About This Report

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School, Thirroul is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) and managed by Catholic Education, Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW). The CEDoW 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 CEDoW. This Report has been approved by CEDoW to ensure compliance with all the 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 2016.

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

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School
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Thirroul NSW 2515
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Parish Priest: Father Patrick Vaughan and Father Ken Cafe
Principal: Danny Sykes
Date: 3 December 2015
Vision Statement

St Michael’s Catholic Parish Primary School:
Inspiring Excellence in Learning, Leading and Living the Faith.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal’s Message

There have been many notable events in 2015 at St Michael’s, however undoubtedly the highlight was the school’s 75th anniversary celebrations, held from the 4 – 8 August. Past and present students, parents and staff came together to give thanks by participating in week long events. Such as games and schooling from years gone by, an outdoor Mass conducted on the eve of Mary Mackillop’s Feast Day and an anniversary dinner, attended by over three hundred guests. Thanks should go to everyone involved with the school this year, especially our Parish Priest, for his valued support, the staff who worked with great dedication and the parent volunteers who gave generously of their time from the Parents and Friends’ Association (P&F)

The P&F has been extremely active in their support, having worked in close partnership with the school to raise funds to cater for the educational needs of the students. This Annual Report highlights the vibrant and enthusiastic St Michael’s school community, and harmonious partnership that is enjoyed between home, school and the Parish.

Parent Involvement

St Michael’s Catholic Primary Schools 75th anniversary year has been full and exciting. The Parents & Friends’ Association (P&F) has been involved in many great activities including; an entire school walk-a-thon which was a huge success, St Michael’s 75th anniversary year celebrations with a week full of activities for students and families alike. Giving everyone a taste of life when the school first opened its doors. The P&F greatly contributed, preparing a celebratory morning tea as well as involvement in organising a gala dinner, which brought together many past and present staff and students. The annual School Fete was held in October and brought together both the school and local community for a marvellous day of fun, food, and entertainment. Throughout the year, parent volunteers have helped host and been involved in events such as Kindergarten Orientation Day, annual Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day stalls and the Easter raffle. This commitment allowed the P&F to contribute to many worthwhile projects and build upon an already strong sense of community and pride. The P&F continued to play an active role in working alongside the school to create a positive learning environment and funding the resources needed to achieve it. P&F financial contributions included library, classroom and technology resources as well as sporting and music equipment. The P&F contributed to the ongoing beautification of the school grounds through regular working bees, as well as partly funding a Gymnastics program for the school. On behalf of the Parents & Friends Association, thank you to the whole school community on what has been another successful year.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

There have been many opportunities to practise student leadership this year at St Michael’s. The senior students were once again involved in Mini Vinnies and led the school in supporting the
less fortunate in the local community. As a school there were many activities held where students could play a vital leadership role. These included school discos, mufti days, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies, the Leadership and Technology Expo and the 75th anniversary celebrations. The Year 6 students took great pride in carrying out specific leadership roles such as managing the environment, speaking at assemblies, assisting teachers in organising liturgies and working with younger students to improve aspects of school life. It has been a privilege to be the school captains this year and it is great to be given so many opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills.

School Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Michael’s is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Thirroul. The school caters for students in years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 253 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 the early 1980’s, 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 educational practices are paramount and are a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, staff and parents.

Student Enrolments as at August 2015 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015 enrolments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE</td>
<td>0</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.smtdow.catholic.edu.au and the CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to this Policy in 2015.
### Student Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 Attendance</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>94.4%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>94.3%</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole school</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
<td>91.9%</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, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

Class teachers mark the roll every morning using the Sentral Attendance Module. Parents are expected to notify the school in writing (letter or email) of any absence. Phone calls are also acceptable - a form is completed by the person taking the phone call and all information is noted. All absence notes are filed. Unknown absences are followed up on a weekly basis via letters from the Sentral Attendance Module which are sent home for the parents to complete and return to school.

Parents must complete an Application for Leave form to apply for holiday leave between one and nine school days which is approved by the Principal. An Application for Extended Leave must be completed for leave between ten and one hundred school days. A Certificate for Extended Leave will be issued once approval has been granted by the Principal (for leave between ten and fifty days) or Head of School Improvement Services (for leave between fifty and one hundred days). For leave greater than one hundred school days an Application for Extended Leave must be completed and forwarded to the Minister for approval.

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 BOSTES requirements.

### Staffing Profile

There are a total of 17 teachers and 6 support staff at St Michael’s Catholic Primary School. This number includes 9 full-time, 8 part-time teachers.
**Teacher Standards**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* guidelines</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2015 was 98.2%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 95.8%.

