About This Report

St Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, Milton 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 Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School
PO Box 178
Milton NSW 2538
Ph: (02) 4455 2328
Fax: (02) 4454 0425
Email: info@sosmdow.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.sosmdow.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Francis Tran

Principal: Mr Anthony Kent
Date: 17 December 2009
Vision Statement

Help one another as we grow in the love of God.
Our mission is to provide an environment where children, staff and parents are educated in an atmosphere of Catholic traditions while living our Christian Values.

Principal’s Message
St Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School underwent significant re-development in 2009. Refurbishment of five classrooms, the Library and the Administration area will serve the needs of the community for future generations. The refurbishments have significant educational benefits aligning teaching pedagogy to the learning needs of the students. Parent feedback indicates a positive and bright future for the school. St Mary’s continued to strengthen the links between the School and Parish community reflected in its commitment to the School Review and Improvement (SRI) process. The school has appreciated the continued support of our Parish Priest and would like to recognise his involvement in all aspects of the School’s growth and development.

Parent Involvement
The Parents & Friends Association (P&F) of the school has been involved in a variety of different fundraising events throughout the year such as Grandparent’s Day, Bunning’s Sausage Sizzles, Mother’s Day Stall, Father’s Day Stall, Canteen, Cook Books and Raffles.

Parents have assisted teachers in the classrooms on a regular basis as well as other curricula activities including Sacramental Programs, Retreat days, Choir performances, Intensive Swimming Program, Parish BBQ, Masses and excursions. Parents also assisted with the running of all carnivals and supported students at a Diocesan level. The P&F Association continues to promote the school and provide financial assistance with particular emphasis on Information Communication Learning Technology (ICLT). Data projectors were purchased and installed for all classes.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership
Year Six students provide an excellent standard of leadership. Our School Captains attended a Leadership Day in Sydney as encouragement and motivation for their new roles in leadership. The Year Six students ran our whole school assemblies fortnightly. Being strong role models was a focus of leadership and running the Assemblies helped the students with public speaking, delegation, organisation and reverence. Every Monday morning and at each assembly Year Six students would lead us in ‘Welcome to Country’, raising of our school flag and the Australian and Indigenous flags, the National Anthem and prayer.

School Captains

St Mary’s Star of the Sea, Milton ASR2009
School Profile

School Context
St Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Systemic co-educational school located in Milton. The school is a one-stream school, serving students from St Georges Basin to Kioala. It caters for students in years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 162. The school has undergone a major capital works refurbishment that included the redevelopment of the school administration area, refurbishments of general learning areas for two Stages and the provision of a covered outdoor learning area.

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>85</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</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 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>93.0%</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In accordance with the school attendance policy and CEO guidelines daily attendance is recorded. Two weeks duration is given for non-attendance to be finalised.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 9.7 teachers and 6 support staff at St Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School. This number includes 8 full-time and 3 part-time teachers.

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

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2009 was 96.42%. 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 Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School staff. During 2009 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

These included:
- Leading Literacy and Numeracy – 2 staff;
- National Assessment Plan for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data analysis – 2 staff;
- Religious Literacy Marking – 2 staff;
- Numeracy Improvement Project – 1 staff;
- System Focus Day – 1 staff;
- IMac- iMovie Training – 2 staff;
- NALSSP- Focus Group Asian Languages – 1 staff; and
- Working Together to Succeed- Closing the gap, Numeracy Project 2 staff.

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2009 was $4,077 This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education Office.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

At the beginning of the school year the staff of the three Shoalhaven Catholic Schools came together for the Annual Mass and Dinner, which was held at St John’s the Evangelist, Nowra.
St Mary’s Star of the Sea has continued to develop links with the Parish and the wider local communities. Monthly Masses are attended by school families and followed by a BBQ & hospitality. The Parish Community was invited to Mass followed by a tour of the new school refurbishments and a BBQ. Senior Parishioners remain part of the daily life of the school. St Mary’s Star of the Sea plays a key role in the Parish Liturgical celebrations of Lent, Easter and Christmas. Members of the Parish and the school staff come together to implement the Sacramental Programs.

Students held many activities to raise money for Caritas, Catholic Mission, Vocations, National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NADIOC) Week and St Mary’s Feast Day celebrations. Staff organised weekly prayer meetings and attend Staff Spirituality opportunities.

St Mary’s Star of the Sea is recognised by the community as a pastoral school. Staff are encouraged and supported in their community involvement. The staff are active in the Church, sport, SES, Learn To Swim, Surf Lifesaving, music, St Vincent de Paul and preschool work on a voluntary basis. This involvement is recognised by the wider community and contributes significantly to the pastoral responsibility we share as a staff.

**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 16 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 7 September and 16 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task is based on the Unit: *One With God’s Creation* and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

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

St Mary’s Star of the Sea Religious Literacy results were consistent with the Diocesan percentages. Students showed a high level of performance in their knowledge of the religious tradition. The high level of performance was particularly noticeable in their ability to:

- identify key aspects of the story of creation;
- identify the Ten Commandments and their guiding principles; and
- identify some saints and recall how they loved and served others.

