Mount Carmel High School
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Email: info@mtcarmel.woll.catholic.edu.au
Principal: Mr John Barrington

Annual School Report 2007

Vision Statement
Mount Carmel High School, guided by prayer and through spiritual formation, aspires to be a Catholic community reflecting gospel values. The students receive a holistic Catholic education, in the Marist tradition, with the aim of attaining moral, academic and personal excellence.

Principal’s Message
2007 marked the twenty second year of Mount Carmel High School providing quality Catholic learning and teaching.

It was Mount Carmel’s honour to host the Wollongong Diocesan Launch of World Youth Day on the 1st August. Led by the Bishop, all schools and Catholic organisations of the diocese came together for a very special event. With only a year to go, participants were given a snapshot of what the ‘WYD08’ experience will be like.

The ‘much awaited’ new uniform was introduced for year 7 and year 11 students from the beginning of the 2007. The new style has proven to be very popular with students, parents and staff. It is a contemporary design as well as being quite practical for this school environment. Allowing for a 2 year introductory phase, all students from years 7 to 12 will be in the new uniform from the beginning of the 2009 school year.

The third phase of the pastoral programme, which commenced in term 4 2006, introduced ‘vertical senior pastoral groups’ whereby year 11 and year 12 students were in the same groups. This new structure had many positive outcomes including year 11 students quickly learning from the example of year 12 students about the expectation and work demands of the senior school. At the start of term 4 2007, years 7, 8 and 9 commenced a similar vertical structure. In the junior school these pastoral groups are based on the four ‘house teams’, while the composition of the pastoral groups have family members in the one group. The full implementation of this system will be at the beginning of 2008 for years 7 to 10.

Parent Involvement
The Mount Carmel High School Parents and Friends Association continues to be a very active organisation supporting the school as well as providing opportunities for parents to meet one another. Regular monthly meetings provide updates of what is happening in the school community as well as covering a wide range of issues during general business.

The association decided to continue with the voluntary fundraising levy as its major source of fund raising. The Association pledged to donate $40,000 per annum for the next 5 years as to assist in the provision of classroom air conditioning. The association also donated more than $40,000 to the school to help provide much needed resources and services.

President

Student Leadership
The school has a well developed Student Representative Council led by the Year 12 Leadership Team (comprising two School Captains, two Vice Captains and four Senior Councillors). Student representatives from years 7 to 11 meet with the senior leadership team fortnightly. This structure is supported by the Assistant Principal and the Senior Coordinators.

The student leadership team is in the process of amending its structure to better accommodate the vertical pastoral system for year 7 to 10 students which commenced in term 4, 2007. Links are being investigated with the ‘Student Parliamentary Club’ which was established this year.

President
**School Profile**

Mount Carmel High School was opened in 1986 and is situated within the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, neighbouring the Parish Centre, Carmelite Retreat Centre, and the Carmel Covent of Mary and Joseph. One of the Carmelite priests assists the school in a chaplaincy role.

The school provides Catholic secondary education for students from the parishes located in the northern sector of the diocese including: St John The Evangelist Campbelltown; Mary Immaculate, Eagle Vale; Holy Family, Ingleburn / Holy Trinity, Minto; Mary Mother of the Church, Macquarie Fields; St Thomas More, Ruse; and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Varroville.

The school is a six stream coeducational high school. The demand for student enrolments remains very high, with waiting lists in all year groups from years 7 to year 11.

**Student Enrolments**

The Enrolment Policy and Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: [www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au) then go to the link Policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>1007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>1004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>1002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Attendance Rate for 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2005 there were 181 year 10 students who completed the School Certificate, of which 134 students the High School certificate in 2007, resulting in a 74% actual retention rate.

**Staffing Profile**

The total staff consisted of 61 full time and 6 part time teachers and 18 support staff members. All staff have participated in child protection training.

The leadership consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and Administration Coordinator, who meet twice weekly. The curriculum and pastoral teams meet monthly. Once a month a joint meeting of leadership, curriculum and pastoral teams occur.

27% of staff have 1 to 5 years teaching experience, 14% with 6-10 years experience; 22% with 11-20 years experience and 37% in excess of 20 years experience. The staff retention rate was 92.6%.

The average daily staff attendance rate for 2007 was 97.01%.

