This time last year we were preparing for the blessing and opening of our new classrooms, and were, unknown to us, soon to start planning for the welcoming of Bishop Kennedy to

the Parish and the School community. As I write this today, we are just saying hello to Fr Abmar, preparing to welcome Fr Gleeson while farewelling Msgr Wilkes.

Our school has grown significantly over the past few years. An obvious example of this is the need to run 3 Kinder classes next year with many of the older classes already approaching 30 in their student numbers. 2012 has seen broader opportunities available to our children with every class now undertaking Indonesian lessons every week, along with Music, Library and PE. New structures and processes have made it easier to provide additional academic support to the students who would benefit from it, whether that be by way of structured programs like Multilit or tailored one-on-one sessions with teachers, Educational Assistants or specialists as necessary. The recent NAPLAN results continue to show that the hard work being done across the Stages to lift the Literacy and Numeracy skills of our students is paying off. Competitions, whether they be on the sporting field or in the academic arena attract our children and they can rightly hold their heads high in any field that they participate in.

A school such as ours cannot operate without the work done by all those who make up the broader school community - teachers, ancillary and support staff, volunteers, consultants, parents and the students themselves. On any number of occasions over the past 12 months, I have been proud to see our students out in the community representing our school, compassionately, respectfully and showing a true school pride and spirit. The charitable work done by the entire school community, including supporting Project Compassion and Children's Mission Week, raising money to purchase Swags for the homeless, or through activities planned by Mini Vinnies instills in our children one of the most compelling aspects of our Faith - caring for others.

When we originally committed ourselves to that expansive refurbishment process over the past few years, we also took on the requirement to make ongoing loan repayments on what we expected to be a major funding shortfall, but through the efforts of the CSO, Parish and P&F we will have effectively completed the building projects with no debt, and we now have a school that everyone can be proud of.

The broader school community continues to support the school to an incredible degree, through fundraising efforts such as our Fete and Revue. During 2012 these events raised over \$30k supplementing the funds raised and saved over the past 5 years enabling a significant contribution from the P&F towards financing the final items in the school refurbishment. The assistance given to St Mary's by the staff and students at O'Connor should also be noted. The high level of St Mary's students continuing their education at O'CCC shows that

we are forging stronger links within the Catholic community, again a feat we can be immensely proud of.

We couldn't do what we do, help our children grow to be contributing members of society without the guidance given to the School by our Executive, Msgr Wilkes and Fr Steven and now Fr Abmar, and we rightly say thank you to them for their passion, compassion and undying commitment. St Mary's School Board Chairperson 2012

Student Leadership

St Mary's has been a massive part of our lives so far. We have had amazing opportunities in our leadership role in Year 6, like representing our school in Sydney at the Leadership Conference. We have also had the honour of wearing our new school blazers for the first time. St Mary's is a brilliant school, where we learn to make friends and cooperate in and out of the classroom. We are proud to be part of St Mary's Catholic Primary School and we have learnt so much during our years here. School Captains 2012

School Profile

School History

St Mary's has a long history dating back to 1848. Our story and traditions have been shaped by the Ursuline sisters, the Patrician brothers and the De La Salle brothers. St Mary's is the oldest school in the Armidale Diocese, established by lay people in 1848. The Ursuline Sisters arrived in 1882 and maintained a presence in the school until 2001. The Patrician Brothers established a boys' primary school on the site from 1889 until 1897. Later in 1906 the De La Salle Brothers reestablished the boys' primary school and taught there until 1972. The school has been under lay administration since 2001. St Angela Merici was the founder of the Ursuline Sisters. The St Mary's buildings are named after St Angela, St Ursula and St Anne. The school crest is common to Ursuline schools as is the motto: "Serviam" Generations of families have been educated at St Mary's.

Location/Drawing Area

St Mary's is located in the Cathedral precinct of Armidale adjacent to the CBD. The Cathedral, Bishop's House, Catholic Chancery, Parish Hall, Ursuline Convent, Centacare, Catholic Schools Office and Armidale Diocesan Investment Group are

all located in the same block. Armidale is a vibrant town and is the centre of the Northern Tablelands. The town has full services and hosts the University of New England. This gives Armidale a unique character and diverse population. St Mary's attracts enrolment from the surrounding district including students from, Invergowrie, Uralla, Black Mountain, Guyra, Yarrowyck, Walcha and Wollombi. Our classrooms are housed in three main buildings surrounded by spacious and park like grounds planted out to make the most of the four distinct seasons we experience. St Mary's has excellent facilities and playing fields. The school library is well appointed and spacious. There are excellent computer facilities available for all students.

Enrolment Policy

St Mary's Primary School follows the Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools policy Enrolment of Students in Catholic Systemic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale 2002. This document can be obtained from the school office or is available on the Catholic Schools Office web site: <http://www.arm.catholic.edu.au>.

Student Enrolment

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2010	147	136	283
2011	153	128	281
2012	156	142	298

Student Mobility

In 2012 55 new students commenced their schooling at St Mary's. Of these 41 were in Kindergarten and 14 in other grades. Throughout the year 16 new students joined our school community. 11 students left St Mary's for other schools during 2012. 44 Year 6 students left St Mary's at the end of 2012 and 14 other students left to continue their schooling at other schools.

