About This Report

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School, Thirroul 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.

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 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 2012.

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

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School
PO Box 86
Thirroul NSW 2515
Ph: (02) 4267 2560
Fax: (02) 4268 1482
Email: info@smtdow.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.smtdow.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Father Ken Cafe

Principal: Mr Danny Sykes
Date: 15 December 2011
Vision Statement

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School is a Catholic school centred on Jesus Christ and is founded on Christian values. Together with the family and the Church our school shares the responsibility of educating each child within a caring Christian community. Each child is seen as a unique being with special talents and needs.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School’s Annual Report provides the local and wider communities the opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the significant achievements that have occurred in 2011. Thank you to everyone who has been involved with the school, especially our Parish Priest for his valued support, the staff who worked with great dedication for the betterment of the students and the parent volunteers who gave generously of their time in so many ways. The Parents and Friends Association have been extremely active in their support, having worked in close partnership with the school to cater for the educational needs of the students.

There has been a strong emphasis this year on using technology as a way of achieving learning outcomes and catering for the diverse needs of students. The completion of the Federal Government’s ‘Building Education Revolution’ Program has had a positive impact on daily life at the school, with students and staff able to work in modern facilities, which are conducive to quality learning and teaching.

This Annual Report highlights the vibrant and enthusiastic St Michael’s school community, and the harmonious partnership that is enjoyed between home, school and the parish.

Parent Involvement

As President you tend to get all the kudos for many great things that go on at our school, but the reality is that it is the many volunteers, many of them unsung and virtually invisible to the others outside of the committee, that deserve the real credit and applause. This is what the Parents and Friends Association (P&F) is about, people getting together for the greater good of the school. The highlight of the year was the return of the fete. The sense of community that this event brings out, it is a pure delight to be involved. The fete raised just under $30,000 and is the major fund-raiser for the school. It was brilliant to see so many people running stalls, raffles, games and crafts, all to help our school.

The P&F has made significant contributions to the school, funding the purchase of resources in all curriculum areas, providing shelving and furniture for the school library, supporting technology by purchasing laptops and desktops, and relaying the grass at the eastern end of the playground.

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

This year has been extremely busy for all Year 6 students. We were able to develop leadership skills by attending the National Young Leaders Day, which was held at the Sydney Entertainment Centre on Monday 28 March, 2011. We used what we learnt to good effect by organising whole school activities such as Peer Support, school discos and other fund raising ventures. We were also more involved at assemblies, assisting the Principal by leading the prayer and handing out awards. Once again this year we combined with Thirroul Public School to lead the ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies at the Memorial Park. A feature of our leadership responsibilities was helping our house teams at both the whole-school cross country and athletics carnivals. The buddy system with Kindergarten was a great way for us to help these younger children get used to life in primary school and we loved the Teddy Bears Picnic. We have had the opportunity to represent the school at various events throughout the year and as school captains, we are so proud of our students and staff who have done everything possible to make it a year we will never forget.

*School Leaders*

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**School Profile**

**School Context**

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Systemic co-educational school located in Thirroul and operates under the guidance of the Catholic Education Office in the Diocese of Wollongong. The school caters for students from Kindergarten (K) to Year 6 (K-6), and has a current enrolment of 212 students. The majority of students come from Thirroul, Austinmer and Wombarra and recently there has been an increase in the number of students seeking enrolment from suburbs south of Thirroul. The school was established in 1940 by the Sisters of Saint Joseph to serve the needs of the Catholic Community. Although the Sisters left the school in 1975 the Josephite tradition remains strong. As a Parish school, St Michael’s is an integral part of the Parish and of the wider community. The spiritual growth and welfare of every student, along with sound education practices is paramount and is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, staff and parents.

