Annual School Report 2007

Vision Statement
Nazareth is a learning community that strives to develop the whole person, so as to find God in all things.

Principal’s Message
2007 has been an outstanding year for the school community of Nazareth Catholic Primary School. Staff and parents have worked together to provide a stimulating and nurturing learning environment for all the students. The commitment and dedication of the staff permeates learning and teaching and all aspects of school life. The teachers have delivered quality teaching programs and have achieved improved learning outcomes for the students. Their task has been made easier by the continued support, enthusiasm and commitment of our parent body. This partnership between the school and the home had a positive impact on learning.

During the year our students participated in a wide range of activities including numerous sporting events, excursions, social skills programs, chess and choir. Learning opportunities outside the classroom included excursions to the Rocks, Minnamurra Rainforest and Sydney Aquarium.

This year the school band was formed and they have performed at Wollongong Mall and at the school musical. Classroom drama and music lessons culminated with the school production of the musical ‘Rock around the Christmas Tree’.

In 2007 Nazareth School was successful in obtaining an Investing in Our Schools Grant of $29,000. This income certainly lessened the pressure of fundraising and was used in the purchase of eighteen laptop computers. We were most appreciative of the support from the Federal Government in giving us this grant.

Parental Involvement
Nazareth Parents and Friends Association began the year with many new people being elected to the P&F executive committee, creating a balance of new faces to Nazareth and other people that have had a few years of experience on the P&F.

Funds raised by the P&F in 2007 were spent on the following:

- A large changeable display sign for the entrance of the school to post school notices on for the wider community.
- Reading material for Stage 1 and 2 to engage our children in reading and literacy development.
- Additional computers and a printer.

All members of the P & F executive committee should be commended and thanked along with other parents, for their active involvement in helping at Nazareth. All parent support throughout 2007 was greatly appreciated by the P & F. Above all we thank our dedicated teachers who have guided our children towards their academic and personal growth.

Student Leadership
All students in Stage 3 are given the opportunity to belong to a leadership team. We have regular meetings where we discuss upcoming events and issues of concern. We have participated in activities that develop relationship skills. We have assisted with the Peer Support Program. All students in Year 6 attended a leadership day at St Paul’s. We formed our first Parliamentary Club.
Nazareth is a coeducational primary school established in 2000. There are two streams Kindergarten to Year 6. Nazareth has a Learning Centre which supports children with special educational needs. As Nazareth was the crossroads of the ancient world, we at Nazareth in 2007, strive to be a place where families, staff, parishioners and the wider community meet in an effort to provide a Catholic learning community.

The school draws its students mainly from the suburbs of Blackbutt, Flinders, Shellharbour, Shellcove, Warilla, Mt Warrigal, Oak Flats, Balarang and Windang. There are 37% of families with Non English Speaking backgrounds.

There have been three major building projects since 2000 in the development of Nazareth and work is still continuing on the playground and outside environment.

Nazareth is the second Catholic School in the Parish of All Saints, Shellharbour City. Families participate in the Parish Sacramental programs and are encouraged to be involved in other Parish activities. Throughout the year we have been involved with Stella Maris staff and students in various ways. Together with Stella Maris, St Paul's Albion Park and Ss Peter & Paul Kiama, we form the Southern Illawarra Catholic Schools cluster. We seek to work together to make better use of personnel and resources in providing Catholic Education in the Southern Illawarra.

### Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Staffing Profile

Nazareth School has a non-teaching Principal, fifteen full time and six part time teachers. The school is administered by a Leadership Team comprising the Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Co-Ordinator, two Co-Ordinators and the Senior School Support Officer. The specialist teachers work in the areas of Special Education, Reading Recovery, Literacy Support, Music, Drama, Gymnastics and Information Communication and Learning Technology.

A Senior School Officer works in administration assisted by a part time School Support Officer. Six School Support Officers are employed to assist the teachers in the classrooms. A qualified counsellor from Centacare, works at the school each Tuesday.