Student Attendance

Average daily attendance for 2012

Kindergarten	93.88%
Year 1	93.45%
Year 2	94.23%
Year 3	94.8%
Year 4	93.25%
Year 5	92.51%
Year 6	93.95%
All students	93.69%

Management of Non-Attendance

School attendance is managed in accordance with the Catholic Schools Office Guidelines for the Management of Student Attendance.

Absence reminder notes are sent to parents / guardians if an absence is unexplained after two days. Sending of the note is recorded by the class teacher in the Absence Reminder Notes Table. Excessive or unusual unexplained absences (e.g. if there is no response to the notes above) are followed up by a member of the school leadership team by phone or in writing by official letter. Occasionally, home visits are necessary. Where a child has more than 5 unexplained/unjustified absences (not necessarily consecutive), the School Action Plan for the Management of Habitual Non Attendance will be followed.

Attendance rates are monitored twice each term to identify students with unacceptable attendance patterns and/or patterns of consistently late arrival. Attendance and absences (including unexplained absences) are recorded twice yearly on Student Reports. Term attendances are recorded on Student Tracking Cards. Concerns are raised with parents as part of the reporting / interview process.

Letters are sent to parents/guardians of students with unacceptable attendance patterns and/or patterns of consistently late arrival as identified in the mid and end of term attendance checks. Parents/guardians are asked to meet with the Principal to discuss the reasons for the absences/late arrival and strategies to improve attendance.

The Aboriginal Education Assistant assists with following up parents/guardians of aboriginal students with unacceptable attendance patterns and/or patterns of consistently late arrival as outlined in St Mary's School Community Partnership Agreement

Consistent identification of students with unacceptable attendance patterns and/or patterns of consistently late arrival will require implementation of additional strategies including completion of the Keep Them Safe Online Mandatory Reporters Guide. Failure of parents/guardians to attend requested meetings and support the school Attendance Policy may result in the termination of student enrolment. This would be done in consultation with the Parish and CSO.

Policy updated in 2012

Staff Profile

In 2012 St Mary's had 12 full-time and 6 part-time teachers. In 2012 two teachers on staff

were successful in obtaining Coordinator roles – as our Curriculum Coordinator and as our PDHPE Coordinator. We also welcomed a new Indonesian teacher and a new Education Assistant. Due to increased enrolment numbers we also received a slight increase in our staffing which enabled the employment of an extra part time teacher.

The leadership team consisted of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Coordinator Two and Coordinator One. Three of the part-time teachers provided Executive Release time for the teachers in these roles.

The classroom teachers were supported by the following part-time specialist staff: Teacher Librarian, Student Support Teacher, Music Teacher, Indonesian Teacher, Aboriginal Education Assistant and 4 Education Assistants. There were two part-time Clerical Assistants. In addition there was a part time ICT Assistant and Canteen Manager.

During 2012 one of our Co-ordinators was appointed as Acting Principal of St Patrick's Walcha for two weeks. She also accepted a secondment to the CSO as Road Safety & Drug Education Officer for one day per week during Semester two. Another teacher was appointed as St Mary's Learning Enhancement Project Teacher for Term 4 2012 & 2013. In 2013 she will coordinate the implementation of the MiniLit program for all struggling readers identified through testing. She will also help coordinate the staff development in preparation for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

The staff have between 9 and 34 years teaching experience. All teachers hold teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia with 4 holding Masters Degrees and 13 holding Bachelor's Degrees. All staff will be returning in 2013 with the exception of our Student Support Teacher whose family will be leaving the area.

The average daily staff attendance rate for 2012 was 94.45%.

Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 3 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum.

Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* 100%

Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications 0%

Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context 0%

* Australian Education Institution - National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition

Percentage of teachers accredited to teach Religious Education 73

Percentage of teachers undertaking accreditation to teach Religious Education 0

Staff Professional Learning

During the year the whole school staff participated in the following Staff Development Days: Professional Learning Communities, Numeracy, Oral Language, Assessment in RE & Analysis of Student Data. Staff meeting PD sessions were also held on Professional Learning Communities, Staff Wellbeing, Religious Education, Literacy, Numeracy, WH&S, First Aid & CPR and Child Protection.

During 2012 staff have attended professional development on : Autism, RE, Aboriginal Culture, the National Curriculum, MiniLit, RE Storytelling, Grammar, Brain Based Learning, Keep Them Safe (Child Protection), Behaviour ,Live Life Well, Creating the Environment for Children's Learning and Social Interaction, ICT, Oral Language, Mental Computation and Place Value in Mathematics, Kids Matter, Asthma & Diabetes Management, Quicksmart Numeracy, Leadership Coaching, Team Leadership for School Improvement and Professional Learning Communities.

Specific workshops and conferences were held for Principals, Assistant Principals, Religious Education Coordinators, Education Assistants, Aboriginal Education Assistants, Librarians, Secretaries and Student Support Teachers throughout the year.

The Principal presented a leadership workshop at the Annual IEU Women's Forum in Sydney and another teacher presented at the Regional Twilight IEU Women's' Forum on her experiences as an Exchange Teacher in Wales.