**Student Enrolments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>LBOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>116</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Diocesan Enrolment Policy and Procedures exists 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 both the school website [www.smtdow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smtdow.catholic.edu.au) and the CEO website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2011.
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>2011</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
<td>86.3%</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of Student Non Attendance

Rolls are marked every morning using the Schools Administration System (SAS 2000) codes. The daily attendance is completed by the class teacher and sent to the office for electronic marking. Parents are expected to notify the school in writing of any absence. All notes are filed. Unknown absences are followed up on a regular basis. Print outs from the School Administration System (SAS) are sent home for the parents to complete and return to school. Should a teacher be notified that a child is leaving the school, this information is directed to the office and a transfer note is completed following Board of Studies requirements.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 13 teachers and 6 support staff at St Michael’s Catholic Primary School. This number includes 8 full-time, 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 within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context</td>
<td>0%</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 2011 was 97.28%. This does not include planned leave such as maternity or long service leave. The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 98%.
Professional Learning

During 2011, St Michael’s personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement (SRI) priorities. These included:

A. St Michael’s whole school development days involved 17 staff.
   These days focused on:
   - Australian Curriculum;
   - Understanding the Autism Spectrum Disorder; and,
   - Spirituality Day - Reflection on the Nativity.

B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses:
   - Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) - NAPLAN Certification - Course on Persuasive Writing (10 members);
   - Refresher training in Asthma, CPR, Emergency Care and Anaphylaxis (17 members); and,
   - School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) (4 members).

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per Staff member was $255. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the Catholic Education Office with an additional average expenditure per staff Member of $1242.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

St Michael's Catholic Primary School is an authentic Catholic Parish Primary School. This is evidenced by the close relationship between the Parish Priest, the school community and parishioners in a supporting environment.

Religious Education is the focus of the school, is taught daily and is integrated in all aspects of schooling and daily life. The Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Curriculum is the endorsed curriculum for all grades from K to Year 6.

The Year 2011 began with a Welcoming Mass for all staff on the first day of the new school year. During Term 1 as part of Sunday Mass, a Commissioning Mass for all staff and catechists was held. This ceremony acknowledged the valuable work done by the St Michael’s staff and catechists in the Thirroul Parish. The students began the new school year with a Welcoming Mass, where all new students received a special welcome and the 2011 school leaders were presented with their leadership badges. A whole school Mass was also celebrated throughout the year for the Feast of St Mary MacKillop.

Students participated in a Liturgy of the Word for Ash Wednesday, Easter, Catholic Schools Week, Book Week, the Blessing and Opening of the new school buildings, for the people affected by the floods in Queensland and for each week of Advent. Year 6 students
participated in the ‘Prayer and Gathering with the Bishop’ on 9 August, along with students from six other Northern Illawarra schools.

The school is very conscious of its rich history and the contribution to the Northern Illawarra and the Thirroul Parish by the Sisters of St Joseph. The school remembers and celebrates the influence of St Mary MacKillop and acknowledges the work of the Sisters of St Joseph in establishing St Michael’s School. On 1 August the school community gathered to celebrate the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop with a whole school Mass.

The work of the missionaries has always been a whole school focus of St Michael’s. During October, one week was set aside for supporting the missions in Peru. Each class participated in a fundraising event led and run by the students. The week culminated in Liturgy of the Word. This missionary work has been followed up by the creation of a ‘Mini Vinnies’ student group. The students were heavily involved in the creation of Christmas hampers for the Annual St Vincent de Paul’s Christmas Appeal and clothing pool.

Sacramental Programs were family based, where parish, school and parents worked together to prepare children for the Sacraments of Penance, First Eucharist and Confirmation. The Parish Priest, class teachers and the Religious Education Co-ordinator (REC) prepared an innovative program for each sacrament.

All staff members are dedicated to providing a quality Catholic education whilst acknowledging the need to work closely with families and Church. The collaborative, collegial approach to all aspects of school life ensured all members of the school community had the opportunity to contribute to direction and decision-making. The whole school community modelled Catholic values by their support and involvement in special fundraising activities including Mission Week ($1,932.00), MS Read-a-thon, St Vincent de Paul, Thirroul Surf Life Saving- Boardies Day ($214.00), Cystic Fibrosis ($275.00), Bandanna Day ($236.00), Christchurch earthquake appeal ($380.00) and Queensland Flood Relief ($380.00). At all school Masses food items were collected for the local St Vincent de Paul Society to distribute to the needy of the parish.

**Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2011. Students completed a written examination and also submitted an extended task based on the unit ‘Mary, Mother of God: First Among the Saints, which was completed during the first half of Term 3. The school cohort in 2011 consisted of twenty three Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 29 August 2011 and twenty six completed the Extended Task (Part B).

Results of the written examination were collated by the Australian Catholic University, combined with the extended task mark, and then sent to parents. St Michael’s Year 4 students produced some outstanding work and achieved some very impressive results. The
students’ creative, extended works were displayed in the school hall for all of the school and parish community to observe and celebrate.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending. Part A consisted of 30 multiple choice/restricted answer and short answer/open ended questions which reflect Stage 1 and 2 outcomes and content in Religious Education.

Students showed a high level of performance in their knowledge of the religious tradition. This high level of performance was particularly noticeable in their:
- knowledge of formal prayers; and,
- knowledge of the Emmaus story.

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:
- identify the correct liturgical colour for the season of the Church’s Year; and,
- recall the Genesis story.

Part B, The Extended Task consisted of one main task with four components, the focus derived from the Year 4 unit *Mary, Mother of God: First Among the Saints*. Students planned, drafted and put considerable time and effort into their project. Students found this task to be a very valuable and challenging learning experience. Students were enthusiastic and produced some excellent products including works of art, Information Communication Learning Technology (ICLT) presentations, storybooks, posters, mandalas, a quilt and a stained glass window.

For Part A 17% of students were placed in the developing level, 61% in the achieving level and 22% were in the extending level.

For Part B 8% of students were placed in the developing level, 65% in the achieving level and 27% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 13% of students were placed in the developing level, 61% in the achieving level and 26% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

**Financial Summary**

During 2011 the school continued its commitment to upgrade ICLT equipment to enhance the learning here at St Michael’s. With the assistance of the P&F, $25,000 was spent on IT equipment and $13,000 was committed to new resources for all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) areas resources for the Library. The Parish also contributed $12,000 to ensure the playground remained a safe area for the students providing new softfall for the playground equipment and the pruning and removal of trees. The Austinmer Thirroul Lions Club donated $1,600 which was used to purchase art and craft supplies for the students.
The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Michael’s Catholic Primary School, Thirroul for the year ended 31 December 2011. This data is taken from the 2011 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

**Student Welfare**

**Introduction**

St Michael's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing the highest quality Catholic education for all students, spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally. The well-being of students is at the heart of all that is undertaken within the school. Student leadership has been heavily promoted throughout the year. The Year 6 students undertook a two-day training course, which prepared them to lead younger students in the Peer Support Program in Terms 3 and 4. Children in all grades came together for weekly lessons to explore topics such as friendship, communication, self-esteem and tolerance.

The Year 6 students were also involved in the school’s Buddy system, supporting K students. This initiative provided guidance and friendship for the younger students as they settled into school routine.

A CatholicCare Counsellor attended the school, three times a month and this service ensured that students experiencing difficulties were given specific support. The Counsellor also worked closely with teachers and the Principal to address student welfare concerns.

Students’ achievements were acknowledged in the school newsletter and at assemblies. An Awards Assembly was held each Friday to celebrate individual student success. All students had the opportunity to earn a range of awards from Superstar Awards through to a St Michael's Blue. Parents were welcome to attend all assemblies. The assemblies were an opportunity for parents, staff and students to recognise the achievements of their peers.
Pastoral Care

This year St Michael’s School continued the School-Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Program (SPB4L). The school is committed to providing quality Catholic learning and teaching to all the students entrusted in its care. The SPB4L initiative focused on establishing a safe and predictable school environment. This program supports long-term success, both socially and academically and aims to explicitly teach expectations for positive behaviours. During 2011, the emphasis was on promoting and maintaining consistent and acceptable classroom behaviours. The school rules: Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other and Take Care of this Place are well understood by all students and they strive to apply them in all aspects of school life.

