St Francis Xavier’s
Catholic Primary School
Wollongong

Annual School Report
2009
About This Report

St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School, Wollongong is registered by the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wollongong. The CEO is 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 regarding School Review & Improvement 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). This Report has been approved by 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 NSW Board of Studies, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and 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:

St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School
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Wollongong East  NSW  2500
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Fax:    (02) 4226 5316
Email:  info@sfxdow.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sfxdow.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest:  Bishop Peter Ingham

Principal:      Mrs Fran James
Date:           11 December 2009
Vision Statement
Saint Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School is a holistic and collaborative learning community, which is based on the person of Jesus. The uniqueness of each individual is developed and celebrated, leading to a future filled with hope and opportunity.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message
The Annual School Report is an opportunity for the St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School community to recognise and celebrate the achievements that have occurred during 2009. St Francis Xavier’s is most fortunate to have the guidance of the Bishop and Parish Administrator, a professional and dedicated staff and a committed parent body. The Catholic faith tradition, education and the welfare of the students are of the upmost importance to all members of the Parish and school community.

The core business of St Francis Xavier’s is to provide quality Catholic teaching and learning opportunities for the students in an environment where individual differences are acknowledged and valued.

Appreciation is extended to the Leadership Team and the staff for the role they have played in managing and leading the school. The ongoing commitment of the staff ensures that the school meets its educational goals through many exciting learning initiatives.

The school has a very committed Parents and Friends Association (P&F) who work in close partnership with the school. Parent volunteers give generously of their time to support teachers and their contributions are greatly appreciated by both staff and students.

Parent Involvement
Once again the P&F have had a good year working with the Principal and the wonderful teachers, staff, the Parish Administrator and the Parish community. The work of the P&F is mostly for the benefit of our children and the school, providing supplementary funding for new equipment and opportunity. The P&F also made a donation to the Breast Cancer Appeal from the funds that we were able to raise through fundraising.

Another role of the P&F is to help bring the school community together through social and fundraising events. Once again, the Trivia Night, Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day Stalls and barbeques following the Term Parish School Masses, contributed strongly. It was great to see the fathers cooking sausages on the barbeque and the spirit that surrounds these events. The major fundraisers were the event parking and the School Fete which have allowed the P&F to contribute to the purchase of resources for the school.
Our parents assisted the school in many ways and to the many parents who assisted with the P&F a grateful and hearty thank you.  

*Parents and Friends Association, President*

**Student Leadership**

All Year 6 students received leadership badges and were given the chance to develop their leadership skills and show initiative this year. Year 6 students accepted responsibility through being members of Pastoral Care, Information Communication Technology and Sport Leadership Committees. Students also planned and assisted with school activities such as liturgies, sports days and the annual talent quest. Acting as playground and peer support monitors, we helped with the social development of younger students while learning acceptance of others. Involvement in school assemblies was another key role. The new skills gained will help us to progress and overcome challenges in high school. It was a privilege to be a school leader at St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School in 2009.  

*Year 6 Student Leadership Teams*

**School Profile**

St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Systemic co-educational school located in Wollongong. The school caters for students in years K-6 and has a current enrolment of two hundred and twenty-two students.

Our school was opened in 1838, under the same patronage as the Cathedral Parish and is the oldest school in the Wollongong Diocese. The Sisters of the Good Samaritan were the founding Order of the school. In 1910 a new school was built on the present site. In 1951 additions to the school began with the blessing and opening in 1953 by Bishop McCabe. The school expanded again in 1972 with the addition of an administration block, six new classrooms and a new library.

Our school crest reflects the life work and the motto of our Patron Saint, Saint Francis Xavier, a missionary who lived and worked in Asia in the 1500’s. The school’s motto “In Hoc Signo Vinces” meaning “In This Sign We Conquer”, challenges our school to be a faith community. We aim to be a school community where the person of Jesus is at the centre of our lives. Saint Francis Xavier’s Parish School strives to be a community where we promote a commitment to the service of others as a basic expression of the Christian message.