**Professional Learning**

During 2015 St Michael’s personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement priorities. These included:

A. St Michael’s whole school development days involving (17) staff. These days focused on:
   - collaborative planning and policy review;
   - problem solving in Mathematics
   - staff spirituality, exploring the concept of “Presence”.

B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses:
   - Leading Australian Curriculum (11 staff)
   - Learning Technologies (11 staff)
   - Quality teaching in Numeracy (11 staff)
   - Staff training in the Disability Standards for Education (23 Staff)
   - Staff training in Child Protection and Harassment and Bullying (23 Staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was $312.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of $708.
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.

The school celebrates and maintains links with the Josephite Order who established the school in 1940. A strong focus is placed on Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop and her devotion to God as a role model for the staff and students. The whole community strives towards living and working within these values. 2015 was a significant year as the school celebrated the 75th anniversary of Catholic Education in Thirroul. With celebrations held over the course of a week, leading up to the Feast day of St Mary of the Cross on 8 August, the school, church, past students and staff, current staff, and wider community gathered to remember and celebrate the tireless work undertaken by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

To prepare for this celebratory week and as part of the school’s School Review and Improvement (SRI) goals, both staff and children immersed themselves into learning about the history of the school and its strong connection to Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph. This encompassed each Stage writing teaching and learning programs with particular foci and the designing and purchasing of resources to support the learning. In addition, personnel with either direct links to Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph were invited into the school to share with the staff and students their knowledge and understandings of the historical facts and memories of school life in the past and the great Josephite tradition. With this knowledge and understanding in place, the school replaced the name of Nazareth House to Fitzroy to reflect the early beginnings of Mary MacKillop’s life and to bring into alignment the direct association with Mary Mackillop, which the other three Sport Houses had in common.

St Michael’s Catholic Primary School’s Vision Statement underpins all that is done at the school. Students, staff and parents are committed to working and leading together in a positive Christian learning environment that reflects the Gospel values in the pursuit of excellence. With the schools’ Vision Statement, we are reminded to inspire excellence in Learning, Leading and Living the Faith. The Catholic values upheld in this vision are integrated across the curriculum. Religious Education (RE) is the pinnacle point of focus within the school and is taught daily and integrated in all aspects of daily life. The Diocese of Wollongong RE Curriculum is the endorsed curriculum for all Grades from Kindergarten to Year 6. All classrooms have a sacred space with Catholic icons including the use of liturgical colours, scripture and connections with the current RE modules taught.

Creating rich liturgical and prayer life as part of the RE of the students is the school’s core purpose. The school community comes together each morning to pray. The students attend and are involved in regular whole school Masses, liturgies and prayer services throughout the liturgical and school year. There are also opportunities for class Masses and prayer services. The students attend Parish Masses on a rostered and regular basis. Throughout the year, significant Church and community occasions were commemorated with special Masses, liturgies and assemblies. The school community celebrated with the Parish Priest the Opening School Mass and the Blessing of the Year 6 Leaders, the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and an End of Year School Mass. In addition, Liturgies of the Word were celebrated for Ash Wednesday, Catholic Schools Week and Mission Month. Each class also organised and presented a Liturgy of the Word.
for special feast days, Holy Week and Easter. Year 6 students joined with other Year 6 students and participated in a Year 6 Mass with Bishop Peter, which was held at St Therese Catholic Primary School, West Wollongong. The school participated and led commemoration services for Australian New Zealand Army Corp (ANZAC) Day and Remembrance Day, at the Thirroul Cenotaph with Thirroul Public School.

The Josephite Charism is embedded in many school learning and mission-related activities. It has helped students to feel a sense of belonging to a wider religious and faith community and to become involved in practices through which their faith is given practical expression. Through embracing the legacy of the foundress, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, “Never see a need without doing something about it,” St Michael’s continued to support those less fortunate by donating money, food and toiletries through a broad range of whole school activities. Many of these activities were a part of the generous support given to the 74 Mini Vinnies students. In Term 1 Mini Vinnies led the school through the collection of toiletries for the homeless and needy in the Illawarra area. As a result the school was able to fill 100 toilet bags valued at around $10 a bag, which were distributed immediately. In Term 3 as part of the St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal, the students created a pop art display of tinned food. This display was filled with tinned food, noodle cups, muesli bars and warm bedding. In addition, Mini Vinnies organised 3 cupcake stalls. $500 was raised, which was used to purchase doonas.

This year the children continued their connection with the global community through raising money for Caritas and Mission Month. These opportunities developed the children’s understanding of social justice issues. During October, the school supported the missions in Madagascar. The week commenced with a Liturgy of the Word. Through a fund-raising event and classroom donation boxes the children and their families raised $750.

