About This Report

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Ruse is registered by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) 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 Action Plans.

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 BOSTES NSW requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the BOSTES, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2015.

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

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Bradbury  NSW  2560  
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Email:  info@stmdow.catholic.edu.au  
Website:  www.stmdow.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Anthony Daly

Principal: Paul Croker  
Date:  1 December 2014
Vision Statement

In the spirit of truth and love the vision at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is to be a welcoming community committed to upholding the dignity of the individual, where quality learning and teaching is inspired by the message and life of Jesus.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal's Message

Provision for the diverse needs of learners was important focuses of staff professional learning during this year with major new programs implemented to assist students attain literacy improvements, including speech therapy support, reading development intervention and phonemic awareness activities. This was complemented by a student learning needs identification process and formation of an academic, pastoral and behaviour support staff team who assisted staff members in the carrying out of targeted learning support strategies.

This year we used the “Together we are the FACE of God” focus to build our awareness of Gospel values taught by Jesus. This meant we concentrated on Faith in Term 1, Acceptance in Term 2, Compassion in Term 3 and Equality in Term 4. All students participated in a joyful Harmony Day celebration linked to this focus with colourful national dresses on display.

We completed a successful School Review and Improvement “Cyclic Review” process in the latter part of the year and official panel visitors were impressed with the learning and Information Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT) resources available in the school. The Cyclic Review Report set out the “vision” and “pathway” towards sustained student learning improvement growth being implemented by staff members through their participation in English and Maths Professional Learning Teams.

Parent Involvement

At the end of a ten year association with St Thomas More and involvement with several Parents’ and Friends’ Association (P&F) Committees including as the out-going P&F Association President, there is a unique opportunity to speak about the year that has gone and the involvement of parents in P&F Association activities in general.

At the recent School Review process all parent who participated nominated “community” as a significant aspect in sending their children to St Thomas More. This sense of community is fostered by parental involvement, is asked for in each child’s Kindergarten interview and is essential for the P&F, Mothers’ club and Fete committee to continue. There were many contributions made by new and long standing parents, teaching and administration staff and I
would like to acknowledge and thank all those people who made a difference to our children and to the school community in 2014.

*Parents and Friends Association, President*

**Student Leadership**

Our amazing journey started in 2014 with a Beginning of Year Mass, where we received our School Captain badges, after they were blessed with Holy Water, by our Parish Priest. The local member of the NSW Parliament was there to commission us into our new roles.

We have represented the school in many ways, including the local ANZAC Day march with other Year 6 Captains and students from across the school; Parish religious ceremonies; the Year 6 Parish Mass; the Caritas/Catholic Mission launch, and the St Gregory’s College Beginning of the Year Mass. As a grade we attended School Masses, Liturgies, and Penance. A particular highlight was the Year 6 Mass with the Bishop of Wollongong. Many students of our Grade made their Confirmation during the year, which saw them fully initiated into the Church. These ceremonies were very significant as they brought us closer to God.

Everybody in Year 6 represented the school by attending a three day excursion to Canberra to learn all about the National Capital’s history and Australia’s democratic system. These were three very busy days, but a great time was had by all. Not only did we represent the school in many school events, we also got to be involved in a variety of community events. It was very exciting to welcome the new Kindergarten students for 2015. Helping at the School Discos and the School Fete was lots of fun and gave Year 6 greater responsibility. Being part of Mini Vinnies and helping the less fortunate in Australia made us feel very proud and honoured.

We would like to say a huge thank you to our Parish Priest for guiding us through our faith journey and helping us to become better believers in Christ. We would also like to thank all the teachers, the P&F Association and the whole community for all their guidance and support through this amazing journey. We will miss this school a great deal.

*School Leaders*
School Profile

School Context
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Ruse, a suburb of Campbelltown. The school caters for students in Years K-6 in a two-stream configuration and has a current enrolment of 373. The school is located in the Parish of Ruse and is under the direction of the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong. St Thomas More traditions have been enriched from the foundational charisms of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan and the Marist Brothers. The school endeavours to cater for the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, behavioural and physical education of all students.

