About This Report

John Therry Catholic High School, Rosemeadow 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 the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report to the Community for this year provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education and Training.

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.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wollongong. This Report has been approved by the Wollongong CEO to ensure compliance with all NSW board of Studies requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the Board of Studies, the Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2010.

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

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Principal: Karen Young
Date: 23 February 2010
Vision Statement

“To create a learning environment based on Catholic faith which empowers students and staff to achieve their potential as individuals in the wider community”

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message
Welcome to the 2009 Annual School Report of John Therry Catholic High School. Our school has continued to flourish with an emphasis on the four key areas of growth for our students being academic, social, spiritual and sporting. The development of a “Graduate Statement” has provided a means of measuring our progress towards these goals. Our year of 2009 was highlighted by improved results in the two public examinations, the School Certificate and the HSC, wins in the Diocesan Swimming and Athletics Carnivals, the implementation of our building refurbishment program, an outstanding Jack Crawford Games, and inspirational camps and retreats. John Therry Catholic High School has continued to embrace a reflective approach in 2009 extending a review of its practices in Student Management, surveying the community extensively on key issues and implementing a number of procedural and structural changes as a consequence. A major refurbishment process has continued to take place across the classroom facilities to improve the learning environment for students. The school has begun to move to an environmentally sustainable site with the installation of many water tanks and an agriculture plot. As the school approaches its 30th Year in 2010 there is a focus on examining our traditions, culture and charism with particular emphasis on re-invigorating our Marist foundations.

Parent Involvement
John Therry Catholic High School is now well into its third decade. Preservation of the heritage and Catholic traditions of the school is important to the P&F. John Therry, named after the pioneering missionary priest, Father Therry, is a blessed and special school. The school has always had a close and supportive relationship with the P&F. This close relationship was born over 30 years ago out of the desire by Catholic parents to have a Catholic co-educational school to which they could send their sons and daughters. Very few schools can make that claim. During 2009 the P&F discussed many issues with the School in relation to and contributed substantially to the Catholicity and financial wellbeing of the school. The celebration of John Therry Week continues to be very much welcomed by the P&F. The upcoming year of 2010 brings a need for major work to install air-conditioning in the William Murray Hall to enable its better use by the school community for examinations, liturgies, functions, and general use. The P&F have provided funds for air-conditioning in classrooms, new sports uniforms for Representative teams and an upgrade for the school sound and light system for the delivery of the new VET Entertainment course.

Parents and Friends Association, President
**Student Leadership**

The John Therry student leadership team expanded in 2009 and consisted of 2 Captains, 2 Vice-Captains, 8 House Captains and 12 SSSA Captains: Spiritual (2), Sporting (2), Social (2), Stewardship/Environmental (2), Creative Arts (2) and Academic (2) from Year 12, while an additional team of 29 students from Years 7-11 serve as our Student Representative Council. The SRC holds meetings fortnightly, where issues that concern the student body are raised, as well as the management of charity work and out of school events such as our discos. Every other week, the School and Vice-Captains meet with the School Executive to discuss the matters raised in SRC meetings in an effort to better the school environment. 70 students from year 10 also play a vital role in Year 7 student’s orientation and acting as Peer Support/Peer Mentors while the 8 House Captains support 4 major sporting events: the Jack Crawford Games, Swimming Carnival, Athletics Carnival, Cross-Country Carnival and other House competitions. House spirit was fostered in 2009 with the further development of the point system for the House Cup, John Therry Week House Banners and Mascots. Points are gathered from merits gained from all aspects of school life: spiritual, academic, social and sporting.

**School Captains**

**School Profile**

**School Context**

John Therry Catholic High School was established in 1981 at Rosemeadow to serve the large number of parishes in the surrounding area. Although a Diocesan high school, its founding Principal was a Marist brother. It is currently a six stream, co-educational, comprehensive Catholic high school drawing its students from all educational sectors: students enrol from over 20 different State primary schools but predominantly the students enrol from the parishes of Our Lady Help of Christians, Rosemeadow, St John’s Campbelltown and St Thomas More, Ruse. A number of students come from further outlying areas such as St Anthony’s, Picton, St Paul’s Camden, Appin and St Aloysius, The Oaks. Students come from a diverse ethnic background, and the school has an inclusive attitude for all students, as evidenced by such initiatives as the Stage 6 Life Skills satellite class link with Mater Dei. The school has a strong Catholic and social justice ethos and works with the Parish Priests and the community to develop and enhance student spirituality.