In 2012 we also hosted some meetings and

professional development sessions in our new facilities. These included the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Meeting and the Diocesan Library Professional Day.

Catholic Identity

Religious Education Program

St Mary's Primary School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text To Know, Worship and Love as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Luc Matthys.

Liturgical Life

St Mary's is fortunate to be able to celebrate Mass regularly in the Cathedral. We celebrated our Opening School Mass with O'Connor Catholic College on Ash Wednesday. Our school captains were presented to the school and parish communities at this Mass. This year our Primary students attended the Parish Mass together on a Friday morning instead of attending over two days. Students prepared reverent and prayerful Holy Week Reflections. A highlight of Term 2 was Grandfriends Day which included a very well attended Mass.

All classes participated in Buddy Masses throughout the year. Infants' classes attended Mass once each term with their 'buddy' class. Buddy masses were advised in the Newsletter to enable and encourage parents to attend. The whole school attended Mass on Holy Days of Obligation. The Parish priests also regularly visited each classroom and provided the Sacrament of Reconciliation each term. Early in Term 4 staff and students enjoyed a very enjoyable Michael Mangan Concert. The end of year Mass was celebrated on the last school day of Term 4.

Four twilight prayer sessions were offered in 2012 for staff and parents. These focused on the themes of Lent, Pentecost, Eucharist and Reconciliation. Our school based sacramental program prepared children in Years 2, 3 and 6 for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Parents supported these programs especially through attendance at the Information Meetings and Enrolment Masses.

For the first time, we participated in the Catholic Identity Survey which was completed by 75 students, 14 staff & 21 families. The results of this survey indicated: "The well-supported Catholic faith profile and the vibrant prayer lives of the community members at St Mary's Primary School are to be commended."

Staff and Student Faith Formation

In 2012 21 Year 6 students from St Mary's received the sacrament of Confirmation, which was conferred by Bishop Kennedy on Pentecost Sunday. On the last weekend in August 26 Year 3 students received the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time and in November 30 Year 2 students received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. During Lent all students were involved in Holy Week Prayer Assemblies which were opportunities for parents, students and the wider community to reflect on the meaning of Lent and Holy Week.. During Advent, students in Early Stage 1, Stage 1 and Stage 2 presented Christmas Prayer Assemblies which celebrated the Christmas message of love, hope and goodwill.

Staff have the opportunity to gather weekly for Staff prayer. In Staff formation, 5 teachers were able to attend the Eastern Teachers Retreat, the Principal attended the ELIM Leadership & Spirituality program for Catholic School Principals from throughout Australia, our Assistant Principal attended the AP Retreat and our Religious Education Coordinator attended the 2012 REC Conference.

Four twilight prayer sessions were again held for parents and staff this year. They were led by members of the Diocesan Renewal team and focused on Lent, Pentecost, Eucharist and Reconciliation.

Year 6 Religious Education Test

Average score	Diocesan (%)	This School (%)
2010	70	68.4
2011	69	71.4
2012	68.4	69.8

Social Justice

St Mary's Social Justice program in 2012 was led by St Mary's very active and enthusiastic "Mini Vinnies" group. 58 students from Years 4 - 6 met regularly at lunchtime throughout the year to help plan and implement a range of initiatives to assist those in need both within and beyond the school. They have been extremely successful in supporting the Caritas Lent Appeal, the St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas Appeals, Assist a Student and the Children's Mission Appeal. Parents assisted with both the Winter Sleep Out and Christmas Party fundraisers.

St Mary's had prayers written by members of our Mini Vinnies group included in the NSW Mini Vinnies Prayer Book. Many students and their families attended the Mini Vinnies Commissioning Mass. Highlights of the year included the Winter Sleep Out, the visit by the National Director of Catholic Mission

– Martin Teulan and a Nursing Home Visit. Mission Week Activities including a Lapathon, Coin Line, Talent Quest and Movie Night which raised over \$4 300 to support a Catholic Mission project in India.

Another unexpected highlight was the purchase of 12 Swags through encouraging children to put their change from Canteen into a bucket to save money for the Buy a Swag for the Homeless Appeal. We were further surprised to subsequently receive an Australia Day Hero Award – School Award for our efforts in raising money to purchase these swags.

The Religious Education Coordinator assisted Stage 3 students who volunteer for community service each term. These students were mainly involved in cleaning the Cathedral in 2012.

Parish Links

St Mary's started the year with representatives attending Bishop Kennedy's Ordination which was a spectacular celebration. Once again our Stage 3 students attended major Parish celebrations including the Chrism Mass. Staff and all classes have visited the Cathedral to view the Year of Grace Icon. Many families were involved with Catholic Schools Week celebrations. These included the Diocesan Mass in the Cathedral & the inaugural Spirit of Catholic Education Awards Presentation. Three representatives of St Mary's attended the Bishops Commission AGM.

2012 was a memorable year as St Mary's participated in the Cathedral Centenary Celebrations including the Cathedral History Symposium, Masses for the Religious and the Clergy, the Centenary Dinner and the Garden Party that was held in our grounds and supported by Mini Vinnies students and families. Most students dressed in Olden Days costumes as part of the Cathedral Centenary celebrations Sadly we also had to plan a farewell BBQ for Monsignor Ted at the end of Term 4 prior to his transfer to Tamworth.