**Professional Learning**

During 2007, Mount Carmel High School personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes. These included whole school development days focussing on themes of: spirituality; curriculum development; student learning styles; and pastoral care.

Throughout the year individual staff members attended a variety of professional development inservices, particular to their faculty or KLA areas.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2007 was $15,292. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office.

**Teacher Standards**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition
Culture of the Catholic School

Mount Carmel continues to develop and enhance the Catholic culture of the school through close links with each of the seven parishes of the region. Every school day commences with prayer in home rooms. Prayer is also a central component of all school and pastoral house group assemblies.

The school celebrated various religious feasts, school events and personal milestones through a variety of liturgical celebrations. Foundation Day (10 February), Feast of St Marcellin Champagnat (6 June) and Our Lady of Mount Carmel (16 July) Masses were a highlight. Other significant events included Year 12 Graduation Mass, the Year 10 Mass of Thanksgiving and the Annual Memorial Mass for deceased students, ex-students and former staff members, held this year at Mary Immaculate Parish Eagle Vale. Individual year groups have had opportunities for Masses, Liturgies, Reconciliation and prayers.

Social justice initiatives continue to be another practical way for students to express their faith commitment. More than $11,000 was raised by the students in support of a wide range of charities including: Caritas Australia, Campbelltown Hospital, Catholic Missions, St Vincent de Paul Society and World Vision.

The Community Service Ball was once again held for senior students. The ball was recognition of the service that the students have performed for others in their local community. Motivated by a compassionate response to others, rather than a “what’s in it for me” attitude, the students had responded generously by working with: the homeless; church groups; disabled children; the elderly and the more needy in the local community.

The family prayer scheme was once again held in support of Year 12 HSC examinations. Volunteer families ‘adopt’ a year 12 student as their family’s prayer intention in this stressful time for senior students.

School retreats, spirituality days and regular year group liturgies, together with school Masses, combine to focus attention on the relevance of faith on all aspects of life at Mount Carmel.

Student Welfare

At Mount Carmel High School we strive in all we do to live by our motto “Ite in Veritate – To Walk in Truth”. As such our focus is on the gospel in terms of the dignity of the individual and this stands behind all we do in dealing with the students in our care. All involved in pastoral care work together to create an environment of respect, where all are valued for who they are.

The welfare of the students is paramount to all we do and as such we are always looking to move forward in ways that benefit the students in their relationship with each other and with the wider school community. 2007 was a year where we spent a great deal of time reflecting on our current practices with the aim of further improving the quality of care we provide for the students in our school.

As a result, the school moved from a horizontal model where the year group was the focus, to a vertical model based on the house system already in existence. This model was adopted in term four. The school went from having four Year Coordinators, to four Pastoral House Coordinators. Each of these four are responsible for a quarter of the school from Year 7 through to Year 10. The Pastoral Groups became much smaller. This model gives the Pastoral Adviser much more time with their students and allows them time to get to know them on an individual basis and follow through with them over the coming years.

The senior school remained unchanged with two Senior Coordinators and their assistants for years 11 and 12. The model adopted here with the smaller groups has been very successful and acted as further impetus to continuing a similar model in the junior school. The HSC results, as well as the feedback from the students themselves, were further support for this more ‘personal’ model where the students felt that they had a pastoral adviser who knew them and was able to support them throughout the senior years.

In the short time that this has been in operation, there has been a positive outcome for both staff and students. It has allowed the House Coordinators the opportunity to work with a bigger cross-section of the school and it has taken away some of the negativity sometimes associated with particular year group combinations. We look to expanding on this house system in 2008 as we become more aware of the benefits it can bring. In turn we hope it will allow us the opportunity for
students to work together across year groups, thereby breaking down the barriers of age, and making each house more of a community within the school.

Whilst this change is only in its infancy, the next step is to set in place some structures to support more house based activities, such as House or Patron days, to give the students and staff the opportunity to learn more about their house and at the same time have fun as they come to know the others in their house.

Pastoral Care has and always will be, a key element in our school. Each day we see the need for our students to feel safe at the school and in turn provide them with the services to support them through this time of personal growth and development. As society changes, the school need to recognise this and so move with the students in making Mount Carmel High School a place where the welfare of the students is first and foremost what we do.

