Annual School Report 2007

Vision Statement

In the spirit of truth and love our vision at St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School is to be a welcoming community committed to upholding the dignity of the individual where quality learning and teaching is inspired by the message and life of Jesus.

Principal’s Message

It is with pleasure that the St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School Community at Ruse presents its Annual School Report for the 2007 School Year.

The 2007 School Year has again seen St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School continue in its vision to provide a school of quality learning and teaching. At St Thomas More education is viewed very much as a partnership between families at home and staff at school.

The school continue in its endeavours to nurture a welcoming and learning community where a spirit of partnership can provide quality learning experiences in the Catholic tradition. Particular thanks are extended to the students, staff, pastor, parents, parish and wider community for the way they have contributed to the effective operation and development of this Catholic learning organisation.

Student Leadership

The 2007 School year was a year of experimentation for St Thomas More. Year 5 and Year 6 began trialing open classrooms. Year 6 also began trialing the Student Leader Badge which stated ‘Student Leader’. The Year 6 students at St Thomas More were very much involved in student leadership. Students were given the responsibility as peer support leaders and led groups of other students through a program on ‘Resilience’. The school captains participated in an ANZAC Day ceremony and at the Good Samaritan Anniversary Mass. A Religious Education Team was begun in 2007 and this group ran power points and set up Mass equipment. The students also had a Stewardship Team with representatives from each class. In all 2007 was a very productive year at St Thomas More and Year 6 students wish the school community continued success in the future.

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is greatly appreciated within St Thomas More. The school has always had a very committed and hard working Parents & Friends (P&F) Association. During 2007 many fundraising and school based activities were organised – Kinder Welcome BBQ, Christmas Carols BBQ, McDonalds fundraiser, Feast Day BBQ, Annual School Fete, Bunning’s BBQ fundraiser, Mater Dei Chocolate Wheel, working bees, grant application for our water recycling project, and sustainable sponsorship packages. The P & F also took steps to established relationships with a number of schools and businesses in the local area.

The Mothers’ Club proved once again to be proactive in organising the Easter Raffle, Mother’s and Father’s Days stalls and numerous hospitality events when required. The Mothers’ Club continues to be a constant support to the P&F. For the P&F to be successful there is a need to have the on-going support of the parents and caregivers of all students. One of the aims of the P&F is to get everybody to work together to support the children and teaching staff, and to assist in providing valuable resources need in the school.

P&F President

P&F President
Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>358</td>
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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></th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.9</td>
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School Profile

St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School is a two stream Kindergarten to Year 6 school, which endeavours to cater for the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical education of students. The school services people who reside within and outside the boundary of St Thomas More Parish, Ruse.

The school opened in 1978 with a total enrolment of 169 students and 10 staff members. Since its inception, the school has grown and in 2007 has an enrolment of 358 children and a staff of 29. Over the years St Thomas More has benefited from a tradition enriched by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan and also the Marist Brothers, due to Principals and staff who worked at the school. The land on which the school is built was kindly donated to the Wollongong Diocese by the Good Samaritan Sisters.

As a Parish School, it is intended that the spiritual growth and welfare of the students be carefully integrated within a needs-based education. This is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, Staff and Parents under the supportive supervision of both Catholic and Government Educational Authorities.

Staffing Profile

During 2007 St Thomas More staff consisted of 17 full time teachers, 4-time teachers, and 8 support staff. The School Leadership Team (SLT) comprises 6 members; the Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator and three Co-ordinator 2 positions.

Members of the support staff included a Senior School Support Officer, 7 School Support Officers and a Canteen Supervisor. Of the School Support Officers 2 worked in office administration, 1 in library administration and 5 assisted teachers with the learning and teaching of children within the classroom setting.

The teaching staff had a range of years teaching experience:

- One teacher was in their second year of teaching;
- Seven teachers had 3 - 5 years experience;
- Two teachers, 5-10 years;
- Three teachers, 11-15 years;
- One teacher, 16 – 20 years
- Seven teachers had 20 years or more experience

Of the 21 teaching staff at St Thomas More during 2007, six have completed post graduate studies to Masters level.

Two current staff members will be retiring from the teaching profession and 1 staff member will leave the school to take up a new position in 2008. This represents 14.2% of staff.

The average daily staff attendance rate for 2007 was 97.12%.

Members of staff at St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School are committed to furthering their personal and professional learning and growth. During 2007, St Thomas More personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes. The major focus for 2007 was the implementation of the school’s Learning Communities Project which focused on the learning and teaching in Literacy.