There is a mix of age and experience on staff. Three teachers have over twenty years of teaching experience, two teachers are at the beginning of their teaching career and the remainder have over eight years of experience in the teaching profession. The staff retention rate is high; however four teachers will be leaving the school at the end of the 2007 school year. The average daily staff attendance rate for 2007 was 96.74%.

All teachers employed at the school have University qualifications. Teacher qualification encompasses Education, Religious Education, Arts, Leadership, Special Education, Reading Recovery, Languages and Information Technology. These have been completed at Masters, Bachelor, Diploma and Certificate levels. Staff members are committed to furthering their personal and professional learning. Teachers work collaboratively, meeting regularly to engage in planning teaching programs.

The staff engaged in a wide range of inservice and professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office and other agencies including: Ignatian Spirituality, Literacy, Numeracy, Reading Recovery, Reporting and Assessment, Quality Learning and Teaching Framework, Habits of Mind and Special Education.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2007 was $6,356. This is in

### Student Attendance for 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
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>Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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**

Nazareth Catholic Primary School has continued to develop a culture in the Ignatian tradition, endeavouring to faithfully reflect the spiritual and educational vision of St Ignatius.

This year, with the assistance of Martin Scroope, Director of the Loyola Institute, the school developed its own Awareness Examen for use in daily reflection and prayer. The school also embarked on a process of identifying role models for the students. Blessed Mary Mackillop, St Francis of Assisi, St Vincent de Paul and Caroline Chisholm were chosen as House Patrons. As well, permission was granted to name the four buildings that comprise the school after St Ignatius of Loyola, Mary Ward, Mary Aikenhead and St Francis Xavier.

Significant times in the school year were celebrated with whole school liturgies. During the opening school liturgy we asked for God’s blessing on the school community, presented leadership badges and had a commitment ceremony for leadership teams. The school Feast Day, the Feast of the Annunciation, was celebrated with a Mass. At the end of Term Two the school farewelled the founding Principal, Sr Anne Taylor, with a Mass celebrated by Fr Ross Jones. In Term 4 a Graduation Mass was held for the outgoing Year 6 students. The Ash Wednesday liturgy, Easter Passion Play, Advent liturgies Grandparent’s Day and ANZAC Day were also significant liturgical celebrations. Liturgies also formed an integral part of each unit of work in Religious Education. The three schools in the Parish celebrated Mass together on the Feast of All Saints.

Students from Nazareth had the opportunity to celebrate the Sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist. Students from Nazareth and Stella Maris joined together for Mass as a celebration after these Sacraments.

The school has continued to promote a culture of social justice. Students learned about the work of Caritas and raised money for Project Compassion. The school also raised funds to support the work of Catholic Mission and to sponsor two students from The School of St Jude in Tanzania. A total of $1,740 was donated to these organisations. During Mission Month the school was visited by Adriana Haro, a visiting missionary from Mexico. During Advent twenty one hampers were prepared for the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.

**Student Welfare**

The Peer Support program continued again this year with the implementation of our fourth module, “Speaking Up”, which focused on anti-bullying. The module supports students to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to make a positive contribution to the creation and maintenance of a safe school environment. The Stage Three students were the leaders of the Peer Support groups and were briefed each week by the Stage Three teachers. Parents/carers were informed of each week’s activities through the school newsletter and encouraged to discuss these with their children at home.

Social skills were developed across the school using PALS (Playing and Learning to Socialise) Program and Buddies between Year Five and Kindergarten students. Small social skills groups were formed based on student needs across Stage Two and Three in order to target specific social skills development.

Seasons of Growth was offered to families within the school to help support students understand and manage grief. This year Companions worked with two groups – one for children in Kindergarten to Year Two and another for Years Four to Six.

A Counsellor provided by Centacare for one day a week, offered a service for students and families in need.

Our Year Six along with the students from Stella Maris Shellharbour took part in the program “Hit the Ground Running. This is a
transition to High School program conducted by both School Counsellors and Staff from both school.