Student welfare is about ensuring the students feel safe when at school and that the managing of their behaviour is done in a positive way. As such, in compliance with the NSW Reform Act of 1990, Corporal Punishment is banned in ALL schools within the Diocese of Wollongong. In line with this also, is the right of parents to discuss any measures taken by the school in regard to discipline. If they have an issue, the Complaints & Grievances Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: www.ceowoll.edu.au and then go to the link Policies. Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Financial Summary

The good school fee collection rate and the continued support of the Campbelltown Catholic Club and the Parents and Friends Association, once again enabled the school to meet all of its financial obligations.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for Mt Carmel Catholic High School for the year ended 31 December 2007. This data is taken from the 2007 financial return to the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Learning & Teaching

Introduction

Mount Carmel High School continued to strive for improvement in the delivery of quality learning and teaching. The school has continued to reflect upon current processes and adapt these processes to the ever-changing world of the learners placed under our care.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Mount Carmel High School follows the NSW Board of Studies syllabus for each course offered (as required for registration and accreditation under the Education Act 1990) and implements the requirements of the Catholic Education Office Wollongong.

The school has continued to review the courses that are offered and in 2007, offered new courses for study. In Stage 6 these included Retail Operations (VET) and Industrial
Technology (Graphics) which will both run in 2008. In Stage 5 the new course running was Geography Elective.

In addition to new courses being offered for selection, the process of selection in Stage 5 was altered. The change will now allow Year 8 students to choose electives and during Year 9, the students will be able to opt to continue with their current courses as a 200 hour course in Year 10, or select a new course or courses to complete as 100 hour courses during Year 10. This will result in both Year 9 and Year 10 students completing the same course in 2009. This change was established for a number of reasons:

- due to the sheer numbers of students who wish to change courses during Year 9;
- to provide students with increased learning options and experiences throughout Stage 5 that meet their changes interests and needs at this age;
- to allow students to use a greater range of learning experience in making subject selections for Stage 6;
- to create an opportunity for integrated vertical classes providing opportunities for extension of talented students and better adapted programs for those with special needs.

The Stage 6 program of subject selection was also modified in 2007. Students were invited to select certain courses based upon their talents and strengths that have been identified through their reports and assessments. Each student met with the KLA Coordinator of each subject they wished to choose to discuss their suitability for the course. This proved to be quite successful, with the numbers of students selecting higher order courses such as Physics and Chemistry lifting significantly on previous years. The school will continue to monitor the progress of these students as they progress through senior school to determine the validity of their selections and advice. In 2008, the school will further refine this process by including more assessment and reporting data in making recommendations to students.

The school has continued its’ commitment to enhancing the use of Information and Communication Technology to support the learning of our students. Further technology resources were made available to students in the form of laptop trolleys and an upgrade of the ICLT facilities in the school library. Students using the library now have access to twenty desktop computers and fifteen macbook laptops.

Throughout 2007, in order to support the training of staff in the use of the macbook laptop, each staff member was supplied with a macbook laptop on loan to learn and trial the use with their classes. The use of these laptops became prevalent within most classes, further enhancing the learning opportunities of the students at the school.

The primary ICLT focus of 2007 was the preparation of the school for the introduction of the 1 to 1 laptop program with Year 7 beginning in 2008. Each KLA has had the added responsibility of developing new programs to incorporate the added availability of ICLT into their programs. This process also included the increased use of myclasses as a learning tool in delivering course outcomes as well as a valuable resource for staff administration.

Mount Carmel has continued to utilise a range of assessment practices to determine student achievement and as a means of learning. Assessment practices of Year 10, 11 and 12 were evaluated and reformed by an Assessment Committee throughout the year. The committee consisted of a number of middle leaders along with the NSW Board of Studies Liaison Officer. The changes to the policy were explained and implemented at the HSC Launch night in Term 4 2007.

Another committee was formed to review the information processing models currently in place within the school and to develop a whole school approach to information processing and referencing. An information model was recommended and each KLA will begin implementing this model into their research tasks throughout 2008.