The school works closely with the Parish, welcoming the Parish Priests as regular visitors in the classrooms and school. Students are Altar Servers for both daily and weekend Masses. Parishioners are encouraged to support the Primary students at weekly Mass. In 2012 the classroom teachers taught the sacramental preparation programs for St Mary's students in Year 6 preparing for Confirmation, Year 3 preparing for their First Eucharist and in Year 2 preparing to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation. The school's Religious Education Coordinator was also actively involved in the Parish Sacramental programs for all three sacraments.

The Parish provides regular financial support for school building and maintenance projects. The

Parish Administrator is a member of the School Board and the Principal is a member of Parish Pastoral Council. Members of the school community including the School Orchestra supported the Bishop's Ordination and Cathedral Centenary celebrations.. Members of the parish community supported the P&F Revue and Fete.

Respect and Responsibility

During 2012 St Mary's school community further consolidated our 'Positive Behaviours for Learning' approach through our 7 Kinds of Best and Student, Staff and Parent Codes of Cooperation.

Values, expectations and agreed behaviours were identified for all members of St Mary's school community utilising our 7 Kinds of Best framework:

- Be the Believing Kind, • Be the Learning Kind, • Be the Achieving Kind, • Be the Community Kind, • Be Kind to Yourself, • Be Kind to Others & • Be Kind to the Environment.

Each Kind of Best was taught and emphasised throughout the year at Whole School Assemblies, Stage Assemblies and in each classroom. At the beginning of the year two weeks were set aside to allow a whole school focus on 'A Quality Beginning' during which Class Visions and Codes of Cooperation were developed based on our 7 Kinds of Best.

Highlights of this Initiative included:

- Classroom Codes of Cooperation developed & displayed in each classroom
- Explicit lessons focussing on the 7 Kinds of Best taught every week to reinforce positive behaviours for learning
- School Wide Student Code of Cooperation reviewed & distributed for family discussion
- St Mary's Term Behaviour Awards presented in recognition of different levels of student compliance with Student Code of Cooperation

During the year students were encouraged to reflect on their growth in demonstrating the 7 Kinds of Best behaviours. The Restorative Justice approach was utilized by teachers in their approach to behaviour management issues. Our Term Award system was modified with specific criteria for each award level allowing students to strive to achieve their best.

Students were encouraged to participate in the community ANZAC Day March and all were involved in special school based assemblies commemorating ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and NAIDOC Week. The whole school also participated in the International Pinwheels for Peace project on International Peace Day in September. The Student Representative Council led a number of initiatives aimed at developing students' pride and awareness of their school uniform and environment.

Congratulations to our 2012 School Captains – These students enjoyed attending the Young Leaders Day in Sydney with hundreds of School Leaders from Primary Schools in NSW during Term 1. Sponsorship from generous families and businesses saw the purchase of 12 school blazers which were proudly worn by our student leaders for many of these events.

School Curriculum

St Mary's Primary School follows the Board of Studies syllabus for each subject offered (as required for registration under the Education Act 1990) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office.

Features of the School Curriculum

During 2012 our school curriculum focus was on working collaboratively to improve student learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. To support this focus the following initiatives were consolidated:

- A Quality Beginning – 2 week focus at the beginning of the year on establishing Quality Learning processes and Positive behaviour expectations in each classroom
- Quality Learning Processes developed & displayed in each classroom e.g. Morning process, Pack Up process to maximise learning time for students
- The use of QLA Tools & Strategies throughout the school enabled us to address our focus areas of High expectations for all and Student goal setting and meaningful feedback
- Capacity Matrices were implemented in all classrooms to maximise individual learning
- Parking Lot used in all classrooms for student voice & feedback
- Classroom Meetings held weekly in all classrooms
- Implementation of Professional Learning Communities Meetings and goal setting process for each team
- St Mary's Literacy & Numeracy Guidelines implemented in all classrooms
- Use of CSO Achievement Targets in Literacy & Numeracy as the basis of the school's annual Literacy & Numeracy Plan
- Assessment Plans for Common Grade Assessments & Student Work Samples for each Year level developed & implemented each term
- Rubrics and/or common criteria developed to support allocation of the Common Grade Scale to these assessments
- Assessment for Learning strategies and terminology consolidated for all teachers.
- Standardised tests for all students completed throughout the year
- Student Tracking Cards updated each term with current assessment data
- Annual NAPLAN Analysis of SMART Data by all teachers to inform future planning
- Protection of uninterrupted learning time from 9 – 11am
- Homework Grid implemented in

all classrooms – content regularly monitored and reviewed by Stage teams • The integration of ICT in student learning at St Mary's was enhanced in 2012 by the provision of PD externally and internally for staff in the effective use of Interactive Whiteboards & iPads • In 2012 the school has received support from "Making Every School a great School – More Support for Students with Disabilities" funding from the Commonwealth Government. The purchase of an I-Pad allowed students to be supported at and during transition. The purchase of this equipment has enabled students' transition to be specifically supported through visual and story scripts. The equipment provided awareness and reduction of anxiety and stress for students at transition. • The final project accessed by the school from this Commonwealth Grant in 2012 was the use of I-Pads in year 2 to improve student outcomes for Literacy and Numeracy. Students were trained in the use of Apps which supported acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. The development of automaticity in number and sound recall was a focus and also included recognition of sight words. • Additional student learning opportunities in 2012 including Tournament of Minds, Brain Olympia, Individual music tuition, Indonesian, school choirs and orchestra, Chess, ICAS competitions and representative sport.