St Thomas More whole school development days involved twenty eight staff. These days focused on:

- Developing an understanding of and improving classroom practices in components of the Literacy Block with emphasis on guided reading and joint construction.
- Enriching individual staffs own spirituality.
Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses were:

- Quality Literacy and Numeracy
- Religious Education network meetings
- Spiritual Animators course
- Religious Literacy marking
- Indigenous Spirituality course
- Courses involving integration of Information Communication Learning Technologies (ICLT) into the curriculum mainly through the course ‘Teachnology’ and ICLT network meetings
- Consistent Teacher Judgement
- Certificate in Special Education/ Autism Course,
- Diversifying Learning Experiences
- ‘PART’ Training
- Goalview, Anaphylaxis and SAS training
- School Assistants Certificate 3 Course
- Attendance at the Habits of Minds Conference
- Participation in national conferences.

It is common practice at St Thomas More for staff members who attend professional learning opportunities, provide feedback and share with their colleagues their learning experiences. The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per teacher was $786.00. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office (CEO).

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

* Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition

**Culture of the Catholic School**

St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School seeks to promote its own Catholic Identity and the traditions of the Catholic Church. We do this through ensuring that there is a visibility throughout the school of symbols of the Catholic Faith and most importantly, through the provision of quality prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations for all within the community.

St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School continues to develop a strong relationship with the Parish community. The Parish Priest, Father John Ho, is a welcomed and regular visitor to the school. He administers the Sacrament of Penance each term and also willingly celebrates important feasts at the school. During 2007 all grades were invited to attend and lead the St Thomas More Parish 9.30 am Masses. The Parish Mass during Term 4 focused on involving the families and children who were preparing for the Sacrament of Penance.

The concept of ‘Stewardship, a way of life’ is entrenching itself into the St Thomas More community. A Student Stewardship Committee was established and these representatives, who wear their badges proudly, work as a team, under the guidance of staff, to promote stewardship within the school community. The children participated in ‘Stewardship Week’ where morning prayers and Religious Education lessons are focused on the concept of Stewardship.

The Catholic children of our school are active participants in the Parish Sacramental Program. In 2007 each of the Sacramental Programs was supported by the religious lessons in the classrooms. The Religious Education Co-ordinator liaised with the Parish Sacramental Team to ensure that Parish/School communication was maintained. The Sacrament of Confirmation was administered in Term 2. The children of the Parish received the Sacrament of the Eucharist in Term 3 and in Term 4 the Sacrament of Penance was received.

Liturgical celebrations have been an ongoing highlight of 2007. Each term, the students in Years 3-6 travelled by bus to the Parish Church to celebrate Mass. During Terms 2, 3 and 4, the children in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 also celebrated Mass with their buddy...
class. Each of these celebrations was well attended by parents and grandparents.

The students in Year 6, along with many other Year 6 students from within the Macarthur region participated in a ‘Prayer and Conversation’ with Bishop Peter Ingham. This experience was hosted by Our Lady Help of Christians, Rosemeadow.

In 2007 the students were involved in Social Justice Initiatives including: fundraising activities for St Vincent de Paul during ‘Vinnies Week’, Mission Week, and Project Compassion. Over $1500, thirty baskets of food and forty bags of clothing were donated to these worthy causes.

A number of special celebrations and commemoration days were celebrated throughout the year. These included St Patrick’s Day, Easter and Holy Week, Anzac Day, The feast of the Assumption, Great Peoples Day, All Saints’ Day, the Annual Christmas Pageant and a fabulous celebration to celebrate the feast of St Thomas More. Members from the parish were invited to this Mass and festivities, and those who attended enjoyed the celebration immensely.

The staff participated in an overnight retreat/spirituality day. The retreat was held at Kerever Park Bowral and was facilitated by members of the school’s Spiritual Animators Team. The input, reflection, discussions and social interaction were thoroughly enjoyed by all staff who attended.

**Student Welfare**

Catholic Schools are based on the dignity of the whole person and provide witness to Gospel Values as a means to living out daily life. These values are captured in the Diocesan and School’s Pastoral Care Policy. St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School continues to provide valuable support to all members of the school community. We have strived to promote positive relationships amongst all members of the community, especially the students. Throughout the year children are encouraged to strive to do the best they can. Their achievements are recognised through a series of awards such as weekly individual awards, Student of the Week Award and the opportunity to have morning tea with the Principal in recognition of exemplary behaviour.