In July 2009, the Bishop of Wollongong announced that in 2012 St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School and St John Vianney’s Catholic Primary School will be amalgamating into a new school at the Fairy Meadow site. The new school will be developed and refurbished into a three-stream school. Under the direction of the Catholic Education Office, an Enabling Committee will be formed in 2010 and will be responsible for establishing an Educational Brief and direction for the new school.
The school will remain on its present site until 2011 and will continue the fine tradition of our early years, providing quality Catholic education. The school is administered by the Wollongong Catholic Education Office and is under the jurisdiction of the Bishop.

**Student Enrolments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>LBOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>117</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. This documentation can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://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></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
<td>95.9%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fortnightly office staff print a ‘Period Absence Report’ indicating students who have been absent without explanation (U). The Teachers follow-up absentees, by forwarding parents a Student Absent letter to complete and return to school.

**Staffing Profile**

There are a total of 18 teachers and 10 support staff at St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School. This number includes 13 full-time and 5 part-time teachers.

**Teacher Standards**

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

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution...</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within Australia or as recognised by AEI-NOOSR*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have qualifications as a graduate...</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher qualifications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant...</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relevant to the teaching context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff Retention
Teacher Attendance and Retention
The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2009 was 97.22%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2008 to 2009 was 100%.

Professional Learning
Professional learning opportunities are highly valued and sought by all members of St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School staff. During 2009 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

These included:
- the introduction of the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework;
- continuation of School Review and Improvement Plan;
- introduction of Professional Development and Personal Review Process;
- School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning;
- Mathematics; and
- English.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2009 was $3,197. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office.

Catholic Life & Religious Education
The Catholic life of our school is evident in our physical environment that is filled with prayer spaces, icons, wall displays depicting special religious celebrations, Feast Days and mission endeavours. More importantly, the Catholic life of our school is depicted in the positive relationships that are built between our students, teachers, parents and the Parish community which are strongly influenced by the Catholic values taught to us by Jesus and embedded in our school rules.

The students’ knowledge of our Catholic faith is taught formally each day in planned learning activities during Religious Education lessons and prayer experiences. Their knowledge is also built through the informal experiences that occur throughout each day in other curriculum areas and in the everyday life of the school.

Most importantly, the Catholic life of our school is evident in the growing relationship that each person within our school community has the opportunity to build with God as they continue their faith journey through formal and informal prayer, relationships with others and planned learning activities.

The prayer life of our school is assisted by the close relationship the school has with our Parish. The school has hosted two Parish Masses and been involved in preparing and assisting
in the celebration of both the Palm Sunday Mass and the Mass for the Feast Day of St Francis Xavier. After these Masses the community have gathered together to share a barbeque and these have been opportunities to build community spirit.

The school celebrated Catholic Schools’ Week with a Liturgy that introduced the theme “Celebrating the Spirit Here.” At this liturgy, our Principal spoke of the particular spirit of the school community, in which all are included and supported in their growth and overall development. Our local State Member and a representative from the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong presented the Term ACE awards to celebrate the Attitude, Commitment and Effort that the selected students have brought to all facets of their school life. The school hosted several schools for the Year Six ‘Prayer and Conversation with the Bishop’. The Year 6 Liturgy emphasised the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the students’ responsibility to use those gifts in their daily lives.

The students have taken on the responsibility of stewarding their time, talent and treasure to assist others through prayer and the raising of funds for various communities including those effected by the Victorian Bushfires, the people of Kiribati, Project Compassion, education scholarships for East Timor and St Vincent de Paul Society.

Our formal Religious Education Program is taught daily and is integrated into all aspects of schooling and daily life. The Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Program is then endorsed curriculum for all Grades from Kindergarten to Year 6.