The whole school community continued to model their Catholic values by supporting special fundraising activities including: Surf Life Saving - Boardies Day ($200), Bishop’s Vanuatu Appeal ($300) and Project Compassion ($2,416). In addition, at all school Masses food items were collected for the local St Vincent de Paul Society to distribute to the needy of the Parish. The year ended with a large St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal which comprised of food items and a $300 donation through the selling of Christmas cards depicting photographs of the Christmas Competition entries for Years 5-6.

The School supports the Sacraments of Initiation (Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation) within the Parish. The school and parents worked together to prepare children for these Sacraments. Further efforts were made during the year to connect with Catholic families and maximise their participation in the school. The school provided material for parents and community members in the newsletter each fortnight, which focused on faith formation.

Many teachers attended the Annual Diocesan Staff Mass at St John Vianney Co-Cathedral. Staff members were given further opportunity to develop their own spiritual formation through attendance at Diocesan-based courses and a number have commenced the Lamplighters and Shining Lights program. This program has been extended to all staff members through bi-weekly communal prayer opportunities. This year’s Staff Spirituality Day focussed on the Lamplighter capacity of “Presence”.
Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment framework of Knowing, Working with, Applying and Valuing the Tradition informs and shapes assessment in RE across K-6 with a focussed system collection of data in Year 4. The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2015. The school cohort in 2015 consisted of 29 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 24 August and 30 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was 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 Michael’s Catholic Parish Primary School achieved pleasing results in the 2015 Religious Literacy Assessment, especially in the Part B component. St Michael’s performance in most sections of Part A was above the Diocesan average, whilst performance in Part B was significantly above the Diocesan average. The overall combination of both Part A and B placed St Michael’s above the Diocesan average.

Students showed a high level of performance in their knowledge of the religious tradition. This high level of performance was particularly noticeable in their responses to questions based on:

- retelling the key events of the Ascension and Pentecost;
- identifying Jesus’ example of service to others; and
- identifying the season of Lent as a preparation for Holy Week and Easter.

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:

- name the Trinity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and
- identify the 3 Sacraments of Initiation.

Part B, The Extended Task consisted of one main task with four components, the focus derived from the Year 4 unit One With God’s Creation. Students planned, drafted and put considerable time and effort into their project. Students found this task to be a valuable and challenging learning experience. Students were enthusiastic and produced some excellent products including works of art, IT presentations, storybooks, posters, and sculptures.

For Part A, 6.9% of students were placed in the developing band, 69% in the achieving band and 24.1% in the extending band for Religious Literacy.

For Part B, 6.7% of students were placed in the developing band, 50.0% in the achieving band and 43.3% in the extending band for Religious Literacy.

Overall, 3.4% of students were placed in the developing band, 62.1% in the achieving band and 34.5% in the extending band 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 2015**

- **Key Area 1 Catholic Life and Religious Education**
  1.4 Parents, Parishes and the Broader Church

  Goal: Throughout the year the school community celebrated the history of St Michael’s School and learnt about the contributions of the Sisters of St Joseph.

- **Key Area 2: Students and Their Learning**
  2.1 Educational Potential

  Goal: Data was used consistently by teachers to track, monitor and review student progress and to inform the teaching and learning cycle

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

  Goal: Students were involved in the ongoing cycle of assessment, evaluation and reporting through the use of data notebooks.

- **Key Area 2: Students and Their Learning**
  2.5 Pastoral Care

  Goal: The school formed a staff Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) Committee to assist teachers in supporting students with academic, behavioural and pastoral needs.

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  3.7 Professional Learning

  Goal: A culture of quality teaching was promoted through the conducting of teaching rounds, which provided staff collegial feedback.

- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finances and Facilities**
  5.3 Environmental Stewardship

  Goal: Teachers promoted environmental stewardship with their students through the teaching of various Religious Education and Science and Technology units.

- **Key Area 6 Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**
  6.3 Linkages with the Wider Community

  Goal: Parents were supported in the implementation of *The Leader in Me* student leadership program in the home.
School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2016:

- **Key Area 1 Catholic Life and Religious Education**
  1.3 Catholic Life and Culture
  
  Goal: Regular experiences which strengthen staff spirituality and prayer life will be explored throughout the year.

- **Key Area 2: Students and Their Learning**
  2.1 Educational Potential
  
  Goal: Key elements of being a Professional Learning Community will be implemented at a staff level.

- **Key Area 2: Students and Their Learning**
  2.4 Integration of Information and Communication Technology
  
  Goal: An innovative approach in using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will be used to improve contemporary student learning.

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  3.3 Teaching Practices
  
  Goal: A whole-school pedagogical approach to teaching numeracy will be developed.

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
  3.7 Professional Learning
  
  Goal: Teachers will set goals and reflect on pedagogical practice as outlined in the Diocesan Performance and Development Plan (PDP).

- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finances and Facilities**
  5.2 Use of Resources and Space
  
  Goal: An outdoor toilet block will be constructed in order to cater for the increased school enrolment.