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 school communities. These documents can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2011.

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

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School is a learning community focused on providing a diverse range of educational experiences to ensure each student has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Effective learning and teaching encourages all students to strive for individual excellence. Staff members are highly committed to their profession and the students in their care. There is a spirit of collaboration encouraged in the decision-making processes that are designed to improve learning outcomes.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

NSW Board of Studies syllabus documents, along with the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Curriculum form the basis of the courses of study devised and implemented by classroom teachers. The KLAs are implemented across all four stages of learning with specialist support in Physical Education. In 2012 there will also be specialist support in music.
At St Michael’s explicit teaching is highly valued. Teachers ensure that all skills, knowledge and understandings are modelled, guided and then independently practised by students. There are also regular opportunities for students to purposefully reflect on their learning.

This year teachers focused specifically on the area of Mathematics with the intent of designing more open ended and tiered learning opportunities. The purpose of this was to develop activities that catered for a variety of ability levels within a mainstream setting. All staff attended a day of professional development focusing on The Australian Curriculum. This enabled staff to develop a better understanding of the new curriculum in the areas of English, Mathematics, History, Science and Technology. The Australian Curriculum at this stage will not be implemented in the Diocese of Wollongong until 2014.

In 2011, the school continued to implement the assessment and reporting procedures, which complied with Federal Government requirements. Student reports, containing the Common Grade Scale were sent home in June and December to parents/caregivers. Parent/teacher interviews were also held in June and after the December reports had been sent home they were available on request. During 2011, all teachers developed class assessment plans to outline the summative and formative assessment procedures for their grade. The assessment plans aligned with teacher programs and were evident in student work samples. Anecdotal records and student assessment portfolios were collected as evidence of student progress and informed professional teacher judgements.

In keeping with the school’s SRI Plan, staff focused on more effectively and purposefully using the Smartboard as a tool to enhance student learning. Staff received professional development at a school level and also through external sources. This resulted in staff accessing and producing a variety of lessons using Notebook software, which aligned with the curriculum and assisted student learning. Students have also begun exploring and creating notebook files.

Learning and teaching has continued to be enhanced by ICLT. St Michael’s ‘Three Year ICLT Plan’ has guided the purchasing of resources and the accessing and provision of professional development for staff. In 2011 the school purchase eight Mac Minis to power the existing Smartboards and a pod of eight iMacs to supply the new school library. Years 3 and 4 received five new Macbooks. At the conclusion of 2011 a new Smartboard was also purchased for the current Year 6 classroom. Afternoon workshops were held to support teachers and therefore students in using an array of applications. At St Michael’s ICLT is viewed as a powerful tool to support learning and students are encouraged by their teachers to use this tool to create, collaborate, communicate and investigate.

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School also prioritises the area of cybersafety and ensures that students, especially in Stages 2 and 3 are provided with learning experiences that develop an understanding of safe and ethical use of the internet. This involved the ICLT Coordinator running class sessions and speaking at the parent information evenings for Years 4, 5 and 6. An Australian Communication and Media Authority (ACMA) representative also conducted workshops for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.
The school’s web page is updated regularly and is widely used by the parents and the wider community to access information. This year also saw the introduction of the school’s newsletter being e-mailed to families each week. The newsletter is still currently available on hard copy for those parents/caregivers who prefer that mode of communication.

Cross Curriculum

Literacy continued to be a high priority at St Michael’s School in 2011. The development of effective literacy practice was supported by whole-class, individual and guided small group sessions in reading, writing and talking and listening. The teaching staff further developed their knowledge of effective literacy practices throughout the year with on-going learning opportunities and professional dialogue and mentoring programs. Teachers have endeavoured to authentically embed technology to enhance literacy learning and to create more challenging learning experiences for students. Teachers also focused on integrating literacy outcomes throughout all KLAs.