St Thomas More has 14 mixed ability classes and a Learning Support Centre, which supports the needs of students with an identified learning disability. As a Parish School, it is intended that the spiritual growth and welfare of the students be carefully integrated within a needs-based education, which is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, Staff and Parents. The school places a strong emphasis on building resilience and operates successful Pastoral Care and Buddy programs. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is committed to the creation of contemporary learning programs, where educational excellence is encouraged, by providing a relevant, stimulating and challenging curriculum that incorporates the use of learning technologies, such as laptops, i-Pads, online resources and interactive whiteboards. Students are given many opportunities: academic, sporting, religious and cultural, to discover and make the most of their talents and they regularly participate in Diocesan and local events. St Thomas More Primary School is a school where students, staff, parents and Parish Priest work and celebrate together in a spirit of true partnership.

Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Diocesan Primary 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.stmdow.catholic.edu.au and the CEO website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2014.
Student Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 Attendance</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>94.3%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>95.7%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>95.4%</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole school</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
<td>95.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management of Student Non Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff members, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences. Parents are contacted regularly about unexplained or repeated absences in accordance with the Diocesan Student Attendance Policy and the CEO School Attendance Guidelines and Procedures (Nov 2012).

Each class teacher had the responsibility of recording class attendance rolls each day, via the Sentral Student Roll Marking portal. It is a school expectation that if students were absent from school, a written note explaining the absence was provided to the class teacher, which in turn was documented and archived by office staff. An email to the school explaining the absence was also acceptable.

If an explanation for an absence was not received, a reminder note requesting an explanation was sent to parents. If two such notes were not returned then an “unexplained/ unjustified” absence was documented. In the event of a child having an excessive number of unexplained absences, contact with the parents was made by the Principal or representative to investigate the circumstances related to these absences.

If a child left school early they were issued with a pass, which indicated that the school was aware of their absence. Parents were required to apply for Principal approval to exempt their child from school for extended periods. Full and partial absences were documented on Student Reports each Semester.
Staffing Profile

There are a total of 22 teachers and 11 support staff at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. This number includes 17 full-time, 5 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 2 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

| Teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* guidelines | 100% |
| A bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education | 0% |

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

Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2014 was 97.5%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 92%.

Professional Learning

During 2014 St Thomas More Catholic Primary School personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review and Improvement priorities.

These included:

A. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School whole school development days involving 33 staff. These days focused on:
   - Planning Day, Policy Showcase and Staff Development;
   - Staff Spirituality, Catholic Education Pedagogy; and,
   - Implementing the new Australian Curriculum.

B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level included CEO run courses:
   - Leading the Australian Curriculum (3 staff);
   - Best Start Training (2 staff);
   - Early Careers Teacher Professional Development (2 staff);
• Beginning Teachers Spirituality (3 Staff);
• Lamplighters – Spiritual Development for Leaders (4 staff);
• A Light for the World Personal Spirituality Formation Experience (2 staff);
• Religious Education Coordinator (REC) Conference (1 staff member);
• Principal/Assistant Principal Retreat (2 staff);
• Religious Literacy Assessment (2 staff);
• South West Sydney, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) Workshops (6 staff);
• Active Afternoon Coaching Course (1 staff member);
• Spotlight on Technology (3 staff);
• Slide to Learn Course: ICLT (1 staff member);
• ICLT Network (2 staff);
• Technology and Special Needs UOW (2 staff);
• Oliver (Reference System for Libraries) Training (1 staff member);
• School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) Training day CEO (1 staff member);
• Multi-Lit Course (1 staff member);
• Mathematics: Fractions (4 staff); and
• School based professional development on Multi-Lit (5 SSO staff). MSSD IP training (18 staff) Mathematics: Number Sense and use of the Continuum (15 staff).

Other professional learning activities:
• Religious Education (RE) based Leadership training in order to assist the development of spirituality in the school context;
• Improving Pedagogy in Religious Education (2 staff);
• Masters in Theology and Religious Education (7 staff);
• RE Storytelling (3 staff);
• Beginner teachers RE PD (3 staff);
• REC retreat (1 staff member);
• Pastoral Care training (1 staff member);
• Seasons for Growth (2 staff); and,
• CatholicCare orientation to High School Program (2 staff).