The Bishop and the Parish Administrator have been regular visitors to our school and actively participate and support all school and social occasions. Parish Masses are celebrated each week and nominated classes attend. Mass participation has a positive input into all aspects of Religious Education in the school. Whole school Masses are also celebrated on a regular basis.

Sacramental Programs are Parish based, with the school and parents working closely together to prepare students for the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation. The Parish Administrator, together with classroom teachers and parishioners prepare an innovative program for each Sacrament.

This year our Year 4 students participated in the Diocesan Religious Education Literacy Assessment. Students completed a written examination and also submitted an extensive task based on the unit of work ‘One with God’s Creation’. The results of the written task were collated by the Australian Catholic University, then combined with the extended task mark and the results were sent to parents and the school. St Francis Xavier’s Year 4 students produced some outstanding work and achieved excellent results.

**Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully implemented within schools across the Diocese in 2009. In 2009 the school cohort consisted of 22 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 27 September 2009.
and 25 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 Three.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

Students showed a high level of performance in:

- their understanding of their relationship with God through the parables of Jesus and other Bible stories;
- their understanding of their place in Creation; and
- their knowledge of the seasons of the Church’s year and the corresponding colours for each season.

Students showed a need for improvement in:

- their knowledge of the language associated with the formal prayers of the Church;
- their understanding of the Liturgy of the Word; and
- their ability to be able to recognise the qualities of Saints.

For Part A 9% of students were placed in the developing level, 64% in the achieving level and 27% were in the extending level.

For Part B 4% of students were placed in the developing level, 44% in the achieving level and 52% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 9% of students were placed in the developing level, 45% in the achieving level and 46% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

**Financial Summary**

During 2009 there were four main sources of income for St Francis Xavier’s School. These were the Parish/School Enhancement and Debt Survey Obligation (SEDSO) Account, Catholic Education Office, the Parents and Friends Association and grants awarded to the school.

Major work carried out during the school year included installation of new plumbing and general upgrade of the toilet blocks. Ongoing maintenance costs during this period included waste disposal, electrical and plumbing, electrical tagging, lawns and ground maintenance. Our local contribution approximately totalled $25,000 that was serviced by the Parish SEDSO account. Building the Education Revolution School Building Project, National School Pride Grant of $125,000 will allow for maintenance work to be completed in January 2010 on our school roof. A new outdoor Shade Structure will be erected in January 2010.
Through the continued support of the P&F Association, Guided Reading Resources were bought for all stages and a $15,000 contribution towards Information Technology resources was given.

A $1,000 School Health Incentive Program (SHIP) Grant was received enabling the school to build a vegetable garden and compost heap to develop students’ understanding of the importance of looking after the environment and improving their eating habits.

In addition, the students were very generous in donating money for the Project Compassion Appeal, St Vincent de Paul Society and Catholic Missions. An amount of $500 was donated to Kiribati and $100 to the Cancer Council Foundation for Pink Ribbon Day.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Francis Xavier’s Catholic Primary School for the year ended 31 December 2009. This data is taken from the 2009 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Student Welfare

Introduction
Student welfare encompasses the wellbeing of the whole child: spiritual, physical, academic, social and emotional. St Francis Xavier’s is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all students.

In 2009, all Year 5 and 6 students participated in Leadership Training Days to prepare them for the responsibilities of being a leader. These workshops were facilitated by the Stage 3 teachers and guided the students about the qualities of leadership and how to be a good leader.

Year 6 students were given responsibilities within the school through our ‘Year 6 Leadership Program’. Each Year 6 student was a member of a school team, these being the Stewardship, Pastoral Care and Information Technology Teams. The teams were led by two school captains and each had certain responsibilities and tasks to achieve during the school year.

The Year 6 students were also assigned a Kindergarten student as a ‘buddy’. The ‘Buddy System’ provided guidance, friendship and support for the students. It also assisted the Kindergarten students to settle in to the school routine as well as promoting a sense of responsibility for the older students.

