Annual School Report 2007

Vision Statement
As an integral part of the Parish, we the school community of St. Anthony's, Picton, strive to provide excellence in Catholic Education in the Josephite tradition.

Principal’s Message
The 2007 School Year was another successful year at St Anthony’s. Our building program proceeded according to plan and the new learning spaces will be ready to occupy at the beginning of the year. The new classrooms will be occupied by Kinder to Year 4 and will provide a modern facility that will allow team teaching across the grade.

Parent Involvement
St Anthony’s School is fortunate to have a significant level of parent involvement within the school community.

Parents are active in the Parents and Friends (P&F) Association, and the Autumn Fair and Fundraising Committees. Parents contribute to and support the school as classroom helpers, in the infants gross motor program, as excursion volunteers, at sporting events and as canteen helpers.

Parents of children with additional learning needs are active participants in term planning meetings to establish educational goals for their children.

P&F President

Student Leadership
At St Anthony’s all Year 6 students are given responsibility as school leaders. The students rotate through six leadership areas over the four terms. The students, guided by a staff mentor, planned and led various activities including: prayer, sports, assembly, charitable days, hospitality and environmental projects.

School Profile
Established in 1880 by the Sisters of St Joseph, St Anthony’s Parish School is one of the oldest schools in the Diocese. St Anthony’s is located on the original school site in Picton. Following in the tradition of the Sisters of St Joseph, the school offers a quality education in the charism of Mary MacKillop. The school is a two stream coeducational primary school offering a Catholic Education to students in the Wollondilly District. This year the school community celebrated 127 years of rich Catholic schooling.

The school community reflects the diversity of Australian society with families of differing cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The school offers a full curriculum in line with Board of Studies requirements. The school caters for diverse learning needs within an atmosphere of mutual respect and where individual differences are valued.

St Anthony’s is an integral part of the parish community. The spiritual growth and welfare of each student, along with sound educational practices is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, staff and parents under the supervision of both Catholic and Government Educational authorities.
Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>390</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.

Student Attendance for 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>86</td>
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Staffing Profile

In 2007 the school had 30 staff. There were 23 teachers, 16 teachers were classroom teachers and 5 teachers were specialist support staff. There were 7 school support staff providing office administration and classroom support.

Three staff members will leave the school to take up a new position in 2007. This represents 10% of staff. The average teaching experience is 15 years.

The average daily staff attendance rate for 2007 was 94.93%.

Professional Learning

During 2007, school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes. These included:

- St Anthony’s whole school development days involved 23 staff.
- These days focused on:
  - Values Education facilitated by Dr Kevin Treston
  - Staff Spiritual Development facilitated by Margaret Keane sgs

Other professional learning activities provided at school level included:

- Anaphylaxis Training – 30 staff members
- Assessment and Reporting – 23 teaching staff
- Curriculum Scope and Sequence – 23 teaching staff
- Professional dialogue around School Review and Development – 30 staff

- Professional dialogue around Team Teaching – 23 teaching staff
- Learning Communities Project on Safe and Supportive Schools Environment and associated policy development – 30 staff

In addition 10 individual staff undertook professional learning in extended courses facilitated by the Catholic Education Office (CEO). Courses including: Quality Literacy and Numeracy, Teachnology, Certificate in Special Education and Reading Recovery.

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per teacher was $ $495. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the CEO with an additional average expenditure per teacher of $ 700.

Teacher Standards

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</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

2007 Highlights

- Social Justice fundraising initiatives such as Caritas, Catholic Missions, St Vincent de Paul and Daffodil Day.
- Donation of $20000 from Campbelltown Catholic Club as a contribution to the redevelopment of the school.
- Building of Stage 1 of the Building Redevelopment Project, which saw the construction of 8 new general learning areas and the refurbishment of two existing spaces.
- With funds made available from the Investing in Our School’s Grant, the construction of an adventure playground.
Culture of the Catholic School

St Anthony’s vision and mission statement implicitly connects the school’s intent to the charism of Mary MacKillop. The Josephite culture is evident in the school in a variety of ways which include, the yearly visit of Year 5 to Mary MacKillop Place, the establishment of the MacKillop Award and close links between the school and the Josephite Sisters.