The reporting of student achievement evolved further in 2007. Following on from the success of the academic tracking reports in Years 11 and 12, each year group from 7 to 12 received either an academic tracking report or a formal report each term. These reports are designed to give regular feedback to parents and students about the achievement and work habits of their children. The Pastoral Adviser has taken on a much greater role in the reporting process, making a comment not only on the students’ pastoral progress but also now comments upon the students’ academic achievement, providing feedback about how student behaviour and work habits may have affected their results throughout the term or semester.
The staff at Mount Carmel has been exposed to numerous professional development throughout 2007. The primary focus of the development has been to enhance the technology skills of teachers in using the macbook laptops in readiness for the 1 to 1 program for 2008. Seminars were held fortnightly that were software based training opportunities and the focus of staff development days was the implementation of these applications in the classroom.

**Cross Curriculum**

Mount Carmel High School is very aware of the significance of developing the literacy and numeracy skills of our students. Each KLA has programs where literacy and numeracy strategies are embedded within a subject-based context. These strategies continue to be mapped to ensure that all students are exposed to a full range of literacy and numeracy activities across the curriculum.

A significant component of Mount Carmel’s literacy strategy includes the reading period that is conducted for twenty minutes each day. Students and teachers are expected to provide reading material to read for enjoyment each morning. The Reading Club is for those students who have not met literacy-reading benchmarks. This is conducted each week where students are assisted in their reading by staff and other students.

The school also has extension and intensive literacy and numeracy classes in Years 7 and 8. These classes have been specifically developed to ensure the needs of these learners can be met more effectively.

The ELLA and SNAP results are analysed extensively with the results distributed to staff through a range of forums. Staff receive information on students who require specific forms of assistance with their literacy and each KLA adjusts programs to ensure that these needs are being met. Each Mathematics and English teacher is provided with the strengths, weaknesses and strategies that can be utilised to enhance the learning of each student in their class.

Each Key Learning Area have developed programs of work that have embedded activities that address issues such as indigenous perspectives, particularly in the area of social justice, discrimination, racism, diversity and aboriginal health. The programs also incorporate multicultural perspectives, often allowing students to incorporate their own cultural perspectives into their learning.

**Meeting the Needs of all Students**

Each unit of work in all key learning area’s has provisions for the adjustment of student learning to allow for students to work at their own pace. Strategies such as the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy and Multiple Intelligences have enabled students to choose strategies that suit their ability and learning styles.

The Special Needs Coordinator has worked with each key learning area to develop adjustments to lessons and tasks to ensure further diversification of learning occurs. Special needs students are integrated into the classroom with support from the special needs staff. Each student has an individual education plan that is established in conjunction with the Special Needs Coordinator, the students’ teachers and the parents. In Stage 5, an elective class has been established in order to further develop the literacy, numeracy and other life skills of the special needs students.

Gifted and talented programs are embedded in the programs of each key learning area. Assessment tasks are designed to allow those with special talents to extend themselves. Extension classes have been developed in English, Mathematics, Australian History and Geography, Science and PDHPE. Plans are in place to develop teams for Tournament of the Minds in 2008 to further extend these students.

**Expanded Learning Opportunities**

Students at Mount Carmel are involved in a range of sporting, cultural and academic activities that further enhance their learning.

Students participate in the weekly Macarthur Independent Schools Association (MISA) competition on Tuesday afternoons. The students participate in a range of sports including hockey, rugby league, volleyball, basketball, netball and touch football. The school also participates in Diocesan sport carnivals providing a pathway to further representation. Students also participate in Australasian Marist Netball and Basketball carnivals, Arrive Alive Rugby League and state wide Catholic schools soccer competitions.

Students at the school are also encouraged to participate in public speaking, debating, musical performances and youth of the year competitions. A highlight of the 2007 calendar was the school musical, “How to Eat Like a Child”, held in term 4 which was the result of a tremendous amount of work from staff and students.
Mount Carmel students are involved in great numbers in the Australian competitions in Mathematics, Science, English and Computers.

**Vocational Education and Training**

Vocational Education and Training courses were offered as a part of the regular school timetable and through various other registered training organisations such as South West Sydney Institute of TAFE. Courses run at Mount Carmel in 2007 include Hospitality, Information Technology, Sport Coaching and Construction.

The percentage of students that completed a VET or TAFE Delivered VET Course in Year 11 in 2007 was 30.66% of the cohort. In Year 12 the percentage of students completing a VET or TAFE Delivered VET Course was 26.12%.

Mount Carmel had 5 students completing Retail Traineeships through either Big W (Wide Bay TAFE RTO), McDonald’s or Lowes Clothing. Three students were in Year 12, with 2 students in Year 11.