Achievements: St Mary's students excelled in a range of activities including: • Eisteddfod Successes by many individuals in Speech & Drama, Dance and Musical Instruments • 2 students were nominated in UNE Let's Hang It Exhibition & one student had his artwork displayed at the NSW Art Gallery as part of Operation Art • The TOM Regional Competition was held at UNE with the Social Science team earning the right to compete at the State Competition in Sydney. In the State Competition they gained second place • St Mary's Chess Teams won the Armidale Chess Schools Competition and the Regional Chess Competition • Two teams competed at the Tamworth Brain Olympia heats with one team earning the right to compete in the finals in Narrabri where they were placed equal first • One of our Year 6 students has gained a place in the Gondwana Children's Choir

Sports News: St Mary's students enjoyed success in a variety of sporting endeavours in 2012 including: • St Mary's students being named the 11 Years Boys Champion and the Senior Boys Runner Up at the Diocesan Swimming Carnival. • The Diocesan Winter Sports Trials with 6 students gaining selection for the Polding Trials. One of these was selected to play in the Under 11 Polding Rugby League team. • The Diocesan Cross Country with 5 students gaining selection for the Polding Cross Country • 11 boys participated in the Diocesan Rugby Trials with two boys making it to the Possibles vs Probables Game • The S3 Gymnastics was extended to include

S2 • St Mary's students being named Junior Boys Champion and Runner Up 11 Year Boy Champion at the Diocesan Athletics Carnival. 8 students in total qualified to compete at Polding Athletics Carnival. • In the Hanna Shield competition our boys came 2nd overall and our girls 4th

Student Performance

St Mary's Primary School uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, portfolios, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the nation-wide literacy and numeracy testing program 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 opportunities exist for external assessment results to be discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

Literacy and Numeracy

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May 2008. NAPLAN replaces the previous State-based Basic Skills Test 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. 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.**

Year 3 % in Bands		1&2	3&4	5&6
Reading	School	5	40	55
	National	13.8	37.2	47
Writing	School	2.5	35	62.5
	National	7.7	43.8	46.6
Spelling	School	7.5	50	42.5
	National	12.9	41.3	43.8
Grammar & Punctuation	School	0	40	60
	National	13.1	35.2	49.7
Numeracy	School	7.5	50	42.5
	National	15.5	49.2	33.4

Year 5 % in Bands		3&4	5&6	7&8
Reading	School	12	50	38
	National	17.8	49	31.3
Writing	School	24	62	14
	National	18.5	60.2	19.3
Spelling	School	12	62	26
	National	16.9	49.7	31.4
Grammar & Punctuation	School	26	40	34
	National	19.8	47.5	30.6
Numeracy	School	22	56	22
	National	18.2	53.1	26.7

Term 4 saw the release of 2012 NAPLAN Data. We were very pleased especially with the growth and progress of our Year 3 students. The Year 3 results are above the National average in all assessment areas. There is a higher percentage of students in the Top Band (Band 6) in Reading than the State average. 11 students achieved in the top two bands for all aspects of Literacy and 11 students also achieved in the top two bands for all aspects of Numeracy. The trend data for NAPLAN results shows improved results in Reading, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation, Numeracy, Data, Measurement, Space & Geometry and Number, Patterns & Algebra. Year 3 NAPLAN results were above State and Diocesan averages in Reading, Grammar & Punctuation, Numeracy, and Data, Measurement, Space & Geometry

The Year 5 results are above the National average in Reading. 17 students achieved in the top two bands of at least two aspects of literacy and 11 students achieved in the top two bands in at least two aspects of numeracy. The trend data for NAPLAN results shows improved results in Reading, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation, Numeracy, Data, Measurement, Space & Geometry and Number, Patterns & Algebra. 2012 results are above State and Diocesan averages in Reading. Student growth results for Reading and Spelling from Year 3 to Year 5 are above State and Diocesan averages.

National Minimum Standards

The lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) represents students who are

achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in each aspect of NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) represent students who are achieving at the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

The percentages of students in this school achieving the national minimum standard are reported below.

		Year 3	Year 5
Reading	School	97.5	98
	National	93.6	91.6
Writing	School	100	94
	National	95.3	92.1
Spelling	School	100	100
	National	94	92.8
Grammar & Punctuation	School	100	98
	National	92.9	90.5
Numeracy	School	100	96
	National	93.9	93.3

We were especially pleased with the percentage of students in Year 3 achieving at or above the National Minimum standards. Only one student in Year 3 failed to achieve at this standard in Reading. A higher percentage of Year 3 students achieved at this level in all areas tested than both the National and State average. In Year 5 we were also pleased with the percentage of students achieving at or above the National Minimum standards. A higher percentage of Year 5 students achieved at this level in all areas tested than the National average. More students also achieved at or above the National Minimum standards than the State average in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation, Numeracy and Data, Measurement, Space & Geometry.

