St Francis of Assisi
Catholic Primary School
Warrawong

Annual School Report
2008
About This Report

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Warrawong is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Wollongong, the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education. The Report also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School’s Annual Action Plan. Following its submission to the Board of Studies, the Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2009.

The Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Wollongong. This Report has been approved by the Director of Schools to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school:

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95 Flagstaff Road,
Warrawong NSW 2502
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Parish Priest: Fr Joseph Nguyen

Principal: Mr Paul Longobardi
Date: December 2008
Vision Statement

St Francis of Assisi School Community lives by the Franciscan motto:

‘My God and My All’.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message

Father Joseph Nguyen, as Parish Priest, continued to lead the Parish with a great sense of community and truly values the role of the school as a key ministry within the Parish. Our community of Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus also continues to sustain our identity.

The year has been highlighted by the completion of our refurbishments (Federally funded, with local contributions) with new, modern learning environments and administration areas. Learning now occurs within flexible, well-equipped spaces that are motivating and dynamic in their design. Improved pedagogy and structures have resulted, complementing existing initiatives and creating opportunities for fresh innovation. Stage-based learning teams were further developed (comprising class teachers and support staff) to improve the learning outcomes of students.

We have welcomed many new families this year. As school enrolments continue to rise, and given the nature of our school’s drawing area, we were supported by the Director of Schools with increased teacher staffing. The P&F Association was energetic in its fundraising and activity, involving many new parents. They organised student discos and barbeques, and acknowledged their appreciation of staff in a beautiful World Teachers’ Day lunch and presentation. In addition, they catered and part-hosted our Official School Opening, New School Fun Day and meeting of Diocesan Principals.

Parent Involvement

In acknowledging the wonderful support of parents, I particularly thank the P&F Executive and Committee for their teamwork and success throughout the year. We raised valuable funds for our school, more than in recent years, and focused again on the social aspect of our gatherings. The enthusiasm and togetherness of parents was proudly apparent and appreciated. Our main fundraiser and social event, the International Food Fiesta, was a great success in bringing our nationalities together. The support of the school’s leadership was a valued part of all we do. One aspect was the heavy involvement that parents enjoyed in the school. We are so proud of our new school. It is a colourful, exciting place to be, with the best and most modern facilities.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

Teachers really care about us and our learning. We have excellent Information Communication Learning Technology (ICLT) resources and now, exciting new renovations and class spaces. Learning looks and feels different at school now—we were motivated by different group work ideas and given more independence in our learning. Also, leadership opportunities enabled closer partnerships with students and staff. We benefited by extra opportunities including sport, attendance at the Young Leaders’ Day, an Art Enrichment Program, community activities and school promotional work.

School Captains
School Profile

The school opened in 1960. The foundation Franciscan Orders of Sisters and Friars continue to serve a largely multicultural community, this year comprising 29 nationalities and 70% of students with a non-English speaking background. There is a large diversity of needs within the school, all of which require careful consideration and planning. The School attracts special funding to support our diversity of learners and our dedicated staff work hard to achieve optimum outcomes for each child on behalf of their parents. Enrolments have grown over the last several years due to the school’s fine reputation, expenditure in school projects and ICLT, and prominent local profile. This year class teachers further developed Stage-based approaches to enhance learning. Support staff was allocated to Stages and were directly involved in students’ learning with an emphasis on K-2 as an early intervention strategy. This collaboration and team approach were an integral part of daily classroom activity.

Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Enrolment Policy and Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Website: www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au then go to the link Policies.

Student Attendance for 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91.0%</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staffing Profile

There were a total of 15 teachers at St Francis of Assisi Primary School.

School Leadership

The Leadership Team was 4 in number-Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Learning Technology Coordinator.

Specialist Teachers

There were part time teachers for Reading Recovery, Library, PE, Music, Executive Relief and Literacy Support.