As part of Library and Information Week 2011, St Michael’s students participated in ‘National Simultaneous Storytime’, a time where all classes from K to Year 6 read the book Feathers for Phoebe by Rod Clement and participated in a range of learning experiences to support Australian authors.

This year was the 10th year St Michael’s students participated in the Premiers Reading Challenge (PRC) and more than sixty percent of students completed the challenge. One staff member and three students were invited to attend the PRC function at the Powerhouse Museum Sydney where they had the opportunity to meet the Premier and some of Australia’s best-known authors and visit the Harry Potter Exhibition.

During National Literacy and Numeracy Week, all classes participated in ‘Reach for the Stars’, a nationwide Mathematics investigation of Australian classrooms. This provided the opportunity for whole school involvement and for cross-age collaboration in problem solving. St Michael’s has an innovative approach to Mathematics using a variety of resources and ensuring that problem solving remains a central focus and that differentiated learning occurs in Mathematics. In every classroom, ICLT resources were used to enhance learning outcomes.

During Terms 2 and 3, students in Year 4 and Year 5 participated in an Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture Course. The course was an initiative by the Wollongong Catholic Education Office in conjunction with Holy Spirit College, Bellambi. Students were provided with the opportunity to learn basic Chinese Mandarin and to further develop their knowledge of Chinese culture. The study of Chinese provided the opportunity for students to become more accepting of diversity, more respectful of others and more aware of their place in the international community.

As part of the SRI process an Environment Club was initiated this year for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Students were responsible for water monitoring, waste management and maintaining gardens.
Meeting the needs of all students

Special Education
Individual Education Learning Plans (IPs) were developed using the Diocesan planning tool for students who received additional funding to support their learning. Regular meetings were held with parents to inform and discuss their child’s progress.

Review Committee
The Review Committee continued to provide support for teachers in monitoring students with specific learning needs in literacy and numeracy. Classroom teachers planned learning experiences that supported the students and developed their skills with students receiving regular additional assistance from School Support Officers (SSOs).

Reading Recovery
The Reading Recovery program ran for the first six months of 2011. During this time six Year 1 children participated in the program and all were successfully discontinued. Reading Recovery met the needs of 20% of the Year 1 cohort.

Gifted Education
This year St Michael’s has focused on the staff developing a better understanding of Gifted Education thereby resulting in greater diversification of learning experiences in the classroom to better meet the needs of highly able students. Teachers have participated in several staff meetings and have been exposed to the new Diocesan Gifted Education Model and the three related support documents. The school has also re-written its Gifted Education Policy and aligned it closely with Diocesan guidelines. This year students at St Michael’s have been provided with the following opportunities:
- SPLICED: A pilot online program created by Wollongong Diocese to cater for highly able Year 5 students. Four students participated in this program;
- MINDQUEST: Weekend courses provided by St George Girl’s High School;
- University Competitions: Years 3 – 6 were able to sit Mathematics, English, Science and Computer competitions; and
- Math Challenge: A three-week competition open to Year 5 and 6 students. Students worked in small teams to solve mathematical problems.

Classroom Differentiation of Curriculum
Teachers at St Michael’s pretest curriculum and then modify the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students. This modification may take a variety of forms:
- ability grouping in the regular classroom;
- ability grouping across a stage of learning;
- faster paced delivery of curriculum;
- personal interest projects or inquiries; and,
- replacement of core class work.

Expanding Learning Opportunities
St Michael’s continues to provide a variety of expanded learning opportunities. Members of
the school choir and band participated in the Holy Spirit College Creative Arts Showcase. Years 5 and 6 students entered the Diocese of Sydney Christmas Art Competition and two Year 5 students were successful in having their work displayed in the crypt of St Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney. One of these students received a highly commended award.

Students from Years 2 to Years 6 were involved in a Friday chess competition against several schools in the Illawarra. Eighteen students also attended the annual chess day, which was held at The Illawarra Grammar School.