As part of our whole school approach to providing a safe school environment regular class meetings continued to take place. These meetings are based on De Bono’s Six Thinking Hats and provide a safe forum for the students to discuss issues and strategies to try and resolve them.

We continued our shared leadership among the Stage Three Students. We have thirteen leadership teams with approximately nine Stage Three students in each group. At the beginning of the year the Stage Three students participated in a leadership day focusing on demonstration of Christian values, and exploring leadership qualities. The students were then able to nominate, form and set goals within their leadership teams.

The Pastoral Care, Behaviour Management and Anti-bullying policies which had previously been reviewed in consultation with the relevant Catholic Education Office personnel were posted on the school web page where they could be viewed.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the office. The Complaints & Grievance Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: www.ceo.woll.catholic.edu.au then go to the link Policies. In compliance with the NSW Reform Act 1990, Corporal Punishment is banned in ALL Schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

Financial Summary
 Nazareth P&F donated the following in 2007:

- $1000 towards reading books
- $7000 for the changeable sign
- $3600 for two laptops and one printer

We have continued resourcing curriculum areas across the various stage groups. The playground is an ongoing area of development with funds being allocated for this. We received $3,000.00 in grants from Shellharbour City Council for ground development also.

We also received a grant from the Federal Government for $29,000 which we have put towards the purchase of eighteen laptop computers.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for Nazareth Catholic Primary 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

The Nazareth Community are committed to the development and delivery of high quality and varied learning and teaching programs which cater for the needs of all individuals. To assist this practice collaborative planning and programming occurs and takes into consideration the varied needs of a stage and the needs of the school as a whole. Professional Development is planned and managed according to needs of individual staff and the identified School renewal priorities. Reflective practice is encouraged in order to evaluate the effective implementation of curriculum programs.

In 2007 the focus in the area of Learning and Teaching has been to continue to develop learning communities where students, staff and the parent community are involved in creating conversations around the Ignatian Reflective Framework. As part of this learning community, the use of the Quality Learning and Teaching Framework, as model for improving pedagogical practice, was identified as an important part of this process.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

The Board of Studies syllabus documents in English, Mathematics, Human Society and Its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative Arts, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) along with the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Curriculum, are the basis for developing the school’s curriculum. These are implemented across the four stages of learning by classroom teachers and supported by specialist teachers who work with students for two terms in Dance and Drama and the remaining two terms in Athletics and Gymnastics.

At Nazareth we appreciate the importance of Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT) as an effective tool for learning and teaching. Each stage has access to a pod of laptops and our Infants classes also have access to a desktop computer in their classrooms. The model by which each stage has the support of an ICLT teacher for one day a week has continued this year. This model has allowed for teachers to work in team teaching situations where collaboration, planning and the implementation of a quality learning and teaching framework that identifies the specific computer skills and processes that the students need to develop to enhance their own learning.

This year it was identified that the school needed to purchase more ICLT hardware to support this learning framework. As a result of surveying staff, students and the parent body, and with the generous support of the Parents and Friends Association, the school has been able to purchase more digital video cameras, digital still cameras and data projectors. The school also successfully applied for an Investing In Our Schools Grant of over $29 000 from The Australian Government that allowed for the purchase of eighteen more laptops.

Assessment for learning is an ongoing and everyday experience for teachers and students and is based on syllabus outcomes. A wide range of assessment tools are used and student learning is monitored closely by teachers. These include the Basic Skills Test (BST) for Years Three and Five in the areas of literacy and numeracy; the Progressive Assessment Test for literacy and numeracy in Years Three to Six; Early Literacy Assessment and Count Me In Too Numeracy Frameworks in Early Stage One and Stage One; and the use of the Mathematics learning continuum and tracking system to monitor student progress in stage based activities across the school. These formal opportunities are complemented by continuous assessment of students work samples throughout the year. This year the school has developed a database program that tracks the progress of students through each of their years of schooling at Nazareth.