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was $284.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the Catholic Education Office with an additional average expenditure per staff member of $913.
Catholic Life & Religious Education

Catholic schools have a unique role in the evangelising and educating mission of the Church. Catholic Education strives to educate the child as a whole learner. Therefore learning communities give witness to distinctive educational, spiritual, moral and social purposes within the evangelising mission of the Church, founded on faith in Jesus Christ. St Thomas More Primary School engages in processes to reflect on, revitalise and strengthen the religious life of members of the school community.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School follows a prescribed curriculum and uses student textbooks titled “To Know, Worship and Love”. In addition to the text books our school engages in the story telling project. This project was developed in order to unpack scripture at a deeper level and allow children to engage with the wonder of scripture. During 2014 the Religious Education Team, which included teachers and parents, have aimed to complete the making of all story-telling resources. The process includes 3 phases:

- Phase 1: Kinder – Year 2 story resources;
- Phase 2: Year 3 and Year 4 story resources, and
- Phase 3: Year 5 and 6 story resources. At this stage Phase 1 is almost complete and Phase 2 is in the early stages.

Our partnership between school and Parish is enhanced by the presence of our Parish Priest, and various school and Parish projects. During 2014, an introduction to School and Parish Masses has been trialled. Different grade groups have been allocated on various Sundays during the year. Children have had opportunities to participate in various ministries within Mass, such as readings, offertory processions, liturgical movements, choir etc. This has created opportunities to build positive partnerships. Our staff have also had opportunities to liaise with Parishioners in order to plan the Masses. In addition to this, children from our school have been invited to join the reading roster within the Parish. The children have attended workshops to up-skill them in proclaiming scripture.

The latest project we are engaging in has involved evaluating the quality of our Sacramental programs. As a school community we are looking at ways to continually improve and develop the programs and opportunities that we provide for our students. We have invited parents, teachers and our students to offer feedback in regards to aspects of the current Sacramental program. It is crucial for all the community to have a voice and share their hopes and concerns for our programs and how they are implemented in the future. All feedback has been collated and is being analysed.
St Thomas More Catholic Primary School community engages community members in a variety of religious experiences. These include:

- Whole school Masses and Liturgies to celebrate special events and feast days throughout the year, for example, the Feast of St Thomas More, Feast of Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop, Holy Week, Catholic Schools’ Week, Grandparents’ Day and a special focus on the Feast of the Assumption, where we acknowledged the Sisters of Charity who celebrated 175 years in Australia this year;
- Students in Year 3 to Year 6 regularly receiving the Sacrament of Penance;
- Our Parish Priest has visited classes on a regular basis and has begun to address topics related to the religious education curriculum, appropriate to the grade;
- Weekly prayer assemblies, led by each class, to reflect the liturgical life of the Church and the units of study;
- Grade Masses in addition to the whole school Masses; and
- Lunch time prayer group.

We have also had a Catholic Care Pastoral Support Worker (Chaplaincy Program) in place in 2014. This program aims to support students through the provision of pastoral care services and the promotion of strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of students and the pastoral needs of the broader school community. Pastoral care is defined in the Agreement with the Commonwealth as “the practice of looking after the personal needs of students, not just their academic needs, through the provision of general spiritual and personal advice.”

Our Pastoral Support Worker has run programs such as “Seasons for Growth” (based on the “Good Grief Program”) and “Mind Up” Mindfulness program, which is designed to develop resilience in children. Our Pastoral Support Worker has also provided support at lunch times by running activities that promote positive social skills.

During 2014, our Mini Vinnies student group has led our community through various fundraising projects. Particular focus has been placed on not only giving but also creating a deeper sense of who we are reaching out to, and why people find themselves in times of need. The Religious Educator Coordinator (REC) and Pastoral Support Worker worked with students to research and choose various international welfare projects to provide monetary support for.

**Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2014. The school cohort in 2014 consisted of 46 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 25 August 2014 and 46 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *Mary Mother of God: First Among the Saints* and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.
In 2014, Year 4 students sat for the Religious Literacy Test which has 2 components. Part A comprised of 30 multiple-choice questions and Part B involved students responding to a particular theme whilst making choices about the way they presented their work.