**Student Enrolments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>LBOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>509</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Diocesan Enrolment Policy and Procedures exist to assist schools in the equitable prioritising of enrolment applications and in order to ensure that the requirements of State and
commonwealth legislation are met. The Enrolment Policy and Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au then go to the link Policies. No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2009.

**Student Attendance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>92.6%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Retention Rate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 10 Total Enrolment 2007</th>
<th>171</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 12 Enrolment at Census Date remaining in Year 12 at end 2009</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Retention Rate (%)</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Attainment in Senior Years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years 11-12 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during years 11 and 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of students attaining the award of the Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Destination Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Yr 10</th>
<th>Yr 11</th>
<th>Yr 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of School Leavers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE/Tertiary</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# This table does not include the 111 students in Year 12 who completed their HSC at the end of 2009.
Staffing Profile

**Teaching Staff:** There are a total of 70 teachers at John Therry Catholic High School: 57 full time teachers (24 male, 33 female) and 13 part time teachers (3 male, 10 female).

**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-NOSR* 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 Staff Retention*

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**
The average daily staff attendance rate for 2009 was 95.5%. This does not include planned leave such as maternity or long service leave.
The staff retention rate at John Therry Catholic High School was 87% of the teaching staff remaining for the 2009 school year.

**Professional Learning**
During 2009 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes. John Therry Catholic High School whole school development days involved 59 teaching and 30 support staff. These days comprised of sessions focussed on:

- Staff Spirituality;
- School Review and Improvement (SRI);
- child protection;
- OH&S;
- LTLL project (Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners);
- Pastoral Care strategies (eg. Rock and Water, Accidental Counselling); and
- Learning Group structures.

A significant range of professional learning experiences and activities were provided to school personnel throughout 2009. These experiences were offered from a range of providers...
including school-based professional development, the engagement of external agencies to provide learning experiences at school, the attendance at external professional development activities and those provided by the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong. The range of professional learning opportunities included: *(The number of full teacher days are indicated in the brackets)*

- Religious Education and Spirituality courses; including: Religious Education Certificate studies (8), Masters of Religious Education (1), Social Justice (4), and RE Leading Learning Networks (2);
- Curriculum General including Leading Learning Networks (22), Catholic Secondary Schools Association Forum (3), Board of Studies Committee meetings (3), Technologies for Learning (8), Lighthouse Learning (2), Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework (4), System Focus Days (3), school visits (20) Subject specific conferences and inservices; English (12), Mathematics (20), Personal Development Health and Physical Education (9), Science (3), Technology and Applied Studies (15), Visual Arts (10), LOTE (9), VET (10), HSIE (9), Special Needs (7), Library (6), Information and Communication Technology (15), Literacy (9), Numeracy (8), Careers (5), and Beginning Teachers (18);
- Pastoral Care including: various pastoral care inservices such as Mind Matters, Mental Health First Aid, Rock and Water (42) Leadership training (eg. Learning for Leadership) (4); and
- others including Anaphylaxis training (46), Manual Handling (52), Voice Care (67), Chemical Safety (24), and Rock and Water Taster (36).

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2009 was $32,380. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office Wollongong with a school based expenditure of $1,815. This averages $488.50 per teacher spent on professional learning throughout 2009. Additional support was provided to beginning teachers with network meetings and release time provided by the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong of 0.075 per teacher which is the equivalent of 9 days release per teacher.

Catholic Life and Religious Education

In 2009, Religious Education at John Therry Catholic High School was celebrated to its fullest in all areas of our school community. It was a year of change about being in a Catholic community and all the traditions, signs and symbols that make up our community here at John Therry Catholic High School. This year we as a Catholic school were challenged to put our beliefs and values into action when dealing with each other and the secular world around us.

Priorities for Students in 2009

Priorities for students were:
- The Year of St Paul;
- celebrate our Catholic faith in community;
• learn how to work together in building a Catholic community;
• show a commitment to the Social Teachings of the Church through good works; and
• re-living the History of St Paul’s mission.