In 2009 St Francis Xavier’s was a selected school within the Diocese to implement the ‘School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning’ framework. A school team was established, including the Principal, Assistant Principal, a teacher, one Support Officer and three parents. The focus of this framework was to promote and develop a proactive school-wide approach to managing positive behaviours in all school settings, thus improving students’ learning outcomes. Our three school rules, Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible have been established and an Expectations Matrix developed. This will support the explicit teaching of appropriate behaviours in 2010. In Term Four 2009, the school team made a presentation at a Diocesan meeting outlining our school initiatives and achievements.

A counsellor from CatholicCare visited our school on a weekly basis this year. The counsellor supported students and parents with difficulties as well as guiding staff with welfare issues.

Students’ achievements were acknowledged at assemblies and in the weekly school newsletter. An awards assembly was held each Friday to celebrate and acknowledge students’ successes. All students have the opportunity to earn a range of awards including stickers in sticker books, weekly merit and sport awards as well as our school ACE (Attitude, Commitment, Effort) Awards. These assemblies were an opportunity for parents, staff and students to recognise many of the positive occurrences in our community.
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 for 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.

**Learning and Teaching**

**Introduction**

As a Catholic school, St Francis Xavier strives to be a learning community where each person is valued and encouraged to do their best. Quality Catholic learning and teaching is a fundamental priority at our school and staff members are committed to providing child-centred learning where the needs of all students are met.

Our aim is to continually seek and implement ways in which quality learning and teaching is achieved and enhanced. As such, priorities have been identified and time allocated to ensure effective delivery of curriculum in all Key Learning Areas.

**Curriculum & Pedagogy**

*Syllabus Implementation*

All NSW Board of Studies requirements were met with learning outcomes taken from the Syllabus Documents for each Key Learning Area (KLA). Our school’s goals and priorities this year have been to use the documents ‘How Effective is Our Catholic School?’ and the ‘Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework’ as a basis to explore and renew teaching practice and to improve pedagogical practice.

**Assessment and Reporting**

Assessment and reporting have been an integral part of the teaching and learning process at St Francis Xavier. Teachers have implemented Assessment and Reporting procedures according to Diocesan Guidelines. A wide variety of assessment tasks have been used throughout the year to ascertain each child’s progress. Student workbooks were sent home
each Term to give parents the opportunity to discuss their child’s work with them. Parents were also given the opportunity to give written feedback about their child’s learning.

**Integration**

Teachers have focused on planning and programming the integration of learning across all Key Learning Areas. This has allowed teachers and students to explore the curriculum providing more diverse and meaningful activities. Through integration, students have developed the skills of transferring knowledge across Key Learning Areas, thus consolidating their learning.

**Technology Supporting Learning**

To facilitate optimum learning opportunities and to achieve student outcomes the school’s Information Communication Technology (ICT) Plan has been continually revisited during 2009. The staff have improved their technology skills through school based professional learning. A variety of media is now used as a learning tool across all Key Learning Areas, increasing student access to technologies such as the digital camera, computer software including Power-Point, Garage Band and iMovies. DVDs were produced by students and staff for Catholic Schools Week, Kindergarten Orientation 2010 and Year 6 Graduation. The skills learnt by students and teachers have been celebrated at school liturgies and assemblies. Students are also communicating with each other via the Internet, discussion forums and email. The school’s web page is regularly updated and is widely used by parents and the community to access information.

**Cross Curriculum**

**Literacy and Numeracy Strategies**

The staff have further developed their knowledge of effective literacy and numeracy practices through the School Review and Improvement (SRI) process and the implementation of the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework. Staff presented at the Term Four Diocesan Learning & Teaching Framework Day.