Results of this test are analysed by staff and are used to inform future teaching and learning. St Thomas More Primary school 2014 Year 4 cohort achieved the following bands:

For Part A, 17.3% of students were placed in the developing level, 65.1% in the achieving level and 17.6% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 5% of students were placed in the developing level, 43% in the achieving level and 78% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 22.3% of students were placed in the developing level, 87.4% in the achieving level and 95.6% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

**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 2014:**

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
  - 2.4 Integration of ICLT

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  - 3.1. Curriculum Provision
  - 3.2 Provision for the diverse needs of learners
  - 3.5 Assessment
  - 3.4 Planning, programming and evaluation

The successful integration of Information, Communications and Learning Technologies (ICLT) has now progressed to the point where the school is proposing to implement the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) 1 to 1 iPad program into Stage 3 classes next year. Curriculum provision has
proceeded strongly with complete implementation of the new BOSTES English and Maths syllabuses and development of Scope and Sequence outlines.

**School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2015:**

The main challenge facing the school is consistently improving the achievement levels of each individual student (inclusive of Gifted and Talented students). This must be accomplished with a strategic approach that effectively tracks the achievement of each student, addresses the identified needs of students by using a range of effective differentiated teaching strategies, and encompasses specific individual learning support intervention measures, where necessary. The vision for the St Thomas More school community is to “Make a Difference” for each child.

The key to the successful implementation of this approach is professional learning and mentoring for all staff members based on agreed practices, developing a common pedagogical understanding, developing rigor in assessment procedures and gaining deep Key Learning Areas content knowledge.

In 2015 the SRI components to be worked through include:

- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
  
  2.3 Reporting Student Achievement

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  
  3.2 Provision for the diverse needs of learners (continued)
  3.4 Planning, programming and evaluation (continued)
  3.5 Assessment (continued)
  3.6 School Climate, learning and environment and relationships

- **Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management**
  
  4.2 Professional Development of staff

- **Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**
  
  6.1 Parent Involvement
  6.2 Reporting to the Community
Financial Summary

Major school expenditure this year focused on the acquisition of new Information and Communication Learning Technologies (ICLT) equipment throughout the classrooms. Funds for these substantial purchases of i-Pads and laptops were provided to the school from the Parents’ and Friends’ Association. These new ICLT resources are being very well utilised to enhance learning programs in all key learning areas. New Home Reading Books for lower grades were purchased with funds provided to the school from the Mothers’ Club. These funds came from various well-supported community fundraising events.

A grant received from the Campbelltown Catholic Club has been placed in the Parish SEDSO Account to accumulate savings for the future installation of air conditioning for the school hall.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Ruse for the year ended 31 December 2014. This data is taken from the 2014 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Student Welfare

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School has a proud tradition of providing pastoral support to members of our community. Student Welfare is paramount in the ethos of Catholic Education and to the very nature of our school. In 2014 the school pastoral care focus was “Making a Difference.” The aim was to provide each child with the support required to access the curriculum as fully as possible and to be completely supported in all aspects of school life. Tracking procedures of student academic achievement, as well as, student behaviours was a major part of this. This year we have continued to have access to a Pastoral Care Coordinator (PCC), a very involved school counsellor (provided by CatholicCare) and a Pastoral Support Worker (PSW).

St Thomas More provides a variety of programs that support students academically, socially and emotionally. With the assistance of the aforementioned professionals, we have been able to run a number of programs to provide support for children socially and emotionally. These programs include “Seasons for Growth” (facilitated by the PCC), Mindfulness and Social skills groups in Year 2 (facilitated by the PSW), as well as, the Kindergarten Transition to School program and Embracing the Transition to High school program, which focuses on the emotional side of getting ready for high school (facilitated by the school counsellor). We have also seen the continuation of out of school family support, through home visits, by our PCC.

The “Better Buddy” program also ran this year. Year 4 students were paired with Kindergarten students. Strong relationships developed through shared activities in and outside the classrooms. The younger students learned that they could rely on the older students to help them in all aspects of their schooling.

School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) remains the driving force for providing a positive learning environment for all students. This year the language used to refer to student behaviour has been changed. The idea being that students and staff alike will focus on the relationship that behaviour has to learning. Behaviour is either supportive or non supportive of learning. The introduction of the Sentral computer student administration system across the diocese has made it much easier for recording and analysing of behaviours and just as with learning, provide support to either enhance or remediate behavioural issues, as required.