**Parent, Student & Teacher Satisfaction**

Parent, student and teacher responses via surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction for nearly all areas of school life. Students indicate that features such as: * being proud to attend a Catholic school; and * my class work is challenging; had the strongest response. Parents responded strongly to: * children being challenged to maximising their learning outcomes; and * the school being a safe and supportive environment. Teachers highest responses were: * students understand their rights and responsibilities; and * the school provides appropriate information to parents about student progress.

Areas identified for future development include: * increasing the range of co-curricular activities; * striving to meet the individual learning needs of particular students; and * ensuring that class work is challenging across all year groups.

**Student Achievement**

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. State wide literacy and numeracy testing programs provide information that assist in diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole school teaching programs. Results must be seen in the context of the school community. Information on student progress is communicated regularly and parents are provided with opportunities for discussion. If further information is required about student achievement, please contact the school.

**Higher School Certificate**

In 2007, 134 students sat for examinations in the Higher School Certificate and all students received their HSC. The results from the 2007 cohort were strong with a number of high achieving students. Student achievement was reported on a standards framework using Course Marks and Performance Bands from 1 to 6 with Band 1 (the lowest) indicating that students have not achieved the minimum standard. Student achievement in Extension Courses is reported in Performance Bands from E1 to E4.

Of the Board Developed Courses, 24 were above the state average (73% of courses) and 9 subjects scored below. Performance in our 4 largest cohort subjects are as follows:

- **In English Standard**: 110 students with:
  - 12.72% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 3.39% statewide)
  - 0% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 5.69% statewide)

- **In General Mathematics**: 109 students with:
  - 29.33% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 22.51% statewide)
  - 0% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 3.63% statewide)

- **In Studies of Religion 1**: 67 students with:
  - 47.76% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 38.16% statewide)
  - 0% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 0.28% statewide)

- **In Personal Development, Health and Physical Education**: 52 students with:
  - 46.15% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 35.58% statewide)
  - 0% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 3.9% statewide)
School Certificate

In 2007, there were 178 students who received a School Certificate. Student achievement is reported as a percentage score and in Bands from 1 to 6 with Band 1 indicating that students are operating below minimum standard. Computing Skills is not reported in Bands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Mean Score %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English – Literacy</td>
<td>77.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>70.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>75.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian History, Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
<td>76.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Geography, Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
<td>78.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing Skills</td>
<td>81.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy and Numeracy Assessments

The English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) and the Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) assess students’ literacy and numeracy achievements against outcomes in the K-6 English and Mathematics syllabuses but in the context of the secondary Key Learning Areas. Student performance is reported in four bands; Low, Elementary, Proficient and High. These assessments are administrated early in Year 7.

There were 181 students who sat for ELLA and 181 students who sat for SNAP in 2007.

National Benchmarks

The table below indicates as a percentage the Year 7 students achieving the national benchmarks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>98.40</td>
<td>99.50</td>
<td>95.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>99.50</td>
<td>98.35</td>
<td>97.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>90.60</td>
<td>90.66</td>
<td>81.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: National Benchmarks not included as they have not yet been published
School Renewal Priorities

The School Renewal Plan is designed to focus our actions to bring about positive change and growth. The following have been identified as key focus areas for the school during the current cycle of this plan. The School Renewal Plan generally sets directions for a period of 3-5 years. It is subject to regular evaluations.

- Continual review of school policies and procedures.

Progress in 2007 Towards Achievements of School Renewal Plan

- Significant whole staff professional development took place in preparation for the commencement of the ‘1:1 notebook computer program’ commencing in 2008 as well as being a means of enhancing the student based ‘learning focus’ for all students in years 7 to 12
- The rollout of the ICLT wireless infrastructure was completed
- The introduction of the vertical based pastoral groups for years 7 to 10 students commenced in term 4.

Priorities for 2008

- The commencement of the year seven 1:1 notebook program, as well as the planning phases for the expansion of the program into year 8, 2009
- Trialling several components of the new ‘School Review and Improvement’ processes as a means of ongoing self evaluation
- Further refining the vertical based house system and adjusting the student leadership framework in line with this new structure.

The information in this report has been verified and the priorities endorsed by the Director of Schools and the Head of School Services.

Peter Turner
Director of Schools

John Barrington
Principal