Through school based professional development and with the support of a Catholic Education Office (CEO) facilitator, staff revisited components within literacy and numeracy blocks and the implementation of effective guided grouping of students. In Mathematics, the staff have worked diligently to develop mathematical thinking, understanding, competence and confidence in all students and to encourage students to engage and to enjoy mathematical learning. In English, the staff participated in workshops to further develop their own knowledge of reading and writing strategies and how best to teach these strategies effectively across all stages.

In 2009 the Reading Recovery Programme has continued being implemented in Stage 1 to support literacy learning. This programme has supported students in Year 1 with developing reading and writing strategies to improve literacy learning.
Indigenous

Celebrations took place to acknowledge Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week heightening students’ awareness of our indigenous heritage. Prominent school displays also support our understanding of our past history. A continued awareness of the need to integrate Indigenous Education across the curriculum will be a focus area in 2010 and for the future.

Environment

In 2009, with the support of a SHIP Grant, a vegetable garden and compost heap was established to provide fresh produce for our school. A compost heap was created to reduce waste in our school as well as to educate our students about looking after their environment. Classes have daily ‘Munch and Crunch’ and the fruit and vegetable scraps are collected and added to our compost heap. This project will continue in 2010 with a focus on educating our students about healthy eating and diet.

The Year 6 Stewardship Team was responsible for a Re-Cycling Program where the school office, classroom teachers and students re-cycled all paper waste.

Meeting the needs of all students

Diversifying Learning

Staff continued to embrace a ‘student centred’ approach to learning and teaching. Teachers have implemented a range of strategies and technologies in order to cater for the individual learning styles of students. Students have had the opportunity to explore and experience learning through approaches such as co-operative learning and mentoring, open-ended problem solving and individual learning projects. Across Stages, teachers have collaboratively planned their learning and teaching programmes to ensure maximum benefit for all students. The Review Committee provided support for students and teachers by monitoring students with specific learning needs in Literacy and Numeracy.

Gifted Education

Gifted students at St Francis Xavier are catered for in various ways. Class teachers implemented a range of learning and teaching strategies in order to challenge these students and teachers’ learning and teaching programs reflected this. Targeted students from Stages 2 and 3 also were provided with a program organised by the Resource teacher to focus on developing higher order thinking skills and problem solving in Mathematics. This enrichment program provided these students with challenging investigation tasks and opportunities to work both individually and in a team.

Special Education

St Francis Xavier has a Special Education Unit with two classes, providing the opportunity for students with special learning needs, to be included into our school community. Transition Meetings were held each Term where parents met with teachers to design an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and to discuss social goals. The plan is used to monitor and provide
feedback on student achievement. School Support Officers assisted with implementing learning activities to achieve these planned goals and outcomes for students.

The school’s Review Committee supported mainstream teachers with students who were identified as having additional learning needs. The Committee regularly met to provide professional support for teachers to further assist students within the classroom setting. School Support Officers also worked within the classrooms to support individual students with their learning needs.

**Self-directed Learning**

At St Francis Xavier, staff have continued to review and refine curriculum delivery this year, through opportunities for professional dialogue. Students have been encouraged to take greater responsibility for their learning as well as developing skills as independent learners.

**Expanding Learning Opportunities**

**Competitions**

In 2009 students were given opportunities to extend themselves through a wide range of learning opportunities. During Literacy and Numeracy week, the students were involved in competitions such as ‘Reach for the Stars’ (Numeracy) and a writing competition where students could review their favourite book (Literacy). Stage 2 and 3 students were invited to enrich their learning by participating in the University of New South Wales ‘International Competitions and Assessment for Schools’ in the areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Information Technology. All students were given the opportunity to participate in the Wollongong Eisteddfod in the choral singing section. Two students from Stage 3 were selected to represent our school at the Diocesan Public Speaking competition. This provided a rewarding opportunity for these students to display their talents in this area and participate in a Regional Competition. Opportunities for participation in art competitions, was also provided. Two students’ art work was selected for the final of ‘The Christmas Story’ Competition’ and a Year 6 student was named the winner of the NSW Kmart Art Competition.