Highlights in 2009

Included:
• Religious Education became the focal point of our school with a new teaching method being trialled in Years 7 to 10. St Paul provided a role model when looking at how we put our faith into action;
• the highlights of our retreats and twilight retreats were the liturgies, the healing rites, the mediation sessions, the small group work, the self reflection time, and the affirmation sessions. The level of participation and the depth of spirituality in our Senior students gives us all hope for a future where Gospel values and the example given by Jesus is lived out in the youth of today;
• our Liturgical Teams where students from Years 10 – 12. They took on responsibilities in order to proclaim the word, altar service, mass preparation and singing in the choir. These teams of students continued to add a new dimension to our celebrations especially in the Easter Liturgy and our school masses throughout the year;
• the Easter Liturgy this year took on a focus of St. Paul’s conviction to service in spreading the Good News. Students from Years 7 to 12 involved themselves in a very moving re-enactment of the Last Supper using drama, images and scripture reading;
• in Year 7 the focus was on the Stations of the Cross and students celebrated Jesus’ trial and death on a cross and how can we relate the ‘stations of the cross’ to everyday life and relationships. Also how do I use my Time, Talents and Treasures at John Therry Catholic High School?;
• Year 10 Camp liturgy centred around their worth to our school community and the use of their God given talents to achieve peace and harmony. There was also the opportunity for renewal and forgiveness; and
• the one to one notebook program continued to bring to life the Catholic tradition in Year 7 and 8 by opening up the information highway on the development of the early church and the work of the missionaries.

Social Justice Report

The St Vincent de Paul student Chapter at John Therry was very active and supported the following charities:
• Caritas Australia. Project Compassion ($6000). This was also supported by the Social Justice Committee;
• Nagle Centre (food, clothing and monetary donations) ($530);
• Rosemeadow, Ruse, Campbelltown and Camden Chapters of St Vincent de Paul ($500);
• Mission Australia ($315); and
• Kiribati fund – Pacific Partnerships ($1000).
In addition Social Justice Committee students were involved in the following:

- Diocesan Just Leadership day;
- Christmas Luncheon ($600);
- St Vinnies Winter Appeal & Sleepout ($615);
- visits to the local Nursing Home; and
- Claymore Neighbourhood Centre support.

We are truly “relishing what is right and just”.

Financial Summary

The major refurbishment project undertaken in 2008, with its emphasis on improving the learning and recreational environment for our students, continued and has flowed on to the 2009 school year. Storm water drains upgrades and water tank installations have also continued in 2009. Sewer line root infestation, a major concern, is being addressed as progressive sewer choking occurs around the school sewer pipe system. In the 2009 school year, $369,188 and $250,365 were spent on Maintenance and Grounds & Operations Building respectively. $521,743 was spent on Furniture and Equipment.

The National School Pride Program funding of $200,000 has been committed and the program will be completed in April 2010. This fund was used for the conversion and refurbishment of Science Laboratory 1 & 2 into two general classroom learning areas and extensive carpeting of classrooms. The school library has been given a facelift with fresh paint and new carpets and computer benches. Classroom in Blocks B, C, D and E as well as demountables A, C and D had been recarpeted. All classrooms are progressively being fitted with new whiteboards and felt pin boards. New computer benches have been installed in the classroom in Block B and the resource room for visual arts in Block E which will house the Apple Desktop Computers. Most classrooms now have new furniture and of those remaining with the older Student Chairs and desks these are scheduled for replacement as the school’s financial position allows. We will take delivery of the next batch of new tables and chairs in July 2010.

The school executive team will carefully scrutinise and introduce stricter financial controls and will initiate innovative policies to assist parents in meeting their financial obligations to the school. We are also looking into a program of improving the collection rate of school accounts to sustain a healthy cash flow and the ability to meet school debt servicing.

The contribution of the P&F has been a significant factor in the development of technology within the school over the past five years. Parents pay a P&F levy of $75 in place of additional fundraising activities and attend working bees to offset the costs of Maintenance. Funds from the P&F have paid $35,000 for air-conditioning in a number of classrooms, $15,000 for the upgrade to the sound and lighting facilities in the Drama room to enable the teaching of VET Entertainment at the school and the P&F have also offered to replace sports uniforms for the
school representative teams in 2009 at an estimated cost of $10,000 which will be finalised at the start of 2010.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for John Therry Catholic High School Rosemeadow for the year ended 31 December 2009. This data is taken from the 2008 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Student Welfare