Catholic Identity is clearly visible through the celebration of important feast days, class participation in Parish Masses and in the displays of sacred spaces around the school and within classrooms.

Liturgical celebrations are planned in consultation with our Parish Priest to ensure they are meaningful and appropriate for the students. Major feast day celebrations have been held to commemorate the feast of St Joseph, St Anthony of Padua, and Blessed Mary MacKillop. A culture of prayer and celebration exists which is evidenced by Friday afternoon school prayer assemblies, class prayer and staff prayer.

This year the staff participated in four staff meetings around different forms of prayer. The Religious Education Team have continued the work begun by our Spiritual Animators Team last year. The team has worked to build a culture of care and affirmation of staff as well as developing the spiritual dimension of the staff through prayer and reflection.

All classroom teachers teach Religious Education based on the current Diocesan Curriculum. Each year our Year 4 students participate in the Diocesan Religious Literacy Assessment. The results of this assessment are distributed to the parents of the students as well as being analysed by the staff.

Each year the school plans and promotes social justice by supporting one charitable initiative a term. Initiatives this year included guest speakers from Caritas Australia and Catholic Church Missions. The school raised and donated $1000 to Caritas, $1000 to Catholic Missions, $320 to St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal, $900 to St Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal plus food hampers for disadvantaged families over Christmas.

Student Welfare

Currently St. Anthony's has a range of programs and initiatives in place to care for the welfare of students and parents. Our school awards scheme is an example of our commitment to recognising the good behaviour of our students. Good behaviour is recognised daily through the accumulation of merits stickers. At regular intervals the merits are redeemed for a Principal’s Sticker and a Principal’s Award. The students continue to enjoy this positive encouragement.

Over the last two years the school has participated in a Learning Communities Project funded by the CEO. The project mapped the policies and structures in place that support the National Safe Schools Framework. This year the school reviewed our Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and produced a Student Welfare Policy.

This year a Creating Peace Program commenced with an Anti-Bullying Day. This program is aimed at reducing the incidence of bullying and harassment, by raising awareness amongst the students, staff and parents and providing strategies for students to use when dealing with bullying.

The buddy system continues to operate within the school with older classes buddyng with younger classes to provide tuition in reading and computer skills. Centacare continues to provide family counselling support to our school on a weekly basis.

Community links are an important part of Pastoral Care at St. Anthony's. This year the school supported charities through participation in The Biggest Morning Tea, Daffodil Day and made donations of Christmas hampers and toys to the St. Vincent's de Paul Society.

The school is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment, characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. The school’s motto is ‘Grow in Respect and Honesty’. This is a constant reference point for encouraging positive behaviour. Any parent, student or community member who has a grievance has the right to have this addressed.

The school has a “Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures” document. Key elements of the complaints handling procedure and what a community member may do if they have a complaint are detailed in the school and diocesan policy document.
Expenditure

Salaries, Allowances and Related Costs 48%
Non Salary Expenses 8%
Capital Expenditure 44%

Income

Fees and Other Private income 32%
State Government Funds 17%
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants 9%
Government Capital Grants 1%
Other Capital Income 1%

The Complaints & Grievances Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education website: www.ceowoll.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.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Financial Summary

A major component of school expenditure for 2007 was on teaching resources and materials. Loan repayments were made for technology hardware, and these represented the final year of a three-year loan. A further $20000 was spent on updating computer hardware and associated software from Kindergarten to Year 4.

The SEDSO (School Enhancement and Debt Servicing Obligation) Account represents a contribution paid by parents to service building debt and improvements. This year the account has been used primarily to pay up front costs associated with Stage 1 of the building redevelopment project.

The balance carried forward in the accounts was significantly higher this year than previous years. These funds represent money budgeted for equipment for the new buildings and ground refurbishment, once the buildings are completed.

The P&F has committed $35000 from their savings to assist in the provision of air conditioning in the new buildings for 2008.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Anthony’s 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**

St Anthony’s Picton is committed to providing quality Catholic Learning and Teaching. All Board of Studies requirements are being met as the school seeks to implement a contemporary curriculum to meet the needs of all students.

In addition to the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) prescribed by the Board of Studies, the students have been provided with courses of study in Religious Education in accordance with Diocesan policy. During 2007 the school priorities have reflected Diocesan and National imperatives for improved performance in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and integration of computer technology across all KLA’s.

