Annual School Report 2007

Vision Statement
At St Pius X we value each individual’s gifts and talents whereby children and staff are challenged and nurtured to achieve their full potential in an atmosphere based on Gospel values.

Principal’s Message
Throughout the year the school community has come together through prayer, service and fundraising to work with those less fortunate than ourselves. St Pius X has continued to support community events and have been involved in such celebrations as Anzac Day and Christmas in the Mall. The staff have been actively engaged in a program designed by Kevin Treston called “Wisdom Schools”. This program endeavours to nurture the whole human person living in harmony within creation. A wisdom Catholic school community is a learning community that invites its members to make life-enhancing choices. Wisdom Schools also built on our Pastoral Care Program and incorporated the National Safe School’s Framework, the generic values presented in the values for Australian Schools Statement, into their school policies. Please refer to the Catholic Education Office website: www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au for a copy of the relevant documents.

We have a very committed parent body and Mothers Club who work in close partnership with the students and staff. Our school is indeed fortunate to have very effective and active committees such as the Fete Committee which strive to exceed expectations by continually raising standards to meet the ever increasing financial needs of our schools.

Throughout the year student leaders have grown in their roles as young adults and school representatives. These leaders play a major role in school life by their participation in a variety of activities, such as managing school assemblies, facilitating whole school liturgies, various sporting events and representing the school in the wider community.

School Profile
St Pius X Catholic School was established and officially blessed in February 1959 but, due to a staff shortage, did not commence operation until February 1960. Staffed by Sisters of the Good Samaritan Order, with an enrolment of 120 children K-Year 2, the school quickly grew in size and population. In 1975, the Sisters of St Joseph assumed the administration of the school, then from 1980 St Pius X came under the leadership of lay principals.

The school is enriched with a wide cultural heritage with many countries being represented in the school population and many opportunities are taken to enjoy this wide cultural diversity.

As a Parish School, we endeavour to enjoy active participation in, and support of, our local Parish and community. Spiritual growth of our students is paramount, along with their welfare and education and is a responsibility shared by the Parish Priest, Principal, Staff, Parents and our local Parish Community.

A very strong foundation of community spirit has been built upon at St Pius X over the past years. This sense of Catholic Community has continued to be nurtured until the present time where the features of this culture reflect a spirit of co-operation, inclusion, recognition of the individual and the involvement of the wider community.
**Student Enrolments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
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**Student Attendance for 2007**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>93.1</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).

**Staffing Profile**

The school has fourteen fulltime and eight part-time teachers. These teachers performed the central role of teaching students in each of the fourteen classrooms. Some of these teachers also performed the additional roles of Special Education Support and Technology Support. A teacher Librarian was also employed four days per week to work with each of the fourteen classes in literature based activities. This year St Pius X continued to employ a Reading Recovery Teacher.

Assisting the teachers in the classroom were five Support Officers. Two of these positions involved working with teachers within the classroom to give extra support for individuals or small groups of students, mainly in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Other roles of Support Officers included assisting in the Library and Special Education Support and providing assistance to a child who is vision impaired.

Three Clerical staff share the position of School Secretary and they have the role of attending to school enquiries, managing school finance and providing assistance to the Principal. There are ancillary staff who maintain the cleanliness of the school and maintenance of the buildings and grounds.

The School Leadership Team consists of the Principal, Assistance Principal, two Coordinators and a Religious Education Co-ordinator. They are allocated release time to perform administrative and leadership tasks.

The teaching staff at St Pius X have a wide range of experience. The qualifications of the teaching staff consist of four Masters Degrees, twelve Bachelor Degrees and six Diplomas of Teaching.

The staff retention rate for 2007 was 80%

The average daily staff attendance for 2007 was 97.27%

**Teacher Standards**

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

| Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* | 100% |
| Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications | 0% |
| Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context | 0% |

*Australian Education Institution - National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition

**2007 Highlights**

- Successful involvement in Social Justice initiatives such as Mission Week and fund raising for St Vincent De Paul.
- Strong attendance at Grandparents’ Day
- Community participation in Book Fair and Book Week
- Sharing of talent in the SPX Showcase and numerous Dance Club presentations.
- Academic Showcasing such as Personal Development Assembly and Religious Education displays.
- Extra Curricula activities including Chess, Public Speaking and Academic competitions.
- Participation in Wollongong Eisteddfod.
- Winners of the Save our Sphere (SOS) environmental mural competition.
- Winner of the Westfield Schools competition.
Culture of the Catholic School

St Pius X is a Catholic Primary School committed to the education in faith of our students and school community. We constantly strive for a religious presence to be at the forefront of our daily lives. At St Pius X we do this by providing the opportunity for Religious Education to be taught on a daily basis and by allowing for Religious displays, pictures, statues and classroom prayer tables to be a major priority.