Administrative Staff

There were 6 School Support Officers, 2 of whom were Office personnel as well. There was 1 Senior School Support Officer 5 days a week.
**Teaching Staff Experience**

Post graduate qualifications are: Master of Education; Graduate Diploma in Adult Education; Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies; Bachelor of Teaching; Bachelor of Education; Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies; Graduate Diploma in Religious Education; Masters of Arts in Theology; Masters in Education.

**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>%</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>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff Retention

**Staff Attendance**

The average daily staff attendance rate for 2008 was 96.79%.

The staff retention rate is high at St Francis of Assisi Primary School with 100% of the teaching staff remaining for the 2008 school year.

**Professional Learning**

Professional learning opportunities are highly valued and sought by all members of St Francis of Assisi School staff. During 2008 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

These included:
- Integration of computers (and other technologies) in daily learning,
- Tuition in the use of electronic whiteboards (SMARTboards),
- Different styles of learners,
- Diversification of the curriculum,
- Behaviour management, pastoral care, and
- Setting and monitoring measurable learning outcomes for students.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2008 was $3,358.00. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the CEO.
Culture of the Catholic School

Our school motto, ‘My God and My All’ is reflected in all aspects of our school life. It is expressed in our formal and informal curriculum, in the school buildings and surrounds, and most particularly in our lived relationships. This is inspired by our Franciscan Friars and the Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus who minister in our Parish and School. Prayer plays an important role in the daily life of the school. Each day begins with prayer at assembly and other prayers are lead by class teachers in the classrooms. School/Parish Masses are celebrated most Fridays plus Feasts Days with Stage Groups preparing Liturgies. Opportunities are provided for Reconciliation and the Friars make class visits on a regular basis.

In 2008 parents were supported by the school and Parish with the implementation of the Parish Sacramental Programs. In Term 2, Year 6 prepared for and celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation; in Term 3, a large number of Year 3 students received the Sacrament of Penance and on the Feast of Christ the King in November the same group received First Communion. A number of teachers, plus catechists, implemented the Program for the Parish. In April we were fortunate to have the Cross and Icon visit our school as part of World Youth Day celebrations. The number of people who participated at our school liturgy was overwhelming and the feeling of Catholic Faith and community was tangibly evident. As a community we displayed our Catholic identity additional ceremonies: Commissioning of Staff and Induction of Captains, Remembrance Day Service, Cross and Icon Liturgy, Blessing of School Refurbishments, Feast Day and Blessing of the Pets, Christmas Carols at the nursing homes. A bonding Staff Spirituality Day focused on our own personal life journey and union.

Student Welfare

Pastoral Care Initiatives included the work of the school Centacare Counsellor and liaising with class teachers to further complement individual welfare Programs. Social skills and transition to High School programs ran. In addition, Pastoral Care plans were updated for students and staff requiring consideration related to medical conditions and disability.

‘Safe Schools’ Framework’ Initiatives included an induction to school for our new students and families. Communication and procedures were revised to ensure consistent care and expectations. Complaints and Grievances Procedures can be found on the CEO website:www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au then go to link ‘Policies’. Behaviour Management procedures were further refined, especially in dealing with the management of playground issues. A new pilot initiative was launched to support this in the context of learning achievement. Catholic Education Office (CEO) staff and a school committee revised procedures and devised a school plan that will monitor and support students in their choices. A ‘Peace and Justice’ Program was valuable, as each Grade focused on facets of peer relations.

In compliance with NSW Reform Act 1990, corporal punishment is banned in all Diocesan schools. Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility centred around the role of Captains in developing leadership with younger students, integrating the promotion of Values Education. Social Justice initiatives encouraged students to be of service, locally and globally-Caritas, Catholic Mission, Franciscan Vietnamese Orphanages, Christmas Boxes for The Philippines, St Vincent De Paul food collection. Approximately $1200 was raised by the children to support these projects. Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the Office.
Financial Summary