**Curriculum and Pedagogy**

Teachers have continued professional dialogue around assessment and reporting as the school strives to develop consistent teacher judgement in order to meet Diocesan Policy and Commonwealth Government accountabilities around reporting to parents. A significant proportion of staff development at staff meetings has been dedicated to the development of scope and sequence of outcomes to meet Board of Studies requirements.

In each classroom, teachers timetable a dedicated block of time for Literacy and Numeracy. In both Literacy and Numeracy, assessment data from Basic Skills Test in Year 3 and 5; Schedule for Early Numeracy Assessment (SENA) in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1; and Early Literacy Assessment (ELA) in Kinder and Year 1 drive the learning programs. The results are used to inform learning and teaching and identify students at risk. Numeracy strategies developed through the ‘Count Me In Too’ program (CMIT) are incorporated into classroom practice.

Teachers attempt where possible to integrate learning experiences from across (KLA’s). This makes the experiences more relevant and allows for more than one outcome to be achieved through the learning experiences.

The school’s Information Communication and Learning Technology (ICLT) Plan enabled the focus to be maintained on the utilisation of technology to support learning. All classrooms are well resourced in technological hardware. There is a significant emphasis on the use of technology in Stage 3 where students utilise technology as a tool to inspire inquiry based learning and individual interest projects.

Students in each class access individual myclasses homepages with links to supportive learning experiences.

**Cross-Curriculum**

Through the use of integration, teachers are programming learning experiences to meet cross-curriculum content. Literacy is a key component across all other Key Learning Areas.

As part of their Religious Literacy Assessment, Year 4 students engaged in individual projects around the theme of ‘Creation’. Children linked their projects to their studies in Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) skilfully making connections between real issues affecting the land, climate change and the spiritual concept of stewardship which encourages us to care for God’s creation.

Indigenous perspectives are included within at least one unit of work in Human Society and Its Environment. Significant work is undertaken in this area in Year 3 and 6. In preparation for NAIDOC Week children focused on activities related to raising awareness of indigenous culture and issues. A whole school assembly was held to dedicate a plaque that recognises the traditional custodians of the land upon which the school is built. Asian Studies is integrated into the content of some units across the school with a key focus in Year 6.

**Meeting the Needs of all Students**

In addressing the individual needs of students, a variety of individual support structures are provided. These include School Support Officer intervention and Reading Recovery for Year 1. This year fourteen Year 1 students were successfully discontinued from the Reading Recovery Program and two students were referred for additional assessments and support. This represents 24% of Year 1 students assisted through the program.

Students with specific learning needs continue to be supported at St. Anthony’s through the school Review Committee. The committee is comprised of a selection of staff under the guidance of the Assistant Principal, who is the Review Committee Manager. The staff members meet regularly to review students who have specific learning needs. Once a student has been referred to the Review Committee, the committee meets to review the progress of the student. The committee then meets with the parent each term to set individual learning outcomes and to review progress. The students are then supported in
class by School Support Officers working in partnership with teaching staff.

In addition, the school also has sixteen students who receive additional funding for special educational needs. Transition meetings are held each term with the parents and teachers of these students to evaluate and plan achievable short term learning goals. The Goalview software system is used to track the progress of these students.

**Expanded Learning Opportunities**

All classes have been provided with opportunities to enhance learning through excursions and visiting performances and workshops. Excursions included visits to Sydney Wildlife Centre, Taronga Park Zoo, Wollongong Science Centre, Power House Museum, Sydney Maritime Museum, Imax Theatre, and Canberra. The students also participated in a workshop on indigenous dance, art and culture presented by the Maluerindi Clan; a science workshop presented by visiting educators called Jollybops; and rugby league, rugby union, netball and cricket clinics run by visiting development officers.

Opportunities to participate in sport and fitness are well catered for through the weekly PE, Sport and Infant’s Gross Motor Program. A specialist PE teacher conducts lessons for each class on a term about rotation.

In addition students participate in school swimming, athletics and cross-country carnivals. Primary age students have the opportunity to trial for representation in Diocesan teams. In addition students also trial for and participate in school teams in local gala days in netball, cricket, rugby league, rugby union, soccer, AFL and basketball. A number of students represented the school and Diocese at MacKillop sporting trials.