The Kindergarten Social Skills Program, which focuses on the teaching of social skills and competencies, and gives practical experiences aimed at setting the children up for successful learning in the rest of their schooling, was again implemented and is now an integral program in the school. The children once again participated in the Peer Support Program. The Year 5 children were trained as leaders and they, along with the Year 6 children, facilitated the weekly sessions. The focus on the program during 2007 was ‘Building Resilience’.

Centacare continues to provide family counselling support on a weekly basis. The Year 6 students participated in the Transition to High School program ‘Hit the Ground Running.’ This program was run with the assistance of staff from Centacare.

St Thomas More ‘Kid’s Club’ continues to be well attended. The aim of this program is to create a fair, co-operative and fun lunch time setting, where all children are treated with respect and dignity. A social skills program which runs during first lunch was also implemented for those children who are on the Autism spectrum. This program is implemented by our very competent School Support Officers.

The Seasons for Growth Program was offered to those children experiencing grief and loss in their lives. The program was facilitated by trained staff. There were 13 children in the program which ran over eight weeks during Term 4. It involved children from all Stages.

During 2007 a primary focus has been the revision of the St Thomas More Behaviour Management Policy. Many staff meetings and committee meetings were arranged so all staff, children and parents could have input into this revision process. The policy has been ratified and will be implemented in 2008. In compliance with the NSW Reform Act 1990, corporal punishment is banned in all schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School is committed to a safe and supportive environment, characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. Any parent, student or community member who has a complaint or grievance has the right to have this addressed.

The Complaints and Grievances 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’.
Access to all polices and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Financial Summary

Financial administration and management procedures at St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School are well documented, communicated and working well in practice. Budgets and financial records are set and managed by the School Leadership Team and Senior School Support Officer. Effective liaison with the Administrative Services Team at the Catholic Education Office is maintained.

During 2007 normal school running costs were incurred. In addition, the St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School underwent its annual building maintenance program which is funded by the parish SEDSO fund. The cost of this program was $15,995. The parish SEDSO fund also funded other major works such as purchasing new tables and chairs for the Year 5 classes, air conditioning, the cutting down and removal of trees and rectifying of damaged sewer.

The Campbelltown Catholic Club was very generous in its donation to the school in 2007. The donation of $26,000 allowed for the completion of the school’s security fencing and gates. The school is very grateful for the support of the Club.

During 2007 the school received funds through the Federal Government’s Investing in Our Schools Program. Funds to the sum of $46,000 were used to purchase computer software and hardware, a sound system for the Small Hall, music kits, reading resources and new plumbing for the Stage 2 toilet block. The school would like to thank and acknowledge the support of the Australian Federal Government.

The Parents & Friends Association and Mothers’ Club were also generous with their support throughout 2007. The funds provided by these two school community groups were used to purchase desk top computers, sport ribbons, concreting of a new path and the purchase of sports shields.

The balance carried forward represents outstanding accounts and orders for the beginning of the 2008 School Year.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Thomas More 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

At St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School, all Board of Studies requirements are being met as the school strives 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. The St Thomas More School Renewal Plan 2006 – 2009, which incorporates the school statement of ‘Quality Learning and Teaching’, provided a focus for initiatives in learning and teaching in 2007.
Curriculum and Pedagogy

This year St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School invested a considerable amount of time, energy and professional learning for the staff in the implementation of the school’s Learning Communities Project, ‘Back to Basics’. The school has developed as a learning community by initiating a Professional Learning Team (a representative of all staff eg teacher, leadership, SSO) whose role was to oversee the implementation of the project. The whole school community embraced the Back to Basics - Literacy Community Project. Each Stage engaged in professional learning to develop components of the Literacy Block which focused on the improvement of student learning outcomes.

A number of stage meetings were provided for the teachers to discuss and share changes and development of classroom practices. A Literacy Celebration Day provided the opportunity for the parents to be invited to an overview presentation of the Back to Basics Project. This was followed by an opportunity for parents to visit Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 classrooms demonstrating the Literacy Block, focusing on Guided Reading and Guided Writing. Stage 2 and Stage 3 classrooms demonstrated Joint Construction and the parents were able to see the development of the Literacy Block components across the continuum of grades.

During 2007 further progress has taken place in developing the use of ICLT in classrooms. Due to generous funds from the Parents & Friends Association, Mothers’ Club and the Investing in Our Schools Program additional desktop computers, laptops and additional multi media hardware were purchased. The role of the Assistant Principal as Technology Support Teacher allowed both staff and children to be supported in effectively integrating technology within the classroom setting.