At John Therry Catholic High School the growth of each student pastorally is one of the School’s main concerns. The School aims to develop students spiritually, academically, socially and through sporting endeavours and, as a result, there is an unequivocal focus on each student’s maturation, development and values. In 2009, the Pastoral Care team continued to focus on the Restorative Justice framework, Values Education, the development of the Graduate Statement and initiatives surrounding rights and responsibilities for staff and students. We also continued our drive towards active stewardship, innovation, solution focused interview techniques and incorporation of the Safe Schools Framework. Throughout the year we included these concepts into our professional development, our daily learning and teaching practices and in our Pastoral care meetings. A major change this year was the planning for and implementation of the new vertical homeroom (learning group) system from Year 7-10 and Year 11-12. Overall at John Therry, we aim to provide students and staff with a fair and just system of support guided by Gospel Values.

As part of our mission, our aim is to facilitate the advancement and experience of responsible self-discipline amongst students and to enhance the well-being, safety and management of the whole school community. Our Student Management Policy aims to building a community of students, parents and staff that can function effectively in a caring environment characterised by trust, mutual respect, empathy and compassion. The dignity of each student is to be respected at all times. We hold pastoral care sessions which have enabled the planning for pastoral topics such as relationships, responsible decision making skills, study skills, resilience, organisation, persistence, confidence and awareness of bullying and harassment issues. An effective collaborative approach between KLA and the Pastoral Team has enhanced student motivation and created a safe school environment.

In 2009 we continued to develop Restorative Justice Practices and this process formed the basis of Pastoral interventions with students over the year. We also engaged in a number of initiatives in regards to Rights and Responsibilities of students including: the development of a new Student Planner for 2009; the composition of the JTCHS Graduate statement for the school to foster effective learning behaviours in our students; the stamp merit and demerit system with links to the already established level system; the implementation of the House Cup Trophy for House Carnivals points and House merit points; a consequence sheet for staff, parents and students; implementation of the First Class Welfare program; staff development on solution focus interview techniques and an incident sheet to enable greater communication between staff and students on behavioural matters of concern. John Therry Catholic High School was heavily involved in the planning and presentation at the Diocesan Pastoral Care Forum and the participants from our school gained valued information from this research and data analysis of our school.

In relation to student leadership, the members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Student Representative Council (SRC) are willing contributors who enhance the voice of the
larger student body. They were responsible for running discos each term which enabled the SRC to support a number of charities throughout the year. They were also responsible for the innovation of stall days to raise funds for house mascots, house value bands and house marquees. The SLT were enthusiastic in setting up the mentor program for 2009 where students in Year 10-12 worked with Year 7-9 in an extended peer mentor time. This innovation will be further developed next year with Year 10-12 students visiting learning groups each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to work as peer mentors. Stewardship is also apparent in the Year 11 Community service program, the Year 10-12 passport program, in the tutoring and reading programs that Year 11 students have participated in each week with Year 7 students, and the Year 10 Visualisation and Verbalisation program. These programs have helped develop stronger house relationships, enhance the skills and confidence of students with special needs and develop a shared concern for the development of literacy and numeracy skills across all years. The SRC participated in the Young Leaders’ Day conference at Darling Harbour, attended the sorry day celebrations, the NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) week celebrations, camps with the Christian Brothers at Mulgoa and the Marist Brothers at Mittagong, as well as participating in local leadership events such as the MISA leaders training afternoon at Macarthur Anglican. The Year 12 SLT was very active and highly successful this year and engaged in events across all areas of the school aim.

Parental involvement was also significant throughout 2009 with parents supporting the many activities that the students were involved in throughout this year. The parent-student-staff triangular relationship is crucial for our shared aims to be accomplished. Each Year group had an information night where Pastoral plans were outlined and specific topics relating to the development of student management and year issues were discussed. We held a mother/daughter breakfast this year and the Father/child bonfire and dinner at school was another highly successful initiative.

John Therry Catholic High School has a Pastoral programme that caters for the specific needs of each student in individual year groups. Our programs include the Year 7-11 Peer support program, camps for Year 7 and 10, Pastoral Days for Years 8, 9 and 11, and a retreat for Year 11. Pastoral Care time was also used for Career development and students also participated in work experience, Year 10 and 12 Careers markets, and had special assemblies with guest speakers. We held a transition day for Year 6 students and trained Year 9 students in Peer Support skills prior to this orientation day. We had two pastoral planning days where Executive members and Year Co-ordinators were able to review programs, work collaboratively in stages and deliberate on the pastoral needs of the students in their care. Underpinning these pastoral programs are gospel values such as truth, compassion, understanding, respect and tolerance which evolve into the necessary touchstones for students to draw from in their future life beyond school.