Our reporting process continued to be in line with Australian Government requirements whereby we provided parents with two written reports annually that provide information about progress relative to the specific standards labelled A-E. Staff, as part of their professional development, continued to devote an important part of their Stage Meeting planning time to developing a consistent judgement in using the common grade scale.

Cross-Curriculum

Nazareth considers the teaching of literacy and numeracy as a high priority. Good practice is continually being refined and developed so as to meet the needs of all students. Teachers received training in Effective Learning and Teaching (Literacy) and teachers received training in Effective Learning and Teaching (Numeracy). Reading Recovery has continued to be a support for Year One children experiencing difficulty in literacy skills. Year One completed the program this year.
Learning & Teaching

During the year our Reading Recovery teacher graduated from the Reading Recovery course. The school completed the second year of the ASISTM Project – a joint venture between the University of Wollongong’s Education Faculty, Corpus Christi Catholic High School and two other primary schools. The project involved working with Pre-service teachers from the University in completing an environmental audit of paper usage within the school and developing an environmental education plan for the school. This environmental focus continued with our close link with Shellharbour Council Environmental Team. Using the personnel from the council, Stage Three students participated in an environmental day and Year Three students participated in Recycling Awareness day.

Meeting the Needs of all Students

Nazareth is continuing to develop learning experiences within a stage education model. This involves students being taught over a two year cycle, except for Early Stage One which occurs over one year. Students are grouped according to educational needs so that they are able to progress along the learning continuum at their own rate.

The responsibility of meeting the needs of all students belongs to all staff and is supported by the school’s Learning Needs Team. The role of the team is to meet with individual teachers in developing strategies and individual educational programs that support the ongoing learning of both staff and students. Students who received funding to address their needs were tracked using the Goalview computer program. Each term Individual Educational Programs were written for each of these students and parents were informed of changes and progress on a term basis. A number of our funded students were withdrawn daily from their roll class to attend our Learning Centre. The Learning Centre provides specific Literacy, Numeracy and Social Skills programs. The cohort of students in the Learning Centre varies throughout the day, reflecting the school’s response to meeting the educational needs of all students. Additional support from the Catholic Education Office personnel was provided for hearing impaired students. The school also had the support of a Centacare Counsellor for one day a week.

Basic Skills Data was analysed and presented to teachers at a Staff Meeting after extensive analysis by four teachers on staff who were released for two days. The staff meeting provided the forum for teachers to discuss and plan to meet the needs of individuals following the analysis. This analysis has also provided Nazareth with important data that supports the strategic direction for the school’s future.

Expanded Learning Opportunities

As has been done in previous years, students in Years Three, Four, Five and Six were given the opportunity to test their skills and knowledge in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools English, Writing and Mathematics Competitions. As part of our Mathematics enrichment program, Stage Three students were chosen to participate in the Australian Mathematics Trust Challenge.

Students have participated in swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals at school, regional, State and National levels. Children have participated in gala days for netball, basketball, Dragon Tag and Cricket. Teams attended the NSW Catholic Primary Schools Basketball Championships in Albury.

Other experiences included Junior and Senior choirs at the Wollongong Eisteddfod, with the Senior choir obtaining first place in the Primary School Choir section and our Junior choir receiving a highly commended award; the formation of a school band and their performance at the Wollongong Mall; the participation of two teams in Tournament of Minds, one team in the Language and Literature Section and the other team in the Social Science category; students in the Diocesan Public Speaking Competition; whole school involvement in the School Musical ‘Rock Around The Christmas Tree’ and Chess teams involved in the Illawarra District Chess Competition. The school hosted Tony Murphy’s Cartoon Caricature’s Workshop and an Indonesian Puppeteer Show which supported the students’ Indonesian studies.

Enrichment days were also offered for small groups of students in Stage One and Stage Three in Creative Arts and Indigenous Studies, along with other students from the Southern Illawarra Catholic Schools Cluster.