The reporting process introduced in 2006 within the Wollongong Diocese and St Thomas More was further enhanced and developed in 2007, with staff undertaking further professional learning in the area of consistent teacher judgement. The Federal Government mandated reporting of student progress using the A – E scale is now entrenched in the St Thomas More reporting process.

The children in Year 3 and Year 5 completed the Basic Skills Test. Children in Year 4, 5 and 6 were also given the opportunity to participate in the University of New South Wales, Mathematics, English, Computer and Science Tests. The children in Year 4 also participated in the Wollongong Diocese Religious Literacy Assessment.

Cross Curriculum

Due to the emphasis of the school’s Learning Communities Project, Literacy development continued to be a focus. The Literacy Block is well entrenched into the teaching day in all classes. Reading resources for the library levelled reading texts and texts to support critical literacy were purchased to assist in the learning and teaching of literacy.

Book week celebrations were again a highlight for children, staff, parents and preschoolers. The mask parade involved all children, including preschoolers, and each class presentation was well received by the many parents and grandparents who attended.

Our school celebrated NAIDOC week in a more reflective manner. As well as whole school prayer our Indigenous Education support staff member set up a room where the staff and children could read, discuss and reflect on our Indigenous heritage and endeavour to gain better understanding of our indigenous background.

All classes have been provided with opportunities to enhance learning through excursions and visiting performances and workshops. During Term 2 all children participated in a Fundamental Motor Skills program. The Year 5 children enjoyed a three day camp to Teen Ranch and the Year 6 children enjoyed an overnight excursion to Canberra.

During Term 4, the Year 5 students participated in a program called ‘Transition Through Technology’. The students travelled by bus to John Therry Catholic High School (JTCHS) every Tuesday to engage in a number of learning and teaching experiences in Woodwork, Science, Music, Visual Arts, Food and Textiles and Dance. The students also interacted with the students from JTCHS and Year 5 from Our Lady Help of Christians, Rosemeadow. At the end of the program the students and teachers invited parents to a ‘Showcase of the Workshops. Students were able to demonstrate their new skills and products.

St Thomas More Catholic Parish Primary School is also endeavouring to create links with St Patrick’s College. During 2007
students from the College were invited to and assisted at our school’s Athletics Carnival. The children in Year 6 engaged in a series of Physical Education lessons facilitated by the St Patrick’s Year 9 Sports Science students. Our Year 5 students also participated in a Creative Arts Expo at the College. Our Year 1 students also experienced literacy activities facilitated by Year 7 students from the College. These links and activities are only the beginning of what is hoped to be an ongoing partnership in the children’s learning.

The children from Kindergarten to Year 6 had the opportunity to participate in The Premiers Reading Challenge. This reading initiative is designed to encourage and increase a love of literature.

**Meeting the Needs of all Students**

In addressing the individual needs of students, a variety of individual support structures are provided. These include peer reading, school assistant intervention and Reading Recovery.

In 2007 our Reading Recovery Teacher was in her training year hence time each fortnight was allocated to the specific and intense training process. The Reading Recovery Program continued to offer an intensive reading program to the students in Year 1, where 14 students accessed the program. This year 11 students were successfully discontinued from Reading Recovery and 3 students were referred for additional assessments and support. The Reading Recovery teacher was also able to provide Literacy support to the Stage 1 classes. The school’s Literacy Support Teacher also focused on supporting those children in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1. All classes participated in the fun maths activities during National Literacy and Numeracy Week specifically ‘Reach for the Stars’.

Students with specific learning needs continue to be supported at St Thomas More through the School Review Committee. The committee comprised a selection of staff under the guidance of the Review Committee Manager. The staff meets regularly to review students who are identified with specific needs and strategies are put in place to assist both the child and teacher with their learning and teaching.

In addition, the school has a number of students who receive additional funding for specific assistance. Transition meetings are held each term with the parents of these students and class teachers to evaluate and plan achievable short-term learning goals. With the continued implementation of the Goalview program, Individual Education Plans for each of these students were developed.

The Diocesan Early Literacy Assessment Program (ELA) was implemented in Years K and 1 with information obtained through this assessment being used to inform teaching. This assisted in the identification of those children needing learning support.

The St Thomas More Learning Centre had another highly successful year. The teaching staff and students of this Centre were also involved in the professional learning opportunities in ICLT. All children in the school community celebrated Autism awareness week. Four staff members completed the Certificate in Special Education/Autism Course and a support network was established in the school to further assist those children identified on the Autism Spectrum.