The students’ responses showed a need for them to develop their capacity to work with and apply the religious tradition especially in their ability to:

- recall the events of Holy Week;
- demonstrate basic understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism; and
- name the ways Jesus is present in the celebration of Eucharist.
Students in Part B displayed improvements in their ability to work with and apply their religious knowledge.

For Part A 12.5% of students were placed in the developing level, 62.5% in the achieving level and 25% were in the extending level.

For Part B 0% of students were placed in the developing level, 68.8% in the achieving level and 31.3% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 0% of students were placed in the developing level, 75% in the achieving level and 25% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

**Financial Summary**

The Parish made a financial contribution of $5,000 towards the existing building loan. In conjunction with their annual $5,000 contribution, the P&F Association contributed a total of $14,990 to the school in the following ways:

- $520 Stage 3 excursion (commitment to pay $10 per head for annual senior students excursion);
- $1,470 Library Resources;
- $5,000 to SEDSO (annual P&F contribution to loan repayments);
- $8,000 to SEDSO to assist with purchase of IT/smartboard equipment

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Mary’s Star of the Sea 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

Our school has a Student Welfare Committee for students needing extra support to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to maintain a safe school environment. It is characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation.

A range of pastoral care incentives has been continued for students at St Mary’s. Buddy classes are established between Year Five and Kindergarten and Year Six and Year One. New Kindergarten children come to school to ‘Get Started’ play sessions and Orientation Day.

The CatholicCare school counsellor visits the school once a fortnight and plays a vital role in the pastoral care and well being of students, parents and staff. The focus of our Behaviour Management Policy is to develop and reinforce positive behaviour and provide an environment that reflects the National Safe Schools Framework.

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

St Mary’s Star of the Sea provides opportunities for students to grow and develop intellectually, physically and spiritually. The school’s integrated units of work for all stages has helped ensure the provision of engaging and diversifying, quality learning experiences for all students to achieve specific outcomes. There is a range of curriculum opportunities that reflect an awareness of the individual learning and pastoral needs of the students.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

There are a range of initiatives to support the development of Religious Education, Literacy, Numeracy and other Key Learning Areas through the use of Board of Studies Curriculum documents K-6 and Religious Education Curriculum documents K-6. Year 3 and Year 5 sat the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing and Year 4 sat the Religious Literacy Assessment, a project that has been established between the Catholic
Education Office, Wollongong and the Australian Catholic University. Staff continue to develop Literacy and Numeracy Plans which include professional learning, intervention and support as well as parent support.

An important aspect of our Catholic identity is that we provide tuition for the students who are ready to prepare for Sacramental Programs. Sacramental preparation includes Penance, First Eucharist and Confirmation.

The programming of the Key Learning Areas promotes an integrated approach to learning. Using diversified learning strategies that are based on theories of Habits of Mind, Bloom’s Taxonomy and Gardiner’sThinking Hats. Learning and Teaching Programs include analysis of achievement data to inform and improve student outcomes.

Staff members are developing Scope & Sequences with planned assessments in order to build a continuum of learning for K-6 across all Key Learning Areas including a process of review. Class teachers and the Leadership Team maintain Review Committee processes that support and monitor the literacy and numeracy needs of students. The Leadership Team initiates and monitors Case Management for students with special needs. Implementation of Reading Recovery includes the maintenance of ongoing monitoring of ex-reading recovery students up to and including Year 4.

Learning Technology remains a priority for the school as students utilise Information Technology as tools to support their learning and enhance their education. St Mary’s Star of the Sea students have access to two mobile pods of laptops (15 computers), making it possible for all students to use the technology when appropriate for research and learning. St Mary’s Star of the Sea purchased 4 new data projectors. While using the technology students are provided with the opportunities to become proficient at their knowledge in a variety of ways.

Cross Curriculum

During 2009 Numeracy has remained a high priority at St Mary’s Star of the Sea. Staff members have participated in Working Together to Succeed, Closing the Gap Numeracy Project and Numeracy Improvement Project. Students are using Count Me In Too Maths games and assessment tools to enhance their understanding of Maths concepts and support the Mathematics Curriculum K-6.

Indigenous Education was further developed in 2009. St Mary’s Star of the Sea staff and students celebrated National Aboriginal Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week with Ulladulla High School Indigenous Students. The elders and students participated in our school liturgy. The Ulladulla High School Indigenous Dancers performed and then led our students in a number of Indigenous games. Many of whom were ex-St Mary’s Star of the Sea students.