Major school expenditure involved school refurbishments to all general learning areas and administration. Funding was sourced primarily from a Federal Government Capital Works’ Grant plus local contributions from SEDSO and school funds. Unspent balances have been largely committed (along with Parish and SEDSO funds) to pending projects including the resurfacing of the school playground and reconfiguration of the school entry.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School for the year ended 31 December 2008. This data is taken from the 2008 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Learning & Teaching

Introduction
The staff again demonstrated its pride in the provision of quality Catholic Learning and Teaching. Our School Review and Improvement Plans and our Curriculum Plans (Literacy, Numeracy and ICLT) reflected a desire for sound practice, innovation and professional learning. Our strategic intent was to determine priorities that enhanced learning and teaching, and improve teacher effectiveness that would benefit the learning outcomes for the students.

Curriculum and Pedagogy
Teachers used the Board of Studies Curricula to plan, teach and assess in English, Mathematics, Human Society and its Environment, Science and Technology, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, and Creative and Practical Arts. Reports were sent home at the end of Terms 2 and 4. Parents were then invited to meet with the class teacher to discuss matters pertaining to their child. Information and Communication Learning Technologies were integrated across all Key Learning Areas in all Stages of learning.

Cross Curriculum
In all Stages, teachers designed units of work integrating outcomes from multiple Key Learning Areas. They designed rich learning experiences incorporating Multiple Intelligence Theory and Higher Order Thinking Skills in an attempt to maximise the benefit of each learning experience.

Meeting the Needs of All Students
Members of staff were acutely aware of the need to diversify the curriculum to better meet the needs of the students. Stage-based groupings in English and Mathematics were successfully used as a means of addressing the range of abilities within a cohort of students. Using School Support Officers during these lessons improved student-staff ratios significantly and remediation and enrichment were more effectively provided.

Expanding Learning Opportunities
The students had the opportunity to participate in a variety of expanded learning opportunities. These included participation in the Australasian Schools’ Competitions in English, Mathematics, Spelling, Computer Skills and Science. The school offers Stage 3 the chance to participate in Public Speaking at a local and regional level. The school has three major whole-school sport carnivals: swimming, cross-country and athletics, and also participates in Diocesan Gala Days for AFL, Netball, Basketball and Soccer.

Professional Learning
During Term 3, the school applied for and was successful in becoming a pilot school for the Diocesan School-Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Project. This project, which is designed to run for several years, involves a team of staff and a parent collecting and analysing data that will help determine a more effective school plan for promoting desirable behaviour and managing children’s less desirable behaviour.
**Student Achievement**

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the National Assessment Plan for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 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.

**Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment program for Year 4 students was successfully implemented within the school in 2008. The cohort consisted of 31 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 1 September and 31 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task is based on the Unit *One With God’s Creation* and was completed during the first half of Term 3. The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

The Targeted Indicators show that students performed extremely well on the questions about the Ten commandments, the Creation Story and Mary but need to focus more on events of Liturgical Seasons in Part A. The whole process is a difficult one for many of the children as the Literacy can be lengthy and confusing, but most of the students were enthusiastic and applied themselves wholeheartedly to the task. The students produced excellent results especially in the Extended Task which were displayed for all the school to view.

For Part A 41.9% of students were placed in the developing level, 51.6% in the achieving level and 6.5% were in the extending level.
For Part B 6.5% of students were placed in the developing level, 77.4% in the achieving level and 16.1% were in the extending level.
Combining Parts A and B, 24.1% of students were placed in the developing level, 62.1% in the achieving level and 13.8% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

**NAPLAN**

There were twenty-nine Year 3 students and thirty-nine Year 5 students who sat for the 2008 NAPLAN. Year 3 is reported in Bands 1-6 and Year 5 is reported in Bands 3-8 with Bands 6 and 8 respectively being the highest.

**YEAR 3**

Over 93% of Year 3 students were above the National Minimum Standard in Literacy and Numeracy. They achieved extremely well in Writing with little or no difference in the other areas and a high percentage of students in the middle Bands 3 and 4.