The school’s Learn to Swim Program was expanded to include Kindergarten and Year 1 this year. The program was conducted at Wollondilly Leisure Centre over a ten day period. It is anticipated that this program will be conducted next year and expanded to include Kindergarten to Year 2.

The school continues to provide the opportunity for students from Year 3-6 to participate in a school band. Performances are held each semester at school assemblies.

Students in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to participate in the Australasian Mathematics and English competitions achieving credible results. After conducting school chess competitions a group of students represented the school at the NSW Junior Chess Tournament in Campbelltown and also at weekly tournaments amongst local schools throughout terms two and three.

**Parent, Students and Teacher Satisfaction**

Surveys aimed a getting feedback from the school community were returned by 25% of the parent body. The information provided by the surveys indicated that parents were satisfied that the school helped to develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition, with 95% agreeing with this item on the survey instrument. The student and teacher surveys indicated similar agreement. The parents also indicated that the school provided opportunities for them to become involved in the school, with 97% agreeing with this item. Another area of significant agreement was that the school offered a range of co-curricular activities. This response was also supported by the student feedback on the surveys with 100% of students indicating that they agreed with this item.

The survey also highlighted several areas that warrant further investigation and a plan of action to improve the situation. In the parent body 24% indicated that the school did not challenge their children to maximise their learning outcomes, 28% believed that there was not appropriate information provided about their children's progress, and 22% indicated that the school did not strive to meet their children’s individual learning needs. This last point was also reflected in the staff survey, where 3 staff provided a similar response. The staff also indicated that more work could be done to develop in students a clearer understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

The students’ responses to the survey indicated that there is still a need to further examine the perception that a number of students still do not feel safe at school. Whilst an overwhelming majority of students, some 78% indicated that they do feel safe, 22% still indicated that they do not. This indicator was slightly up on the 2006 survey.

It is anticipated that the new School Review and Improvement Framework will enable the community to further explore these issues.
**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 52 Year 3 and 59 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: 14% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 6% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in writing, followed by reading and language.

Numeracy: 8% of students were in Band 1 and 39% in Band 2, with 4% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in number, patterns and algebra, followed by measurement and date, space and geometry.

**Year 5**

Literacy: 0% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 56% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in writing, followed by reading and language.

Numeracy: 0% of students were in Band 1, 2% in Band 2, with 49% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in measurement and data, followed by space and geometry and number, patterns and algebra.

The following graphs give an indication of the learning gains made by students in their journey from Year 3 to Year 5.

**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>Year 3 2006</th>
<th>Year 3 2007</th>
<th>Year 5 2005</th>
<th>Year 5 2006</th>
<th>Year 5 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>94.8</td>
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<td>96</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>98.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: National Benchmarks not included 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.

- Create a nurturing, celebrating community of faith where Gospel values are central, where Catholic traditions are taught and where Josephite charism inspires our lived response to faith.
- Build an effective learning environment where students are challenged and supported, where curriculum is relevant and challenging and where teaching practices are appropriate to individuals’ learning needs.
- To maintain an environment, in which every person feels welcomed, respected, valued and safe.
- Create a safe, stimulating and functional school environment in which resources are appropriate to student and staff needs.

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

- The staff have undertaken significant work in the development of Curriculum scope and sequence overviews that embed assessment strategies in terms of Board of Studies Outcomes and Foundation Statements.
- In light of the consultation around the Diocesan School Review and Improvement policy, the school developed an action plan around strategic intent for 2007.
- The Stage 1 of school building redevelopment project will be finished and ready for occupation from the 2008 school year.
- The staff undertook significant work in critically analysing the Basic Skills Test data to better inform learning and teaching at St Anthony’s. The Year 5 results saw significant learning gains against previous years.

**Priorities for 2008**

- Commence a cycle of School Review and Improvement and develop a Strategic Intent Statement for 2008-2010.
- Develop a Learning Communities Project around quality assessment.
- Critically analyse the Basic Skills Test data and initiate professional development in the area of Numeracy.
- Develop teachers’ capacity to work in Team Teaching environments.
- Review our school Vision and Mission Statement.

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 Milgate  
Principal