**Expanded Learning Opportunities**

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education needs are well catered for through the weekly PE and Sport lessons. A Fundamental Motor Skills Program was implemented during Term 2 for all classes. All children participated in the School Cross Country and Athletics Carnivals. Children from Years 3 to 6 and selected Year 2 and Year 1 children participated in the Annual Swimming Carnival. Staff also prepared children for participation in a number of Diocesan and local sporting events and carnivals including cross country, cricket, athletics, basketball, netball, swimming, soccer, oz tag and rugby league. The school was represented by our Senior Soccer Team at the Annual Tiger Shield Soccer Tournament and were runners up in this competition. The school’s U/9 Rugby League Team were also runners up in the Annual Western Suburbs All Schools Rugby League Knockout.

The St Thomas More Cricket Team had a very successful year in the Mark Taylor Shield competition. The team made it through to the quarter final stage of the competition only to be narrowly defeated by the eventual winners. A number of students represented St Thomas More at Diocesan and MacKillop trials with two children progressing through to State Competitions in athletics and cricket.

Year 5 and Year 6 children had the opportunity to trial for and participate in the Diocesan Public Speaking Competition. The school’s
Year 6 representative was successful in making it through to the Diocesan final.

The school choir grew in numbers and the children were keen participants in Parish Masses, the school Christmas celebrations and the combined Macarthur Christmas Carols evening. The choir along with the St Thomas More Dance Troupe had the opportunity to perform at the Annual Fete and also entertain the ladies at the Annual Local Probus Group Christmas celebration.

Children also had the opportunity to learn Keyboard through the Music Institute Program. Children in Year 6 were given the opportunity to learn guitar, due to the generous giving of time by a talented staff member.

An initiative introduced during 2007 was the Federal Government funded ‘Active Afternoon Program’. This program is cost free to participants and allows children the opportunity to participate in fun, healthy, organised activities which promote a healthy lifestyle. The program was offered two afternoons per week and an average of 30 took advantage of the activities each session.

**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 47 Year 3 and 51 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 7% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in Writing, followed by Reading and Language.

Numeracy: 27% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 17% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in Number Patterns and Algebra, followed by Measurement and Data and Space.

**Year 5**

Literacy: 0% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 52% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Writing, followed by Reading and Language.

Numeracy: 2% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 54% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Measurement and Data, followed by Number and Patterns and Algebra and Space and Geometry.

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

**Learning Gain — Literacy**

![Learning Gain — Literacy Graph]

**Learning Gain — Numeracy**

![Learning Gain — Numeracy Graph]

**National Benchmarks**

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

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<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Reading</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98</td>
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</table>

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

Parents, staff and students were surveyed during the year to provide feedback on the school’s performance in relation to certain items. The survey results indicated that 98% of respondents from parents, students and staff believe that the school helps the children in their understanding of the Catholic Faith. Responses from students indicated that 98% them surveyed were proud of their school, and 96% understand their rights and responsibilities whilst at school. While 86% of children indicated that they felt safe at school, the results reveal that there are some children who feel unsafe at times and 7% of children believe there is no one they can approach for help. The implementation of the revised behaviour management policy in 2008 and the revision and implementation of the pastoral care policy will hopefully allay these fears. In relation to parents, 98% of the responses indicated that parents feel that the school provides opportunities for them to be involved and 11% believe that the communication of children’s progress is inappropriate. Staff, parents and children agree that the school offers a range of sporting and co-curricular activities and 87% of parents believe that their children’s individual learning needs are met and that their children are challenged in their learning.

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.

- Upgrade pedagogies across all stages within the school with a focus on developing children’s English Literacy and Numeracy and the integration of Information Communication Learning Technologies (ICLT) into the learning teaching process.
- To further develop the school as an integral part of the mission of the church within the Parish of St Thomas More.
- To develop a strong and ongoing emphasis on creating a culture of mutual respect, courtesy and social relations between everyone in the school community.

Progress in 2007 Towards Achievements of School Renewal Plan

- The St Thomas More Behaviour Management Policy was revised, ratified and implemented.
- The successful implementation of the school’s Learning Communities Project, ‘Back to Basics’.
- A Religious Education Team within the school was formed with further improvements in roll descriptions and task allocations to be developed.

Priorities for 2008

- A continuation of the implementation of the school’s Learning Communities Project, ‘Back to Basics’.
- To begin the process of implementing the Wollongong Diocese ‘School Review and Improvement’ process.
- To revise and implement the school’s Pastoral Care and Anti Bullying policies.
- To pursue the possibility of creating a place of prayer and reflection for the school community within the school precinct.

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

Don Spencer
Principal