Professional Learning

Focus areas for 2007 included:

- Ignatian Spirituality
- Quality Learning & Teaching Framework
- Habits of Mind
**Student Achievement**

The 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 state-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 external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

**Basic Skills Test**

There were 48 Year 3 and 60 Year 5 students who sat for the 2007 Basic Skills Test. Year 3 is reported in Bands 1-5; Year 5 in Bands 1-6, with Bands 5 and 6 respectively being the highest.

**Year 3**

Literacy: 15% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 9% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in Writing, followed by Reading and Language.

Numeracy: 25% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 6% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in Number, Patterns and Algebra, followed by Measurement.

**Year 5**

Literacy: 2% of students were in Band 2 (none in Band 1), with 64% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Reading, followed by Writing and Language.

Numeracy: 3% of students were in Bands 2 (none in Band 1), with 52% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Measurement, followed by Number and Space and Geometry.

**National Benchmarks**

The table below indicates as a percentage the Year 3 and Year 5 of students achieving the national benchmarks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 3 2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Year 5 2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: National Benchmarks not included have not yet been published.
Student, Staff & Parent Satisfaction

During 2007 parents, staff and Stage 3 students were surveyed to provide each group the opportunity for input in areas affecting learning and teaching and the general functioning of the school. The information provided by the survey will be used to assist the school with future planning.

A majority of students responded that they felt proud of their school. When asked if the school helped them understand the Catholic faith the vast majority of students gave an affirmative response. This was supported by the parent and staff surveys. All staff said that the school helps students to develop a knowledge and understanding about the Catholic tradition and a vast majority of the parents who responded believed the school helps my child to develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition.

When asked if their teacher encourages them to the best of their ability, an encouraging 94% of students responded positively. Once again this was reflected in the responses of staff, where 100% of respondents said that students are challenged to maximise their learning. Parents, too, were in agreement. 89% of parent respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that my child is challenged to maximise his/her learning outcomes. 88% of parent respondents and 100% of staff believed that the school strives to meet the individual learning needs of students.

Students are confident they understand their rights and responsibilities. The majority of students feel safe at school and 91% felt that if they had a problem there were people in the school they could go to for help. A reassuring 96% of parents and 100% of staff agreed that the school provides a safe and supportive environment. Parents also felt that the teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of my child (95%).

When asked if the school provided sporting and other activities in which I can become involved 68% of students strongly agreed and a further 24% agreed. An overwhelming 99% of parents responded positively to the statement that the school offers a range of co-curricular activities.

Parents were also happy with communication by the school. 87% of parent respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement the school provides appropriate information about my child’s progress and 99% supported the statement that the school effectively communicates information about activities and events.
**School Renewal Priorities**

The School Renewal Plan is designed to focus our actions so as 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.

- To focus on developing a Quality Learning and Teaching framework that recognises best pedagogical practices
- To continue embedding Ignatian Spirituality within the school community with a focus on implementing Ignatian pedagogy in all aspects of the curriculum
- To review the Mathematics Scope and Sequence so as to develop the numeracy needs of Space and Geometry and Measurement

**Progress in 2007 Towards Achievements of School Renewal Plan**

- The Ignatian Committee worked closely with the Nazareth school community to produce and implement the Nazareth Awareness Examen.
- The Learning Communities Project was successfully implemented and allowed staff to embed the Quality and Learning Teaching framework into their pedagogical practice.
- Improvements in communication procedures ensured that all members of the school community were better informed.

**Priorities for 2008**

- Continue to develop the Quality Learning and Teaching Framework so as to be in line with the Diocesan Policy
- Implement the Learning Community Project using the Ignatian Pedagogical Framework of Experience → Reflection → Action to meet the Numeracy needs of students in Space and Geometry and Measurement
- Develop a peer mentoring process as a model for promoting best practice in Learning and Teaching
- Develop and implement induction processes for staff, students and parents in Ignation Spirituality.

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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

Louise Campbell  
Principal