The Pastoral Care structures allow all staff to become involved in the social development of the students in the school. We have Year Co-ordinator’s, Assistant Year Co-ordinator’s and homeroom teachers who form the pastoral fabric of the school. We also have two CatholicCare
counsellors who were available four days a week for the particular needs of individual students, parents and staff throughout the year and were able to present information at staff meetings and Pastoral care meetings. Development and planning in 2009 allowed for a change in the Pastoral structure whereby new positions of Senior and Junior Pastoral Care Co-ordinator were created and these staff were responsible for special events and pastoral program management, liaison with outside providers such as Mission Australia and the Police Liaison officer, organisations such as Enlighten Education and Rising Generations and co-ordinating whole school events. Further planning for 2010 saw the creation of a Transition Co-ordinator, a Student Future’s Co-ordinator and the trial of House Co-ordinators in Term 4. We were pleased to hear towards the end of the year that there will be two Marist Brothers working at John Therry next year and our planning around their involvement at school would include their involvement in staff spirituality, family and student welfare initiatives and in educating us on the Marist traditions of our school.

Our Student Management Policy has the aim of building a community of students, parents and staff that can function effectively in a caring environment characterised by trust, mutual respect and compassion. We have developed the school level system where students can progress through six levels depending on their behaviour. For students who act positively in the school we have rewards such as this year’s Gold Level student’s excursion to Canberra which was a tremendous way to reward these conscientious students. The Federal Member Mr Pat Farmer met with these gold level students at school, prior to the trip to Canberra and gave some words of advice and encouragement to them. We hope to continually improve this level system so that all students can achieve their personal best and get rewarded for doing so.

John Therry Catholic High School has been actively involved in works of charity and during this year we have supported Caritas Australia, the Cancer Council’s Daffodil Day and our support towards St Vincent De Paul was, as always, a major focus of our fundraising efforts. The SLT fundraised with a BBQ lunch to support the work of Father Joseph Pelle at Milne Bay in Papua New Guinea. The Annual Christmas Luncheon was held in the Bishop Murray Hall and we had over 220 people in attendance. Once again, the students, parents and staff joined together to provide for the needy in our community through contributions to the Jesse Tree and the supply of hampers for these families. The generosity and financial contributions of many people allowed for the continuation of this event and the legacy of the late Mr John Read to who initiated this important social justice event.

During 2009 the year we have also decided to reduce homeroom size with the new vertical system, strengthen the homeroom structure by consolidating our students into four houses for homeroom, sport and peer mentoring time and to initiate the role of House Co-ordinators. In Term 4, there was a special John Therry week where the school came together with a number of activities, house stalls, competitions, JT Superstars and the Jack Crawford games. This week of celebration on the house patrons and the life of Fr John Therry has revitalised the charism and values of Fr John Therry in our school.
Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to a safe and supportive environment. The principles, guidelines and procedures set out in the policy documents **Maintaining Right Relationships** and **Safe Work Environment** are the framework for school leaders, students, staff, parents and the wider community to develop a safe and supportive environment. The **Diocesan Complaints Handling Procedures** forms an important element in the Diocese’s commitment to ensuring safe and supportive environments in our school communities. These documents can be found on the Catholic Education office website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au then go to the link Policies. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2009.

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.

**Sporting Highlights of 2009**

These include:
- Junior Boys won MISA South Championship, Senior Boys achieved second place;
- John Therry was third overall school in MISA South competition;
- 18 students represented John Therry at State level;
- 2 student Age Champions at Diocesan Athletics;
- 2 student Age Champions at Diocesan Cross Country;
- 5 students received Diocesan Blues awards;
- 6 students qualified for All Schools competitions;
- 1 student competed at the Paralympic games;
- 1 student competed at World Youth Titles and Junior Olympics; and
- 1 student represented NSW in U/16 Rugby League State of Origin.