**YEAR 5**

Over 92% of Year 5 students were above the National Minimum Standard in all aspects of Literacy and Numeracy except Reading. There was little variation between Literacy and Numeracy with a high percentage of students in the middle Bands 5 and 6.

Other forms of formal assessment were critical in the school collecting and planning to data that informs us of individual student learning gains, strengths and weaknesses.
St Francis of Assisi Primary School
Warrawong
Student Achievement 2008

National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
Student Achievement in Bands

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May this year. NAPLAN replaces the previous State-based Basic Skills Test and the results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

### NAPLAN 2008:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% in Bands</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

The lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) represents students who are achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in each aspect of NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) represents students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2008: % AT or ABOVE NMS</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent, Student & Staff Satisfaction

Areas of Strength

In the surveys conducted, responses from students, parents and staff indicated a strong sense of pride in the school. It was acknowledged that the school assists the students, in a significant way, in their understanding of the Catholic faith. Student awareness of rights and responsibilities was high and seen as closely related to the making of a safe school environment. There was a distinct impression that there were clear support structures, rules and procedures in place, and they could rely on peers and staff for help and support. Again, they viewed support for their learning as high, being encouraged to know and strive for their potential. An important aspect of school life was the availability of sport activities especially gala days and the opportunity to represent in athletics, swimming and cross country. Other activities (optional) included school, community, university and corporate competitions involving art, creative arts, environmental projects, writing and formal academic competitions.

Parents agreed that their child was helped in developing their view of Catholic tradition. Similarly, all agreed that there were opportunities to be involved and that communication was effective. Most parents strongly agreed that their children were suitably challenged according to their learning needs and potential, and that reporting processes were very good. Again, most strongly agreed that the school provided a safe environment, showed care for each child’s welfare and encouraged extra curricular learning opportunities.

Overall, staff members strongly believed that the school adopted effective measures to maximise learning outcomes and to meet individual learning needs. This was seen to be enhanced by the provision of a safe and supportive environment as well as the children’s understanding of their rights and responsibilities as learners and peers. Reporting to parents was seen as comprehensive, taking the form of formal School Reports twice a year, corresponding parent/teacher meetings and meetings each term with parents who have children with special needs. Other informal reporting of progress was seen as effective. Common methods were communication via diaries, interviews on request, emails and phone calls.

Areas of Future Development

Several parents held the view that we need to continue to focus on addressing individual learning needs through effective pedagogy, structuring of learning groups, collaborative work with support staff and the way we differentiate the curriculum to suit the variety of learners. Students need to be constantly challenged to know and reach potentials, and in so doing, share the responsibility for their learning. In addition, the integration of meaningful and diverse Information and Communication Technologies was an ongoing feature in planning and staff professional development. Also as a result of surveys, it was noted that the school should continue to review how the students understand their rights and responsibilities. This relates to the way they deal with each other in social and play settings, and will remain a focus of staff. We continually reviewed behaviour management procedures in creating a consistent and fair approach, in which children take responsibility for their choices and actions, and staff adopt a known approach when helping them.
School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement is an ongoing process of self-evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. By the end of 2008 all schools have begun the transition to the new School Review and Improvement process.

School Review and Improvement components reviewed in 2008:

- Staff personal and professional goals relating to respective roles as well as their role as a member of the school community
- Review and development of Key Reference Committees (Literacy, Numeracy and Information, Communication and Learning Technologies)
- Meeting of the diverse learning needs of students
- Teaching styles and structures that are most effective within the new school

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed in 2009:

- To commit to pedagogy that embraces and integrates ICLT in enhancing student learning outcomes.
- To promote collaboration between class teachers and learning teams to demonstrate potentials of the new general learning spaces
- To consolidate early intervention programs and structures (K-2) and further develop Stage groups and other structures across the school
- To work towards the achievement of specific measurable learning outcomes within each Stage, as set in Term 4, 2008
- To engage as a CEO pilot school in the School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) project, in linking student behaviours with student achievements
- To build upon the effective, active and visible relations forged within the Parish