Students from K to Year 6 participated in the annual class and school public speaking competitions. As well as this, two Stage 3 students participated in the Regional Public Speaking finals, with the Year 6 entrant awarded first place. Students were also given the opportunity to enter the school talent quest competition, which was held in Term 4.

The students participated in a wide range of sporting activities at school, regional, Diocesan and MacKillop levels. A highlight of the sporting events this year was the Cross Country team winning the Diocesan carnival, the first time this feat has been achieved at St Michael’s. Students who possessed outstanding individual sporting talent were able to vie for selection through Diocesan Trials, with twelve students being chosen in Wollongong Representative Teams. Throughout the year, various school carnivals were conducted including swimming, cross country and athletics. These events encouraged maximum student participation and developed community spirit.

**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. It 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.

Twenty-seven Year 3 students and thirty Year 5 students sat the NAPLAN test in 2011. The students at St Michael’s Catholic Parish Primary School achieved a high level of results in all components of NAPLAN tests. In Year 3, all students achieved at, or above the National Minimum Standard in literacy and numeracy. Year 3 students achieved results higher than the National average in Bands 5 and 6 in reading and numeracy. All year 5 students achieved above the National Minimum Standard with results in Bands 7 and 8 significantly higher than the national average in all strands of literacy and numeracy.
When NAPLAN results were released in September 2011 all parents were given the opportunity to discuss their child’s results with the class teacher. Staff members were presented with the school’s NAPLAN data at a staff meeting during Term 4. All results were discussed and a plan for 2012 was instigated, targeting students in lower bands who need intervention and support, and also extending those students in higher bands.

**Student Achievement in Bands**

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses aspects of literacy and numeracy in Years 3 and 5. It provides valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students. Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. **Please Note:** Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2011: % in Bands</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
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</table>

**Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard**

Students are considered to be achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) if they are in the lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) or if they have been exempt from NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) represents students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2011: % AT or ABOVE NMS</th>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

At the end of the 2011 School Year parents, students and staff were given the opportunity by means of a survey to provide the school with feedback on its performance in a number of key areas. The survey was a way for the school to gauge how well they had achieved their goals for the year and it gave important feedback for future planning.

Summary of Parent Satisfaction Findings

All parents were given the opportunity to respond to the survey. All respondents agreed that the school provided opportunities for parents to be involved. They also agreed that the school helped the students develop a knowledge and understanding about the Catholic faith. They also confirmed that the school provided a safe and supportive environment.

A small group believed that students needed to be challenged more to maximize their learning outcomes. A small group of parents also indicated that they would like more information about their child’s progress.

Summary of Student Satisfaction Findings

In November eighty seven students from Years 4, 5 and 6 were surveyed. There were seven questions in the survey ranging from their pride in the school, teacher encouragement, understanding their rights and responsibilities and feeling safe at school. The students were overwhelmingly proud of the school and they believed that teachers encouraged them to learn to the best of their ability. Students also indicated that there were opportunities for them to become involved in sporting and other activities at school. A small group of students was unsure of whom to approach for help if they had a problem.

Summary of Staff Satisfaction Findings

An analysis of the responses from staff indicated that staff members were most positive in all the areas covered by the survey. In addition, the respondents commented favourably on the safe and supportive environment where the welfare of each child is a priority. Staff
acknowledged the responsibility that the school has to help students develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition.

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 2011:

- Key Area 2 : Students and their Learning
  2.1 Educational Potential
- Key Area 3 : Pedagogy
  3.2 Provision for the Diverse Needs of Learners
  3.6 School Climate, Learning Environment and Relationships
- Key Area 5 : Resources, Finance and Facilities
  5.3 Environmental Stewardship

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2012:

- Key Area 1 : Catholic Life and Religious Education
  1.1 Vision and Mission
- Key Area 2 : Students and their Learning
  2.5 Pastoral Care
- Key Area 3 : Pedagogy
  3.4 Planning, Programming and Evaluation
- Key Area 6 : Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication
  6.3 Linkages with the Wider Community
- Key Area 7 : Strategic Leadership and Management
  7.2 Innovation, Development and Change