**Learning & Teaching**

**Introduction**

2009 has been year of change implementation as a result data analysis of our community’s needs. Much of our focus has been on the expansion of personalised digital learning at John Therry with the Year 7 & 8 notebook program. There has been significant restructuring of the timetable across all stages to promote student engagement with their learning and our Catholic learning community.

**Curriculum & Pedagogy**

In Stage 6, our 2009 HSC cohort achieved some outstanding individual and course results. 3 students achieved a ATAR in excess of 90 and 7 in excess of 80. Graduating students were offered 75 degree courses from universities throughout the state. Courses in 8 of the 10 Key
Learning Areas achieved results above the state averages. Of particular note were the examination results in Community & Family Studies, Visual Arts, Information Processes & Technology, Business Studies, Information Technology and Hospitality as were the results in both Mathematics and General Mathematics. The bodies of work of two HSC Visual Arts candidates were preselected for ARTEXPRESS, one of whom has been included in the exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW in 2009.

In Stage 5, the Year 10 School Certificate cohort achieved outstanding individual school-based and state-based assessment results with a number of students achieving academic excellence across all Key Learning Areas. In Year 9, students have engaged in a series of short courses that are skills based and designed to maximise students’ engagement. Focus areas have included financial literacy, creative arts performance production and environmental stewardship. These short course programs will continue in 2010 with particular emphasis on harnessing this allocation of time to enhance students’ literacy and numeracy skills.

In Stage 4, the strong emphasis on explicit teaching of the foundational skills of Information & Communication Literacy Technologies (ICLT) has been correlated with how they underpin the classroom curriculum. This integrated cross-curricular approach has been further strengthened by an inquiry-based rotational short course program that systematically and explicitly addresses the ethical, efficient and effective use of mobile technologies. Students have developed a range of digital products as part of this approach. The linking of digital & information literacies will be integrated more fully with Key Learning Area assessment programs in 2010.

Cross-Curriculum

The integration of personalised technology as a tool for learning and teaching has been expanded to include both Year 7 and Year 8 in 2009. This significant financial commitment by the school community has been supplemented by federal government funding that has allowed the school to update desktop technologies. In 2010, the ratio of student to computer access will be 1:2 with the notebook program entering the Stage 5 arena.

Data analysis has been a regular focus in 2009 for whole staff professional development, dialogue and reflection. The second year of the national assessment program (NAPLAN) has provided a greater sense of secondary ownership by yielding information on our students’ growth in the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy. This will also provide a platform for even greater sharing of information with our feeder primary schools to enable us to transition and track our students as they enter high school.

Once again in 2009, John Therry has led the diocese in the breadth of our National Literacy Numeracy Week celebrations - showcasing and rewarding achievements, providing experiences and workshops with nationally acclaimed authors such as Diane Bates and D.C. Green, creating a climate of challenge and fun in which quizzes and competitions engaged students across all stages in an authentic way.

Another highlight in 2009 was the visit to the school of national media personality and journalist, Kerry O’Brien under the local media program, Inspire, who generously ran a forum for senior students on 21st century journalism and the media.
In 2009 the school continued its project, Leaders Transforming Learning and Learners (LTLL) in partnership with the Australian Catholic University. This project has given a cohesion to the many initiatives that have been undertaken over the last 12 months including School Review and Improvement and the launch of Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework. The LTLL initiative has created a whole school structure and language against which all aspects of the learning community can be critiqued to promote consistency of purpose and approach – to develop in each of our students the attributes and values of the ideal John Therry graduate.

Throughout 2009, we have implemented significant changes to the learning and teaching and pastoral care structures across all stages to support the graduate development and to more effectively respond to our learners’ diversity of needs.

**Meeting the Needs of All Students**

The diverse needs of our students have been catered for through a variety of initiatives and within a variety of environments. Differentiated learning in mixed ability classrooms, the introduction of Stage 5 short courses, the harnessing of Learning Technologies, particularly in 1:1 classrooms, the expansion of individual programmes of study/remediation to support students with significant literacy and numeracy skill development needs, as well as the extended access of Life Skills outcome and content across all stages, are all evidence of our commitment to catering for the individual within the community. All initiatives have been planned and implemented within a data evidenced process to maximise effectiveness and use of resources.

Once again the Satellite program in conjunction with Mater Dei continued to provide many reciprocal learning opportunities for both Satellite and regular class members. The successful inclusion and graduation of Satellite students remains a strongly supported initiative of both school campuses.