School Policy Summary

Student Welfare

St Mary's Primary School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- minimises risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students
- provided student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development

The school's Pastoral Care Policy is based on the Bishop's Commission Policy Pastoral Care In The Catholic Systemic Schools Of The Armidale Diocese.

St Mary's teachers plan for and program specific Whole Class Support Strategies each term as part of our Student Well Being Program. This includes the explicit teaching of Positive Behaviours for Learning. Social skills are taught explicitly as part of St Mary's weekly focus on our 7 Kinds of Best. A scope & sequence of these focuses has been developed K-6 and a variety of resources are used by teachers. Individual Student Support Strategies are also documented and shared with other staff members as needed.

In 2012 as part of our focuses on Be Kind to Yourself and Be Kind to Others, all classes at St Mary's participated in classroom lessons aimed at identifying bullying behaviours, exploring the role of bystanders when bullying occurs and reinforcing the "Turn, Talk, Tell" strategy for dealing with bullying should it occur. The "Turn, Talk, Tell" strategy to bullying involves students turning away or ignoring bullies, talking to bullies by saying "No" or telling a teacher what has happened should the bully not respond to the "No". All reports and incidents of bullying are followed up with strategies and support offered to any victims of bullying. Any identified bullies are given appropriate consequences and also offered strategies and support to modify their behaviour.

The Class Parent program was once again useful in providing support for families in need throughout the year. Student well-being was once again enhanced in 2012 through the "Crunch and Sip" program in all classes which encourages a short snack break at 10am to eat fresh vegetables or fruit as well as the consumption of water throughout the day. A number of St Mary's students also benefited from the "Walking School Bus" option for travelling to school once each week. Nearly 80 students participated in the 'Walk Safely to School Day' activity. St Mary's is recognised as a "Sun Safe" and "Asthma Friendly" school.

The full text of school and diocesan policies are available on request from the school office..

Discipline Policy

St Mary's Primary School bases its Discipline Policy on the Bishop's Commission Policies Pastoral Care In The Catholic Systemic Schools Of The Armidale Diocese, Policy On Suspension, Expulsion Or Exclusion Of Students In Catholic Schools In The Diocese Of Armidale and Management Of Drug Related Issues In Catholic Schools In The Diocese Of Armidale. These policies are based on procedural fairness and are discussed with students on a regular basis. In compliance with the NSW Education Reform Act 1990, corporal punishment is banned in ALL Armidale Diocesan schools.

The full text of school and diocesan policies are available on request from the school office..

St Mary's Discipline Policy was updated in 2012 to include our focus on Positive Behaviours for Learning, 7 Kinds of Best and Student Code of Cooperation. The Time Out Behaviour Reflection Sheet was modified to focus students on the 7 Kinds of Best expected at St Mary's. The Discipline Policy now specifically refers to procedures to be implemented following reported incidents of Bullying or Violent behaviour.

Anti-Bullying Policy

St Mary's Primary School bases its Anti-Bullying policy and procedures on the Catholic Schools Office operational policy "Student Anti-Bullying Policy". The full text of this policy is available on www.arm.catholic.edu.au.

St Mary's Anti Bullying Policy was updated in 2012 to incorporate procedures recommended in the 2012 Catholic Schools Office Anti Bullying Policy

Enrolment Policy

St Mary's Primary School bases its Enrolment Policy on the Bishop's Commission Policy Enrolment of Students In Catholic Systemic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale.

The full text of school and diocesan policies are available on request from the school office..

Complaints and Grievance Resolution Policy

St Mary's Primary School procedures for resolving concerns and complaints is based on the Bishop's Commission Policy Complaints & Suggestions Policy for the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that members of the school community must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive, conciliatory environment. The full text of school and diocesan policies are available on request from the school office..

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

MYP once again conducted a School Results Survey for St Mary's in 2012. Responses from parents were received from 49.6% families. The Parents indicated

an overall satisfaction score of 82%. The best practice areas identified by parents included: leadership, general and resources. Responses from staff were received from 73.1% of eligible respondents. Staff indicated an overall satisfaction score of 82%. The best practice areas identified by staff included: Catholic ethos, resources, leadership and general. Responses from students were received from 94.2% of eligible respondents in Years 4 & 6. The students indicated an overall satisfaction score of 86%. The best practice areas identified by students included: leadership, Catholic ethos, general, resources, teaching & learning, and improvement processes.

2012 School Satisfaction Surveys was an overall satisfaction rate of 82%.

School Review and Development

Annual School Priorities 2012

In 2011 the CSO launched their new Strategic Directions & Intents and in 2012 we were required to model our School Improvement Plan on this framework.

CSO Strategic Direction 1: To promote family involvement in the faith life and faith development of children in Catholic schools. St Mary's School focuses were: • Assisting parents in their role as the primary educators of their children in faith. • Providing prayer reflection opportunities for parents. • Participation in the Catholic Identity project.