Meeting the needs of all students

A Special Education Support teacher and four School Support Officers provide extra support in Numeracy and Literacy for students who currently attract Student and Disability funding and also work in small groups with students who may have learning needs.
Our school library provides the staff and the students with educational resources to support individual interest and needs. The Teacher Librarian plans collaboratively with teachers to ensure a rich learning environment. Most students completed the Premier’s reading Challenge this year and the volume of books being borrowed from the library increased. There is a substantial increase in the number of literacy resources available in all Stages. Indonesian continues to be taught at St Mary’s Star of the Sea to all students from K-6. Lessons focus on language and cultural studies of our nearest neighbour in a positive and meaningful way. Students participated in Clean Up Australia, World Environment Day and National Tree Day. Students enjoyed participating in the Active After School Communities (AASC) program. The focus of AASC, which is fun, inclusive, safe and high intensity, is ‘Play for Life’. We have gained valuable sporting resources and students have accessed quality programs and equipment.

**Expanding Learning Opportunities**

St Mary’s Star of the Sea, students participate in a number of formal and informal competitions. Formal competitions included the University of NSW Education and testing competitions in English, Writing and Spelling, Mathematics, Science and Computer Studies. Students received High Distinction, Distinction, Credit and Participation Awards. The local and wider community competitions included: Australian Bush Poetry Society Writing and Recitation Competition, Milton Scarecrow Competition, Inter-School Chess Competition, Lions Club Peace Posters, Australia Wide Music Count Me In, Wollongong Diocese Public Speaking Stage 3 and “The Christmas Story’ Art Competition.

During December students performed on a number of occasions in the local community at the Village Green in Milton and singing at Sarah Clayton Retirement Village. These were excellent opportunities to promote St Mary’s Star of the Sea School community spirit. Students competed in the Australian Bush Poetry recitations. Some students wrote their own poems to recite. The school is very closely linked with the local community through the neighbouring schools, preschools, high schools, local businesses and local Council. St Mary’s Star of the Sea offers the opportunity of a specialist Music Program. All students have curriculum-based lessons and individual students choose to learn a musical instrument in groups.

St Mary’s Star of the Sea offers a wide range of sporting choices. Students participated in the South Coast swimming trials, MacKillop Swimming Championships, MacKillop Cricket Championships. Cross Country and Wollongong Diocesan Athletics and Gala days in Soccer and Netball. Students participated in St Mary’s Star of the Sea Sports Carnivals and Intensive Swimming Program during Term 4.

Excursions at our school enrich and supplement the curriculum with relevant learning experiences. Students visited; Mogo Zoo, Township of Milton, Narrawallee Inlet, Tabourie Museum, Jervis Bay Dolphin Watch, Old Mogo Gold Town and Berry Sport and Recreation Camp.
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.

St Mary’s Star of the Sea Year 3 results indicated strengths in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Year results in numeracy displayed that the schools average growth was above 80%.

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 | YEAR 3 | | | YEAR 5 | | |
|--------------------------|--------| | | | | |
|                          | Bands 1 and 2 | Bands 3 and 4 | Bands 5 and 6 | Bands 3 and 4 | Bands 5 and 6 | Bands 7 and 8 |
| Reading                  | School | 5% | 38% | 57% | 10% | 50% | 40% |
|                          | National | 15% | 40% | 42% | 20% | 46% | 34% |
| Writing                  | School | 10% | 48% | 43% | 25% | 65% | 10% |
|                          | National | 9% | 45% | 45% | 18% | 58% | 24% |
| Spelling                 | School | 0% | 34% | 67% | 25% | 60% | 15% |
|                          | National | 15% | 44% | 39% | 19% | 52% | 28% |
| Grammar & Punctuation    | School | 5% | 24% | 71% | 20% | 45% | 35% |
|                          | National | 15% | 35% | 49% | 17% | 46% | 36% |
| Numeracy                 | School | 15% | 43% | 43% | 15% | 50% | 35% |
|                          | National | 16% | 50% | 32% | 18% | 55% | 25% |
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2009: % AT or ABOVE NMS</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

In a recent survey of parents, students and staff, the following information was obtained relating to their satisfaction with the school. 95% of staff responded to the survey while 80% of surveyed parents replied to the 9 survey questions. St Mary’s Star of the Sea was seen as a safe and supportive environment for students whilst it was acknowledged that the staff had a genuine interest in the student’s welfare.

The parents indicated that the school provides various opportunities for involvement in school activities and decision-making and that communication and reporting are appropriate. Most parents indicated that the school challenged their child to maximise their learning outcomes. A small number indicated that more could be done to meet individual learning needs. Year Six students responded positively to the survey with 100% completing all tasks. All students acknowledged the role that the school had played in developing their educational Religious and sporting abilities.
School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement 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
  - 1.1 Vision and Mission
- Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.4 Planning, Programming and Evaluation
  - 3.5 Assessment
- Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities
  - 5.2 Use of resources and space

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

- Key Area 2: Students and their Learning
  - 2.3 Reporting Students Achievement
- Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.6 School Climate Learning Environment and Relationships
- Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership & Management
  - 4.2 Professional Development of Staff
- Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities
  - 5.1 ICT Resources
- Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication
  - 6.2 Reporting to the Community