**Expanded Learning opportunities**

Our students once again took advantage of a wide variety of external competitions across the Key Learning Areas. The English, Poetry, Short Story, Science and Mathematics Competitions all allowed our students to demonstrate high levels of competence.

In debating and public speaking, our students consistently performed with distinction in the Rostrum Voice of Youth, the Lion’s Club Youth of the Year Quest and the Plain English Speaking competition. Our junior students regularly acquitted themselves well in the MISA debating competition, strongly supported by the conduct of Inter-House debating across Years 7 to 10.

In Creative Arts, our students demonstrated exemplary skills in drama performance forums such as the Mount Annan Carols, the Riverside Theatre’s Fast & Fresh Short Play Festival, McDonald’s Performing Arts Challenge, NIDA workshops, Theatresports and professional work on television drama series. In Music, students attended professional productions and showcased their own talents in school-based forums such as First Step Forward and Preview. In Visual Arts, students visited local and state galleries while entering regional art shows and showing their works at school events.

The exceptional success of our Rock Eisteddfod group for 2009 also showcased the depth of both performance and production talent at John Therry. For example the recognition of the
achievement of both staff and students in the field of textiles was evident in receiving the costume award.

In the Sciences, our students completed First Aid courses and took advantage of extra-curricular scientific experiences at lunchtimes. Our students continued their annual participation in the Siemen’s Science Camp.

Outdoor education opportunities featured more prominently through the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme trips pitched at various levels of difficulty, allowing John Therry students to progress through the scheme’s hierarchy of awards. Outdoor recreation camps and surf awareness days offered our students greater appreciation of a range of environments. An exhibition of wheelchair basketball promoted recognition of both people with disabilities and also the importance of personal and sporting safety.

In sport, John Therry continued its proud tradition in MISA, and at diocesan, state, national and international levels in various disciplines including tennis, athletics, and netball.

**Professional Learning Focus**

Professional learning has simply become part of school culture and practice over the last few years as teachers model what it means to be lifelong learners and to ensure that our students have the best learning experiences possible. The School Review & Improvement process, the action research project, Leaders Transforming Learning & Learner, The Diocesan Learning & Teaching Framework and the demands of the 1:1 Macbook environment as well as the imminent roll-out of the Australian Curriculum all place teacher learning at the forefront of school professional learning agendas.

**Vocational Education & Training**

The calibre of those participating in the vocational area continues to be illustrated by consistently strong HSC examination performances which have contributed significantly to students’ ATAR scores. Again in 2009, John Therry HSC students featured as award recipients and nominees in both school-based and TAFE competitions such as the Top Performing Student in a TVET course and the Australian Education Student Prize as well as the Best Work Placement Student award. This area of the curriculum will continue to grow in 2010 as the course offerings have been significantly expanded to include courses such as Entertainment and Sport Coaching.
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 national 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.

NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was introduced for students in Years 7 and 9 in May 2008 and continued in 2009. NAPLAN replaced 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.

Student performance in NAPLAN is reported in ten bands. These assessments are administered in May in Year 7 and 9. There were 188 students in Year 7 and 186 students in Year 9 who sat for NAPLAN in 2009. NAPLAN consisted of a number of tests over four days in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. The Literacy component assessed areas such as reading, writing, spelling and grammar whilst the Numeracy component assessed number and data, measurement, space and geography. Students were supplied with a report that provided their individual results in these areas as well as the state average. John Therry students achieved sound results in NAPLAN. In Overall Literacy 94% of Year 7 students and 96% of Year 9 students achieved results in bands that were above or met the national minimum standard. Similar results were seen in Numeracy, where 97% of Year 7 students and 97% of Year 9 students achieved results in bands that were above or met the national minimum standard. Students have been targeted for school based intervention in 2010, including a comprehensive literacy program that will involve all students in Years 7-10. In addition a number of other students have been identified with specific literacy needs and these students will undergo additional, small group, intensive literacy intervention that is supplementary to the standard literacy lessons. In numeracy, selected senior students have been identified and trained in implementing a program with our younger students to support their numeracy needs.