The St Thomas More Behavioural Support Policy has been updated this year with attention to streamlining procedures. Student recognition has been refined with updates made to the positive award system. Playground Champion Awards and Merit Certificates reward supportive or positive classroom and playground behaviours, as well as, academic achievements. The pastoral care award this year was the FACE of God award. Children receive this award for displaying Christian values.
This year the profile of Indigenous students has been raised. Students participated in community activities such as the Sorry Day Service and National Aboriginal Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week activities. More opportunities have been provided for these students to make cultural links. Visiting artists and dancers have allowed students to participate in a variety of cultural activities. The school is beginning to develop personal relationships with a number of local elders. A pen pal program with indigenous students at St Joseph’s Primary School, Walgett was initiated. While this program is in its infancy the hope is that it will provide our students with a broader view of indigenous 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* is 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 2014.

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**

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**Curriculum and Pedagogy**

During 2014, the systemic process of identifying children from the higher end of the learning continuum was continued. As part of this process 57 Year 2 students were administered the Acer General Ability Test (AGAT). Two of these students tested in Band 7 or above and went on to be assessed further using the Slosson Intelligence Test. The information gained from these tests provides teachers with specific data to inform enrichment and differentiation.

St. Thomas More has remained committed to providing access to learning technologies and 2014 saw the purchase of new iPads. All students from Years 2-6 continued to have access to the Google Suite of applications with personal email addresses and passwords. Students in Years 4-6 were skilled in the use of these Google applications. This included, but was not limited to Year 6 using Google Drive and Doctopus for the completion of assessment tasks, Year 5 using Google applications for presentations and Year 4 using Google Drive to complete their homework.

In the latter part of the year, St. Thomas More made the decision to implement the Diocesan 1:1 Device program for 2015 in Stage 3. Parent information sessions were held at the
beginning of Term 4, to inform parents about this decision and the requirements for 2015. Students from Years 5 and 6 will commence bringing their own personal iPad to school from the beginning of Week 3 2015. Teachers, students and parents will all receive assistance with the implementation of the iPads throughout 2015, with “bootcamps” facilitated by CEO personnel.

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle. A variety of assessments were undertaken and results were used to inform teaching programs for whole class and individual instruction. Results were shared with parents using the A-E reporting scale and parent/teacher interviews were held at the end of Semester 1 and 2. Students in Years 3 and 5 completed the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy and students from Years 3-6 were provided the opportunity to complete the University of New South Wales (UNSW) International Competition and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) Mathematics, English, Computer and Science Competitions. The children in Year 4 also participated in the Wollongong Diocesan Religious Literacy Assessment.

Teachers continued in 2014 to use Assessment ‘of,’ ‘as’ and ‘for’ learning when designing units of work, to ensure that all aspects of students learning were assessed. Teachers also worked on planning assessment tasks which allowed individual students to show the maximum learning they had obtained. Reading tracking folders continued to be used and students who made little or no progress in their reading were identified and received extra assistance from a specialist Literacy Intervention Support teacher.

The role of Literacy Support was new in 2014 and was an extension to the previous program of Reading Recovery. The specialist teacher was able to work with and assist students during 2014 in the areas of reading, writing and oral skills from Kindergarten to Year 2.

2014 saw the introduction of the new English and Mathematics syllabuses and all teachers began using these documents for planning and implementing their teaching programs. To support the implementation of these documents Learning Teams were created in the areas of English and Mathematics, with all staff members belonging to one or the other team. As well as these, a Teacher Educator in English and a Teacher Educator in Mathematics worked closely with staff to assist with the implementation of the new curriculum requirements.

Mathematics took a significant focus this year, with staff participating in numerous Professional Development opportunities with input from CEO curriculum experts. Some of these took place during the school vacation periods throughout the year. Particular emphasis was given to K-2 classes during 2014 and this will be extended to Years 3-6 classes during 2015. The Literacy and Numeracy Continuums were added to the Sentral computer system procedures and all teachers from K-6 are now tracking the learning gains of all students in English and Mathematics. This also allows teachers to formulate ‘guided groups’ in their classrooms based on children’s abilities and needs.

Staff prepared for the implementation of the new Science syllabus in 2015 and attended a number of meetings and plenary sessions to ensure the smooth transition for staff and
students. A whole school Science Scope and Sequence was developed and sample units written. Staff will commence teaching from the new syllabus in 2015 and will create units of work using the ‘backward design model’, where the end outcome of what the students are to know is thought about first and then teaching and learning activities are designed to get the students there.