The link between the school and our Parish, Immaculate Conception, is very important. Working closely in consultation with our Parish Priest, the staff and children have participated in successful Parish based Sacramental Programs of Confirmation, Eucharist and Penance.

St Pius X is a place of prayer, praise and worship of our loving Father. Liturgy has a central place in the life of our school and this year the children were involved in a number of special prayer celebrations. These included celebrations for the Feast of Mary MacKillop, St Pius X as well as Holy Week and a number of Parish Masses. There were also wider community based celebrations such as the Feast of Sts Joachim and Anne, which was used to promote Grandparents’ day, and other special celebrations such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day.

Many children from the school participated in the Parish based Sacramental Programs, which culminated in their respective celebrations. Staff too were involved in the running of these groups, further strengthening the bond between school and Parish. Retreat days for children in Year 6 and Year 3 were held prior to them receiving their Sacraments. Year 6 also attended a special event when they were invited to participate in Prayer and Conversation with Bishop Peter.

All teachers have the Religious Education Curriculum at the forefront of their daily teaching and follow the guidelines from the Catholic Education Office. This year saw the second year of full implementation of the K-6 curriculum. This year again saw the Year 4 children completing the Religious Literacy Assessment, a diocesan initiative. The children completed an ‘exam type’ booklet and an extended response task with very good results.

Student Welfare

Student welfare encompasses the wellbeing of the whole child; spiritual, academic, physical, social and emotional. This year two staff members attended an extended course addressing bullying and harassment, resilience, pastoral care, emotional intelligence, social skill development and dealing with challenging behaviours. As a result of this, a special lunch room called “The Kids Club” was established to give children a safe and supportive environment where they can practise their social skills during the second half of lunch while engaging in games and art/craft activities.

Year 3 students and teachers participated in the 10 week ‘Rock and Water’ Program which was designed to help build self-control, self-confidence and their ability to deal with bullying behaviours.

A weekly school focus was introduced at the Monday morning assembly with themes ranging from Habits of Mind to the ways we communicate with each other in an effort to build stronger relationships across our community.

The School Care Board in the staffroom highlights specific medical concerns and courses of action if required. This information is also in the Playground Folders used by teachers on duty. They contain emergency information for specific students and Alert Cards to notify the Principal/staff in the case of an emergency. Discipline concerns are noted in the folder which are followed up by the Assistant Principal and recorded on a database.

A tagging system monitors special needs students and tracks their progress from year to year at St Pius X. Specific difficulties or talents that a child may have are recorded and any programs that have been put in place to address these needs. This information is passed onto the child’s new teacher each year.

Every Tuesday a counsellor from Centacare is available at St Pius X who meets with referred students.

Merit Awards leading to Principal Awards, SPX Awards and MacKillop Awards recognise individual achievements. Also acknowledged regularly are students who have received Sacraments as well as sporting, academic and cultural achievements.
OH & S inspections are completed each term and evacuation and lock down procedures are practised each year.

The Complaints and Grievance Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Office 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.

**Parent, Student & Teacher Satisfaction**

87.5% of parent responses to the nine questions were positive with the most favourable result being that parents see that the school provides a good understanding of Catholic tradition for their child. About 20% of parents felt that classrooms could be more child-centred and that reporting on student progress could be improved.

88% of student responses to the 7 questions were very supportive of their school with understanding rights and responsibilities and understanding their Catholic faith as being the most popular responses.

**Financial Summary**

During 2007 there were three main sources of income for St Pius X School. These were the Parish/School Enhancement and Debt Survey Obligation (SEDSO) Account, Catholic Education Office and Parents and Friends Association.

Major maintenance which was carried out during the school year included Plumbing to the value of $2259 and repairs to the verandahs under the stair wells totalling $1483.52. Ongoing maintenance during this period was Pest Control $880.00, Security $3514.00, Carpet Cleaning $1600.00 and Waste Disposal $5720.00.

St Pius X purchased a new photocopier. This machine is used for student, staff and parent needs. Additional equipment purchased including desktop computers totalling almost $10 000 and $20 000 for laptops.