CSO Strategic Direction 2: To promote professional learning in the context of collaborative learning communities that enable teachers to design quality experiences for students. St Mary's School focuses were: • Maintaining high expectations for student learning • Ensuring school programs are collaboratively planned & continuously evaluated. • Establishing a spirit of collegiality, shared goal setting & responsibility for improvement.

CSO Strategic Direction 3: To foster a culture of investigation to inform the learning process, supported by on-going professional learning and target-setting. St Mary's School focuses were: • Utilisation of accurate annual target setting & benchmarks • Using relevant assessment & evaluation data to track, monitor and review student progress • Improved differentiation of the curriculum

CSO Strategic Direction 4: To expand the modes of and opportunities for professional learning and dialogue to strengthen leadership capabilities and capacity across the system. St Mary's School focuses was to embed Professional Learning Communities practices across the school to enhance the teachers' ability to work interdependently

CSO Strategic Direction 5: To foster positive family – school partnerships that focus on individual outcomes and the Common Good. St Mary's School focuses were: • Developing effective practices to support parents as partners in their child's learning. • Ensuring common shared values & expectations for behaviours and relationships • Timetabling of explicit lessons to teach the school's shared values, expectations & behaviours • Support of the School Community Partnership Agreement to meet our requirements as a NSW Aboriginal Focus School.

CSO Strategic Direction 6: To identify and promote sound financial, physical and human resource management and accountability mechanisms. St Mary's School focuses were: • Effective & strategic planning in the overall financial management of the school budget. • Updating of St Mary's School Maintenance Plan to ensure the school provides a safe, secure and well maintained physical environment • Allocation of financial resources to support the continual upgrading of ICT resources.

Projected School Priorities 2013

<•CSO Strategic Direction 1: Strengthen the process of staff formation in order to further staff commitment to and participation in the evangelising mission of Catholic schools. • School wide focus on meaningful prayer & liturgy

CSO Strategic Direction 2: Engage learners in varied experiences that maximise individual learning outcomes. • Implementation of Best Start Kindergarten Assessments to identify the level of attainment in literacy and numeracy for each child • Enhanced engagement of students in their own learning through the use of pre assessment tasks, clear learning intentions & success criteria & effective feedback from teachers • More effective differentiation of the curriculum to meet the diverse learning needs of students • Intensive implementation of MiniLit Reading Intervention Program for identified students Yrs 1-3 • More effective utilization of student data to analyse the effectiveness of teaching practices • Effective support of our Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer in building relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families in order to enhance their engagement with the school and improve student educational outcomes • Strategies implemented/consolidated as an Aboriginal Focus school to meet the requirements of the 'Closing the Gap' initiative: o Identify strategies to address readiness for school o Reinvigorate the formal agreement between the school, families and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community o Consolidate & strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family forums o Commence an evidence-based attendance strategy in consultation with parents and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander community o Further consolidate whole-of-school literacy and numeracy programs o Encourage staff participation in immersion programs that will assist in leading improvement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. • Improved use of ICT to enhance teacher & student learning

CSO Strategic Direction 2: Review and consolidate programs and practices to build resilience and enhance physical, social, spiritual, cognitive, moral and emotional well-being. • Implementation of Kids Matter Modules – Developing a Positive School Community & Social & Emotional Learning for Students

CSO Strategic Direction 3: Identify leadership potential at all levels and implement formation programs to offer opportunities to enhance individual capabilities and organisational capacity. • Effective utilization of our Learning Enhancement Project Teacher to: o support the implementation of MiniLit and Readon o support staff in the familiarization and planning stage for implementation of the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum • Utilization of the National Professional Standards for Teachers as a common focus for the teachers' annual goal setting process • Participation of all teachers in the Team Leadership for School Improvement (TLSI) Modules to further assist & engage them in the process of ongoing school improvement

CSO Strategic Direction 4: Nurture partnerships within and between schools, parishes and the Catholic Schools Office for the Common Good • Development of a broader vision for St Mary's Mini Vinnies group • In collaboration with parents, establishment of a K-6 focus on environmental education • Implementation of PLPs designed in collaboration with students and parents to better cater for the learning needs of Aboriginal students

CSO Strategic Direction 5: Make more effective use of existing accountability requirements, to guide school and system improvement. • Implement electronic Class Rolls to monitor student attendance • Updating of WH&S planning & procedures • Updating of Staff Handbook & effective implementation of Staff Induction processes • Major Policy review prior to 2014 Audit

Major Achievements from the 2012 Annual Plan

•CSO Strategic Direction 1: Promote family involvement in the faith life and faith development of children in Catholic schools. • Increased links with the Parish & Diocese through strong involvement in Bishop Kennedy's Ordination & the Cathedral Centenary • Participation in the Catholic School Identity Profiling Project • More widespread distribution and use of our Student, Staff & Parent Codes of Cooperation as

reflection tools • Further enhancement of our Quality Beginning program to establish Quality Learning processes and Positive behaviour expectations in each classroom • Modification of the PDHPE Scope & Sequence to include whole school Positive behaviour focuses