Student Achievement in Bands

Year 7 results are reported in Bands 4 to 9 with Band 9 representing the highest achievement and Year 9 results are reported in Bands 5 to 10 with Band 10 representing the highest achievement. Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
### NAPLAN 2009: % in Bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YEAR 7</th>
<th>YEAR 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bands 4 and 5</td>
<td>Bands 6 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| National         | 18%                     | 54%                     | 27%                     | 19%                     | 56%                     | 24%                     

### Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

The lowest Band for each year (Band 4 in Year 7 and Band 5 in Year 9) 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 5 in Year 7 and Band 6 in Year 9) represent students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.
Higher School Certificate

In 2009, 108 students sat for examinations in the Higher School Certificate and all students received their HSC, with one student completing the first year of an HSC Pathways program. The results from the 2009 cohort were strong with a number of high achieving students. Student achievement was reported on a standards framework using Course Marks and Performance Bands from 1 to 6 with Band 1 (the lowest) indicating that students have not achieved the minimum standard. Student achievement in Extension Courses is reported in Performance Bands from E1 to E4.

There were 24 mentions for the school on the Distinguished Achievers List for scores greater than 90. 85% of the students achieved results in the higher bands of 4, 5 and 6. Of the Board Developed Courses, 11 were above the state average (34%) and 21 subjects scored on or below (66%). Performance in the subjects with our 4 largest cohorts were as follows:

In General Mathematics 2 Unit there were 73 students with:
- 14% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 25% state wide)
- 5% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 7% state wide)

In English (Standard) 2 Unit there were 72 students with:
- 7% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 5% state wide)
- 13% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 8% state wide)

In English (Advanced) 2 Unit there were 36 students with:
- 39% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 52% state wide)
- 0% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 0% state wide)

In Studies of Religion 1 Unit there were 47 students with:
- 43% of students achieved Bands 5 and 6 (compared with 49% state wide)
- 0% of students achieved Band 1 (compared with 1% state wide).

School Certificate

In 2009, there were 155 students who received a School Certificate. Student achievement is reported as a percentage score and in Bands from 1 to 6 with Band 1 indicating that students are operating below minimum standard. Computing Skills is not reported in Bands. 82% of our students achieved in the higher bands of 4, 5 or 6 in their subjects while there was 12 students who achieved Band 6 in one or more subjects.
### Subject & Mean Score %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Mean Score %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English – Literacy</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian History, Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Geography, Civics &amp; Citizenship</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing Skills</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

The school staff, students and parents completed an Annual Satisfaction Survey for 2009. The copies of the survey were posted to all families with responses received from only 46 families out of a possible 750, surveys were distributed to all students (years 7-12) and all staff (teachers and school support officers). 744 students and 44 staff completed and returned their responses.

A summary of the key findings from the collated surveys include a number of areas of strength which were identified equally in the responses from staff, students and parents. These were: school pride, strong Catholic culture, broad curriculum and co-curricula offerings, and a safe learning environment. However, 39% of parent’s identified the meeting of individual needs in need of development, 37% identified disappointment in the school maximizing outcomes for students and 39% are unhappy with feedback about their child’s progress. These areas are still in need of further development at the school and have been specified as areas for development in our school’s SRI planning for 2010.

Communication was seen to be appropriate by staff but questioned by parents in the distribution of information and the reporting of students’ progress. The reporting system will be further examined in 2010. Although the school environment was described as safe and supportive, a significant area for development identified in the survey was in regard to student compliance with school rules being inconsistent from both a student and staff perspective.

Further statistical information from this survey is available on request from the Principal and copies have been distributed to staff (Staff meeting), students (School Assembly and SRC) and parents (P&F meeting).

### 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 2009 all school have begun the transition to the new School Review and Improvement process.
School Review and Improvement components reviewed in 2009:

- Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education
  - 1.1 Vision and mission
- Key Area 2: Students and Their Learning
  - 2.1 Educational potential
- Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.7 Professional learning
- Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management
  - 4.1 Recruitment, selection and retention of staff
- Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities
  - 5.3 Environmental stewardship
- Key Area 6: Parents, Partnerships Consultation and Communication
  - 6.1 Parent involvement
- Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management
  - 7.2 Innovation, development and change

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed in 2010:

- Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education
  - 1.4 Parents, parishes and the broader Church
- Key Area 2: Students and Their Learning
  - 2.3 Reporting student achievement
- Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.1 Curriculum provision
- Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management
  - 4.4 Succession planning
- Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities
  - 5.4 Financial management
- Key Area 6: Parents, Partnerships Consultation and Communication
  - 6.3 Linkages with wider community