Regular weekly sport and physical education activities were available as part of the curriculum. The school conducted three major sporting events during the year. These were for swimming, cross-country and for athletics. Staff, students and parents were actively involved in planning these carnivals. These carnivals were a steppingstone for selected students to compete at Diocesan level. In several sports, student representation was achieved at Diocesan and at MacKillop levels. Many students participated in Gala Sports Days and Knockout Competitions and these included Rugby League, Netball, and Dragon Tag. The school strived to promote health and lifestyle awareness with our canteen implementing eating alternatives to support healthy life-styles. Daily Munch and Crunch time has continued where the students bring in fresh fruit and vegetables to enjoy, in the morning teaching session.
With parent support through conducting training sessions for students, a team of Stage 2 boys competed in the Paul McGregor Rugby League Football Shield. The team reached the final. The Surf Sense Program was conducted for Years 2, 4 and 6 students along with the ‘Swim and Survive’ Program for all Primary students. A ‘Learn to Swim’ program was also offered for all Early Stage and Stage 1 students.

Our students had the opportunity to showcase their talents through musicals for parents and the school community. Performances included the musical ‘The Bible’ presented by Year 6 students and our Year 3 & 4 classes entertained the Christmas crowd with carols in the Wollongong Mall during early December. A whole school Christmas Concert entertained parents and friends. At the end of the year, the school hosted a very successful ‘Talent Quest’ which gave many students the opportunity of displaying their talent in dance, music, singing and drama. Over 100 students across the school auditioned for this talent quest, which was a rewarding experience for them all.

**Professional Learning**

Professional learning opportunities were highly valued by all staff. Staff had the opportunity to complete personal and professional goal setting through the Professional Development Planning and Review (PDPR) process. This aligned their professional development with their own needs and those of the school through the School Review and Improvement (SRI). Staff attended a variety of personal and professional learning opportunities.

Staff, were involved in our ‘MAD’ (Mathematics and Drive) project which proved to be a rewarding, enriching and valuable learning opportunity for all teachers and School Support Officers (SSO). Stage teachers were provided with planning time for two, half-day opportunities that involved teachers, support staff and a Learning Officer from the Catholic Education Office. On these planning days, various needs of teachers were addressed, such as the delivery of more effective Mathematics Blocks, the planning of richer and more engaging learning experiences and designing a greater variety of assessment tasks. These sessions allowed for professional dialogue and sharing of staff expertise as well as creating a true learning community amongst the staff. All teaching staff also attended a week-end Mathematics Conference in May 2009.

The staff also participated in professional learning opportunities around the implementation of components of the Literacy Block. These included Active Joint Writing, Guided Reading and Writing and the importance of explicit teaching of reading and writing strategies. The staff were involved in workshops that allowed for professional dialogue and discussion through the use of viewing teaching videos in these areas. Teachers also nominated to observe each other teaching components of the Literacy Block through the PDPR process.

The staff continued their professional learning in the area of managing challenging behaviours through implementing the framework ‘School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning’ (SPB4L). The framework supports teachers and parents in developing strategies for addressing students’ behavioural needs through creating an environment of respect and rapport with
others, managing behaviours positively and developing students’ responsibility for their learning.

Staff members were also involved in ICT learning opportunities through attending school-based workshops facilitated by the ICT Coordinator. These included more efficient use of technology to support pedagogical practices in line with the ‘Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework’ and the designing of class web pages.

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 Program 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.

NAPLAN

The NAPLAN was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May 2008. 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.