**Cross Curriculum**

Where possible, Learning and Teaching Programs were integrated across all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and these were implemented in a variety of ways.

The Grandparents’ Day celebration has become one of the major highlights on the school calendar. This year the day was held early in Term 3. Mass was followed by a shared morning tea and then classroom visits. These visits gave parents and grandparents some insight into what happens in classrooms and the day was enjoyed by all who were involved.

All classes had the opportunity to enhance their learning through excursions, and all classes attended Life Education workshops. Classes were also involved in NRMA Road Safety and “Start Smart” Financial Literacy workshops.

Kindergarten visited Calmsley Hill City Farm. Year 1 enjoyed their day exploring the Freres Crossing Nature Reserve and the built parklands of Marsden Park. Year 2 visited Mt Annan Botanical Gardens. Year 3 took a trip to Featherdale Farm and Year 4 enjoyed their excursion to ‘The Rocks’. The Year 5 students enjoyed a three-day leadership camp to Wedderburn Christian Camp, and the Year 6 students participated in a three-day excursion to Canberra and Federal Parliament.

Indigenous perspectives were celebrated during NAIDOC Week, as well as, part of Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) units in all grades. Year 2 presented an assembly for NAIDOC Week, which was attended by several local Elders.

Throughout the year students participated in a variety of transition and/or orientation programs. Year 6 were involved in transition days at a number of local high schools. CatholicCare ran a Transition to High School program for St Thomas More students and St John the Evangelist, Campbelltown students. Students from both schools had sessions facilitated by CatholicCare workers and Year 7 students from St Gregory’s College, St Patrick’s College and Mount Carmel Catholic High School. During Term 4, the Year 5 students once again participated in the ‘Transition Project’ which involved students visiting St Patrick’s College and John Therry Catholic High School to engage in a number of learning and teaching experiences in Woodwork, Science, Mathematics, Visual Arts and Food and Textiles. These experiences allowed students to experience first-hand learning within the High School context.

**Meeting the needs of all students**

At St Thomas More the students are offered a differentiated curriculum to ensure that they reach their best possible academic results. Learning is diversified through the implementation
of Individual Learning Plans, as well as, small group intervention. The School Support Officers work in collaboration with the teachers to assist the students to complete individualised goals.

The Learning Support Centre caters for students with a variety of additional needs. A full time teacher and School Support Officer work in the Centre. English, Mathematics and social skills are the main components taught in the Centre. All students in the school with additional needs have an Individual Learning Plan that is devised collaboratively each Semester by the classroom teacher, the Learning Support Centre teacher and the parents. Teachers and parents meet twice a year to discuss and amend these plans as necessary.

One teacher has trained in the Multi-Lit program and was able to come back and train three School Support Officers. Together they take 2 students each, four times a week through Phonics and a Sight Word based program. There are now students involved from all grades. This year, to date, 24 students have completed or are presently on the program.

In addition to Multi-Lit, there are seven Oral Language groups a week catering for one to five students, most of whom receive two thirty minute lessons a week. The focus is on receptive and expressive language skills, on memory, vocabulary development and comprehension.

Year 1 students in need have been targeted with a Reading and Writing Support program. The enrichment opportunities for the students at St Thomas More include groups that occur during lunchtimes and within teaching time. These include: environment gardening group, choir and fitness group, Thinking Club, Art Club and Kid’s Club.

At St Thomas More there is a process for identifying students who are Gifted and Talented. All children from late Year 2 to Year 6 and any new enrolments are tested on the AGAT General Ability Test. Children who score within percentile 7,8 or 9 are then Tested on the Slossan Intelligence Test. Children who then score over 120 will be included in the Gifted and Talented program that runs one day per week. This program is a combination of an extension group for Mathematics, ‘Murder Under the Microscope’ and the CEO Stretching Potential through Learning in Interactive & Challenging Environments in the Diocese of Wollongong (SPLICED) program.

These children also form part of our Meeting Students Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) group, which includes children with special educational needs, as well as Pastoral and Behavioural needs. An MSPEC Committee has been formed and meets weekly to discuss the special needs of individual children and to devise learning plans to assist them to learn and to contribute successfully to the life of the school.