CSO Strategic Direction 2: Promote professional learning in the context of collaborative learning communities that enable teachers to design quality experiences for students • Provision of quality extended PD on Professional Learning Communities for 4 more staff members • Further consolidation of Professional Learning Community practices with a focus on staff & student learning, teacher collaboration and improving student results • Common and consistent RFF time established for each Stage team • MiniLit training for most Infants staff & initial implementation of MiniLit strategies in classrooms • Whole staff participation in Numeracy PD to establish common vocab, strategies & focuses for use in all classes K-6

CSO Strategic Direction 2: Foster a culture of investigation to inform the learning process, supported by on-going professional learning and target-setting • Implementation of Targeted Intervention with additional staffing allocation to each Stage Team for a designated hour each day in order to better meet the learning needs of all students • Effective intervention strategies for lower & higher performing students in literacy & numeracy • Use of mastery targets for student achievement K-6 • Enhanced use of data to inform teaching and learning • Common assessment tasks with agreed upon criteria utilised K-6 • Improved differentiation of the curriculum within Stage based classes based on different learning mastery targets for students in each Grade • Successes in Gifted & Talented programs including Tournament of Minds, Brain Olympia & Chess • Successful integration of new technologies by staff and students to enhance learning

CSO Strategic Direction 3: Expand the modes of and opportunities for professional learning and dialogue to strengthen leadership capabilities and capacity across the system. • Enhanced identification of our new Student School Leaders through the purchase of new school Blazers • Appointment of a Learning Enhancement Teacher for Term 4 and into 2013 to coordinate the implementation of MiniLit

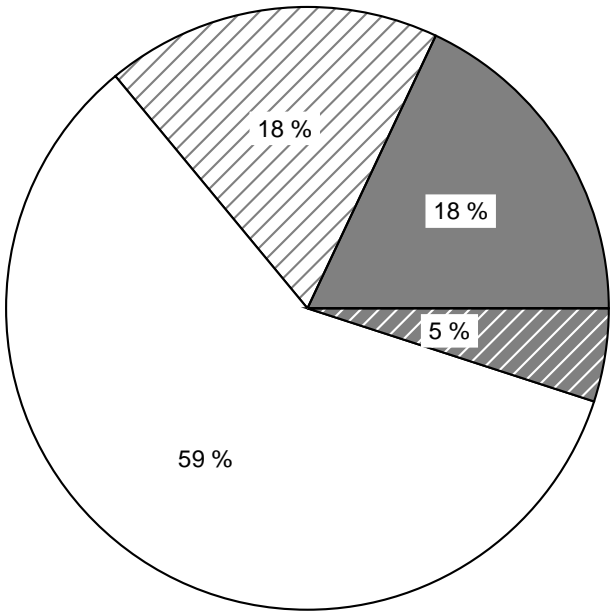
CSO Strategic Direction 4: Foster positive family – school partnerships that focus on individual outcomes and the Common Good. • Provision of workshops for parents to enhance their skills & understanding as partners in education • Pleasing Parent Involvement & Feedback in completing Surveys, participating in Parent Workshops & supporting School Events • Increased ability to meet the needs of working parents through the establishment of a quality After School Care program • Increased

student enrolments for 2013 • Participation by 6 staff members in the Diocesan Let’s Talk Dhawunda Cultural Immersion program & enhanced understanding of Aboriginal culture • Installation of surround sound systems in all classrooms to enhance the ability of Aboriginal students to successfully engage in learning • Planning for the employment of an Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer

CSO Strategic Direction 5: Identify and promote sound financial, physical and human resource management and accountability mechanisms. • Upgrading of School Maintenance Plan to address identified & significant maintenance issues • Completion of most maintenance items identified as ongoing issues of concern • Installation of a major Solar System to reduce electrical costs

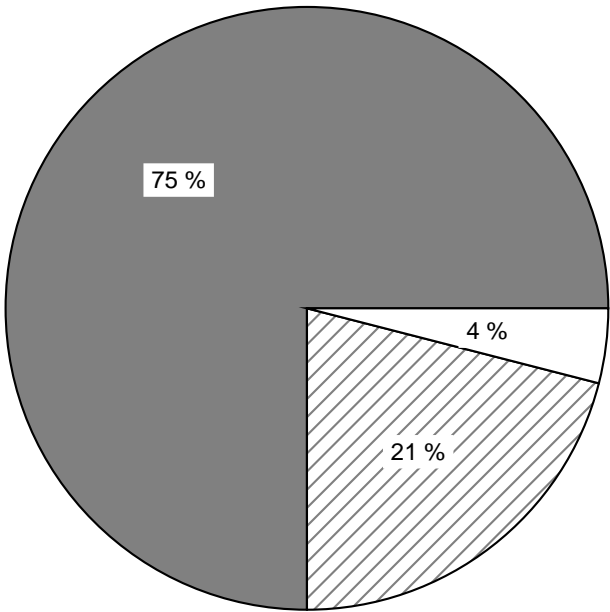
Financial Statement

Income



- fees and private income
- ▨ state recurrent grants
- commonwealth recurrent grants
- ▩ government capital grants
- ▧ other capital income

Expenditure



- salaries, allowances and related expenses
- ▨ non-salary expenses
- capital expenditure
- ▧ other capital income

The information in this report has been verified and the priorities endorsed by the Director of Catholic Schools and the school consultant.