The Year 3 Literacy results include 53% of students achieving Bands 5 and 6 and 2% were in Bands 1 and 2. The best performance areas were in Reading and Writing, followed by Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy results recorded 43% of students achieving Bands 5 and 6 and 5% were in Bands 1 and 2. The best performance was in Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry, followed by Number Patterns and Algebra. The Year 5 overall Literacy results included 32% of students achieved Bands 7 and 8 and 12% were in Bands 3 and 4. The best performance was in Reading with Grammar and Punctuation, Spelling, and Writing being equal. In Numeracy: 28% of students achieved Bands 7 and 8 and 14% were in Bands 3 and 4. There was little difference in achievement across all Mathematics strands. In Year 3, 100% of students achieved National Minimum Standard in both Literacy and Numeracy and in Year 5 100% of students achieved National Minimum Standard in Literacy and 98% in Numeracy.

Student Achievement in Bands

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 2009: % in Bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN % in Bands</th>
<th>2009:</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bands 1 and 2</td>
<td>Bands 3 and 4</td>
<td>Bands 5 and 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>School</td>
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<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>50%</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) represent students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.
Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parents, students and staff were surveyed to gain feedback on the school’s performance and to make recommendations for improvement. Students, parents and staff were unanimous in recognising the Catholic tradition embedded in the culture of the school.

Teacher Survey

All staff (100%) responded to the survey. Of those, 100% agreed or strongly agreed that the school helps students to develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. The staff (100%) also agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides appropriate information to parents about student progress. The staff (100%) also agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides a safe and supportive environment to all community members.

Twenty-one percent (21%) of the staff agreed that students did not understand their rights and responsibilities. Eight percent (8%) of the staff agreed that students were not challenged to maximise their learning outcomes; and seven percent (7%) agreed that the school didn’t strive to meet the individual learning needs of students.

Student Survey

Seventy percent (70%) of students from Year 3 to Year 6 were surveyed. Ninety percent (90%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that they were proud of their school. Ninety five percent (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that the school helps in their understanding of the Catholic faith. Ninety five percent (95%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that their teacher encourages them to the best of their ability and that they understand their rights and responsibilities at school. Eighty six percent (86%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe at school. Ninety one percent (91%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that if they had a problem, there were people they could approach for help and ninety four percent (94%) agreed or strongly agreed that there are sporting and other activities in which they can become involved.

Parent Survey

Thirty percent (30%) of parents responded to the survey. Of these, one hundred percent (100%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school helps the students to develop a knowledge and understanding of Catholic tradition. Ninety one percent (91%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides appropriate Pastoral Care and Welfare for the whole school community. Sixty nine percent (69%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that their child is challenged to maximise his or her learning outcomes. Ninety percent (90%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school strives to meet their child’s individual learning needs. Sixty five percent (65%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides appropriate information about their child’s progress. Seventy three percent (73%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school offers a range of co-curricula activities.
Eighty five percent (85%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child. Ninety eight percent (98%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides a safe and supportive environment. Ninety five percent (95%) of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school effectively communicates information about activities and events.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement (SRI) is an ongoing process of self evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. It informs action planning at the school level to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Above all, Catholic schools must be good schools with a strong learning orientation and a strong sense of purpose. In all aspects of improving and developing, schools should be learning-centred, constantly striving for excellence and have the student as their primary focus.

School Review and Improvement components reviewed and rated in 2009:

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
  - 1.2 Religious Education
  - 1.4 Parents, Parishes & the broader Church
- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
  - 2.2 Rights & Responsibilities
  - 2.4 Integration of Information & Communication Technology
  - 2.5 Pastoral Care
- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  - 3.3 Teaching Practices
  - 3.4 Planning programming and evaluation
  - 3.5 Assessment
- **Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management**
  - 4.2 Professional Development of Staff
- **Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**
  - 6.3 Linkages with the wider community

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2010:

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
  - 1.3 Catholic Life and Culture
• Key Area 2: Students and their Learning
  - 2.1 Educational Potential
• Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.2 Provision for the Diverse Needs of Learners
  - 3.7 Professional Learning
• Key Area 5: Resources, Finances and Facilities
  - 5.3 Environmental Stewardship
• Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication
  - 6.1 Parental Involvement