Our parent body was very generous in allocating funds for Literacy, Numeracy and sporting needs. In addition the students were very active in raising funds for charitable organisations including St Vincent De Paul and Catholic Missions.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Pius X 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

In keeping with our Mission Statement, staff are dedicated to providing each student with quality Catholic learning and teaching, which facilitates the growth of each individual as a lifelong learner and a caring and responsible member of the wider community.

Staff members are committed to the development and delivery of high quality and varied learning and teaching programs which cater for the needs of all individuals in the spectrum. To assist this practice, collaborative planning and programming occurs and takes into consideration the varied needs of the individual, the needs of the class and the needs of the school as a whole. Analysis of assessment data also assists this process. Professional development is planned and managed according to the needs of individual staff and the needs of the school as a whole. Reflective practice is encouraged in order to evaluate the effective implementation of curriculum programs.

Education is child-centred and students at St Pius X Catholic School are encouraged to accept responsibility for their learning and behaviour. We value parents as the first educators of their children and welcome them into partnership in developing a successful learning community.

Continued growth requires change and therefore ongoing reflection and evaluation are promoted in order to sustain and extend this development and to help realise our School Mission Statement.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

Quality Catholic learning and teaching is our core business and as such is underpinned by our School’s Mission Statement. We endeavour to develop, implement and evaluate quality learning and teaching programs that support the needs of all students and create a learning environment that promotes the nurturing of the whole individual.

Teachers follow the NSW Board of Studies Curricula and the Wollongong Diocese Religious Education documents to collaboratively program.

The successful Count Me In and Count Me In Too Numeracy Programs continue to be followed in Early Stage 1, Stage 1 and Stage 2 classrooms. Regular team meetings are held to maintain the integrity of the program and to provide for professional dialogue between colleagues. Stemming from this, the whole school staged two Mega Maths mornings where students were grouped in Stages and given challenging tasks to complete. Reading Recovery has been operating in the school for thirteen years now and has continued to support the learning of students in Year 1 and beyond. Teaching time allocated to Reading Recovery is .8FTE. This year, fifteen students had the opportunity to be involved in the Program.

Assessment for learning and assessment of learning are ongoing and everyday experiences for teachers and students and is based on syllabus outcomes. A wide range of assessment tools are used and student learning is closely monitored by teachers. Year 4 students were again involved in the Diocesan Religious Literacy Assessment from which all students receive individual feedback and an analysis of the results guides future planning for RE throughout the school. Years 3 and 5 participated in the Basic Skills Tests and Primary Writing Assessments in August. Students from Years 3 to 6 were also given the opportunity to participate in the University of NSW English, Maths, Science, Computer Skills, Writing and Spelling Tests. All external test results are scrutinised by teachers and the school as a whole to guide future planning in learning and teaching.

At St Pius X, we appreciate the importance of learning technologies as an effective tool for learning and teaching. All classes have access to desktop computers and Year 5 and Year 6 each have a pod of laptops which are in use most of the day. Kindergarten to Year 4 have two pods of laptops which they share on a roster basis. The Library has four desktop computers as well as three laptops which they share during assemblies and meetings. The ICLT Coordinator has class release that is used to facilitate, coordinate and develop programs and resources. Exposure and experience are provided for students in a variety of computer applications and programs depending on their Stage level and level of competence.
Students learn about the Italian culture and language on a weekly basis and enjoy an annual Italian Day of food and culture.

**Cross Curriculum**

Cross curriculum content is currently incorporated in all classrooms at various levels. Teachers endeavour to match outcomes from a number of Key Learning Areas to develop programs that are more meaningful to the students and provide rich learning tasks. Content also addresses Indigenous culture, civics and citizenship, difference and diversity, environment, gender and multicultural issues.

**Meeting the Needs of all Students**

All staff have been involved in professional development focusing on differentiating the curriculum in order to meet the needs of all students in their class. This encompasses adjusting learning and teaching activities to cater for the wide range of abilities, backgrounds, experiences, personalities and learning styles in each class. This method ensures that the needs of students who are experiencing learning difficulties, as well as those who need extending, are met.

In Kindergarten, the ‘Welcome to Big School’ Program has been successfully implemented for a number of years and aids easier transition to school for students and their parents.