**Expanding Learning Opportunities**

The ‘Active Afternoon Sports Program’ funded by the Australian Sports Commission continued to be a well-attended and rewarding program at the school during 2014. St Thomas More students participated in free, fun, healthy, organised sports activity sessions, which
promote a healthy lifestyle, throughout seven weeks of each term. The inclusion of new activities, such as gymnastics and yoga, contributed to increased participation this year.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) needs were well catered for through weekly Physical Education lessons. All Years K to 6 children participated in the School Cross Country Carnival and the Annual Athletics Carnival held at Campbelltown Stadium. Year 3 to Year 6 children, and selected Year 2 children, participated in the Annual Swimming Carnival, which was held at Bradbury Swimming Centre.

Selection trials were held, and children were chosen, to represent St Thomas More Catholic Primary School at the Western Region Carnivals after each of these events.

Staff also prepared children for participation in a number of Diocesan and local sporting events including cricket, basketball, netball, soccer, and rugby league. A number of St Thomas More Catholic primary School students had the opportunity to represent at Diocesan, MacKillop and State level.

Year 5 and Year 6 children had the opportunity to participate in the School Public Speaking Competition, with one student being chosen to represent St Thomas More Catholic Primary School at the Annual Diocesan Regional Public Speaking Competition and he was placed second overall.

During 2014, the children had the opportunity to learn keyboard, guitar, singing or drums through the ‘Music Bus’ Program. This program has continued to gain popularity among the children. Children also participated in weekend competitions and concerts organised by the ‘Music Bus’ company.

‘The Christmas Story Art Competition and Exhibition’ invited children in Years 5 and 6 to express and use their artistic talents in a special competition coinciding with the Advent and Christmas season. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School was successful in having a number of entries displayed in the exhibition at the Wollongong Art Gallery.

Each grade had four opportunities during the year to demonstrate their learning for the school community through the leading of school assemblies. These assemblies were an opportunity to share the learning that had occurred at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. This year the talents of the St Thomas More School choir were showcased in an end of year assembly.

The School Choir and all Years K to 6 students participated in a wonderful Christmas Concert attended by approximately 1,000 parents and relatives in the latter weeks of the year. Bright colourful costumes, excellent dance choreography and enthusiastic singing enabled the school community to celebrate the true meaning of the Advent/Christmas season.
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

NAPLAN is implemented for students in Years 3 and 5 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.

In May 2014, the children in Year 3 and Year 5 sat the NAPLAN tests. There were fifty-three Year 3 and fifty-eight Year 5 students who sat these assessments. Overall, the students displayed growth in areas of literacy and numeracy.

The Year 3 and 5 cohorts performed better in spelling than reading. Our school target focus has been on reading and grammar and punctuation and significant learning gains have been reflected in the test results in these areas.

Year 3 performed well, achieving more band 3 and 4 results than the National average in reading, writing, grammar and numeracy.

Year 5 performed well, achieving more band 5 and 6 results than the National average in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy.

To continue this growth, the areas of reading, spelling, writing and numeracy will be areas of focus throughout the school in 2015.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2014: % 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><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
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<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>39%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>School</td>
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<td>53%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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) are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.
Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parents, carers, staff members and Years 4 and 6 students were surveyed to provide each group with the opportunity for input into areas affecting learning and teaching, and the general environment of the school. The information provided will be used to assist with future planning, improvements to policies and updating curriculum programs.

Parents

100% agreed that the school helps their child develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 95% agreed that the school provides various opportunities for parents/carers to become involved. 90% felt their child is challenged to maximise his/her learning outcomes. 85% felt the school strives to meet their child’s individual learning needs. 85% believe the school provides appropriate information about their child’s progress. 100% know that the school offers a range of co-curricular activities. 95% felt teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child. 90% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children. 95% believe the school effectively communicates information about activities and events.

Staff

100% of staff members agreed that the school helps students develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 90% felt that students understand their rights and responsibilities. 85% believe the school strives to meet the individual learning needs of students. 100% felt the school provides appropriate information to parents/carers about student progress. 95% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children.

Students

100% of students stated they were proud of their school. 90% think the school helps them understand their Catholic Faith. 90% of students believed their teacher encourages them to learn to the best of their ability. 100% of students stated that they understand their rights and responsibilities at school. 85% of students feel safe at school. 100% of students believe that if they had a problem at school, there are people who they can approach for help. 85% of students agreed there are sporting and other activities they can enjoy.