St Pius X has a number of students who are funded under the Special Education umbrella and a Coordinator is allocated class release to facilitate programs, personnel and resources. School Support Officers and class teachers assist these students in class and at times on a withdrawal basis. Transition meetings are held each term and the computer data program, Goalview, is updated, assisting teachers in monitoring and developing goals for their students. The partnership between staff and parents is vital and is encouraged at all times.

The Review Committee assists teachers in developing programs to meet the varying needs of students in their care. A school based tagging system is used to record details about students and monitor their progress from year to year. Students referred to the Review Committee, students with learning or other difficulties, students on our school Care Board, students identified as gifted and talented, students who score in the lower bands of the Basic Skills Tests as well as students who have been discontinued from Reading Recovery are all included in the tagging system. Information about specific strengths and weaknesses, programs and other vital information is included on these sheets so that it is readily accessible to their current and future teachers.

**Expanding Learning Opportunities**

Habits of Mind were introduced to the students this year as a vehicle for encouraging mindful learning. The intention is to develop in students the desire to strive towards becoming life-long learners, equipped with the strategies necessary to achieve success with their goals.

National Numeracy and Literacy Week was celebrated with a series of activities utilising Stage groupings and the expertise of successful writer, Sue Whiting.

Activities designed to extend and enhance learning include active participation in liturgies, excursions, public speaking, choir, sport, gala days and carnivals, presenting school assemblies, maintaining school gardens, cultural awareness (Italian), guest speakers and visiting performers. Other extra-curricula activities that are a feature of St Pius X are the dance club, chess club, choir and SPX Factor Talent Showcase.

Parental assistance in the classroom in a variety of areas enables much needed and welcomed assistance in helping our students. A Parent Helper Program is conducted at the beginning of each year.

**Professional Learning**

This year St Pius X committed to implementing Habits of Mind throughout the school. This involved three teachers attending an extended course aimed at providing knowledge, skills and resources that could then be used successfully at the school.

The ongoing focus on improving teaching pedagogy has seen many teachers participating in Effective Literacy and Numeracy courses and Teachnology which is aimed at improving teacher skills in ICLT. School based co-learning utilises the skills of teachers on staff to work with other members of staff in areas such as Critical Literacy, Numeracy, Technology, RE, Habits of Mind and Behaviour Management. All staff are actively encouraged to continually update and improve their pedagogy to enhance the learning of the students in their care.
**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 43 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:

8% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 10% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in Language followed by Reading and Writing.

Numeracy:

31% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 10% of students in Band 5. The best performance was in Patterns & Algebra followed by Data, Space & Geometry.

**Year 5**

Literacy:

0% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 65% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Writing, followed by Language and Reading.

Numeracy:

5% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 60% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Space & Geometry, followed by Measurement & data and Number, Patterns & Algebra.

**National Benchmarks**

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

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<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</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>98</td>
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</tr>
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<td>94</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*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.

- In consultation with all stakeholders a Renewal Plan was implemented in 2007. This plan is designed to develop and implement new and appropriate ways of teaching, recognising the commitment of all within the community to the value of life-long learning and to enhance the quality of learning and teaching.
- Embedded in the Renewal Plan is the recognition that St Pius X Catholic School is a community in which all have the opportunity to deepen and explore their understanding of Catholic Faith.
- Maintain a genuine culture of Pastoral Care and an authentic Catholic School based on Gospel values by continuing to develop a sense of collaboration between parents, school staff, students, and the Parish Community.

Progress in 2007 Towards Achievements of School Renewal Plan

- School Culture Statement was discussed at regular intervals throughout the school year.
- Child centred learning was embraced by all teaching staff during 2007.
- Action plans in Catholic Identity, Pastoral Care and Student Welfare, Learning and Teaching, Resourcing and Learning and Leading were implemented.
- myclasses was introduced and implemented in all grades and is now a very valuable tool with staff communication and professional development.
- Staff spirituality plan was facilitated by the Animators group and culminated in end of year staff retreat.

Priorities for 2008

- Further develop Habits of Mind in the learning and teaching cycle.
- Introduce and implement the Diocesan initiatives of School Review and Improvement which will improve student learning outcomes.
- Continue to develop Child Resilience in the School Community.
- Be actively engaged and support the Diocesan Initiatives, events and Liturgies for World Youth Day.
- Further develop school and Parish links by embracing the message in the document Catholic Schools at a Crossroads.
- Provision of inter-class and school visits which will promote collegial professional development embedded in co-learning Philosophy.

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

Cheryle Brennan
Principal