- **Key Area 7 Strategic Leadership and Management**
  7.1 Planning for Improvement
  
  The implementation of *The Leader in Me* will be reviewed in order to ensure that it reflects best practice.

**Financial Summary**

During 2015 the school purchased 35 iPads for use in the Kindergarten, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 classrooms. This project was financed with the assistance of the P&F Association. The school committed funds to the purchase of new curriculum resources for each class. Once again, the school funded the Community Sport program which enabled students from Years 3 - 6 to experience sports in the local area including; tennis, lawn bowls and dancing during terms 2 and
3. Replacement soft-fall bark for the playground equipment and ongoing tree maintenance program was financed with the assistance of St Michael’s Parish School Enhancement and Debt Servicing Obligation (SEDSO) funds.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Michael’s Catholic Primary School, Thirroul for the year ended 31 December 2015. This data is taken from the 2015 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.

**Student Welfare**

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 was heavily promoted throughout the year especially through the continued implementation of “The Leader in Me” Program. In Term 4, Peer Support groups were conducted with the special focus placed on friendships. The Year 6 students formed leadership groups in the following areas - public speaking, the environment, fund raising, playground, student voice and liturgy. Assemblies were conducted by student leaders and other initiatives such as organising school discos and coordinating school environmental practices were the responsibility of the Year 6 students. The school’s Buddy System also worked effectively this year with the Year 5 students helping Kindergarten children settle into school life.

A CatholicCare counsellor attended the school, 3 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 many ways including via the school newsletter and at assemblies. An Awards Assembly was held each Friday to celebrate individual student success. All children had the opportunity to earn a range of awards from Superstar Awards through to a St Michael’s Blue Medallion. Students who were seen to be regularly living The 7 Habits were presented with leadership awards.

This year St Michael’s School continued the School-Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Program (SPB4L). 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. The school’s (SPB4L) policy clearly outlines the school’s approach to ensuring that all students are safe and that the school rules: Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other and Take Care of this Place are well understood and followed by all students.

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 CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2015.

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 committed to ensuring a whole school approach to quality learning and teaching. This year there was a significant focus on numeracy and the effective pedagogy that underpins a quality numeracy session K-6. There was a high level of professional collaboration across all Stages of learning, creating consistency in practice and understanding.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

Syllabus implementation

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. This year saw the consolidation of the Mathematics and English implementation, with teachers enhancing their understanding of the integrity of the syllabuses. The implementation of the new NSW Board of Studies Australian Curriculum for Science and Technology began this year. This was supported by ongoing professional development, which allowed teachers to explore the principles of thinking scientifically in more depth. 2016 will see
the implementation of the new NSW Board of Studies Australian Curriculum for History and Geography.

Assessment and reporting

In 2015, St Michael’s continued to implement assessment and reporting procedures, which complied with Federal Government requirements. Student reports contained the common grade scale with comment options for Religious Education, English and Mathematics, as well as a general comment. Reports were distributed at the end of Term 2 and Term 4 with parent/teacher interviews held late in Term 2 and an opportunity provided at the end of Term 4.

2015 saw the continuation and consolidation of practices explored in the previous year across all Stages. Through the use of data notebooks, students were encouraged to self-assess their own learning and set goals which were reflective of their learning journey.

Integration

Integration across the KLAs is an effective strategy to address multiple outcomes and make explicit connections with the student’s learning. Authentic integration at St Michael’s was implemented across the Grades in particular in Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) and English. This enabled teachers to provide a variety of quality learning experiences that were connected to real life situations.

Technology supporting learning

Staff commitment to use technology as a tool to enhance student learning and knowledge production was evidenced through the continuation of the Stage 3, 1:1 iPad Program. The success of this program was recognised by Apple and as such became an Apple Distinguished Program. This affiliation with Apple provides ongoing professional support and access to Apple’s 5 Best Practices which helps to inform our future directions and goals.

In addition to the 1:1 iPad Program, pods of five iPad minis were allocated to each class, from Kindergarten to Year 4. Together with the larger pod of 16 iPads which are stored in the library and are available for use in all classrooms, teachers and students had greater access to iPad technologies during the year. Teachers used a wide variety of creativity and productivity apps to enhance the learning of students across all KLAs.

An innovative student leadership program was developed to support technology initiatives. Nine Stage 3 students formed the TECHspert team. These TECHsperts were each allocated to a class from Kindergarten to Year 4 as well as the library. Their responsibilities included updating iPads, troubleshooting and supporting the class teacher with any requests. Recognising and valuing the technological expertise of these students has empowered them with authentic leadership that they have accepted and applied with professionalism.

A technology team, comprising teachers and a parent representative, was also formed this year. The team was committed to ensuring the SRI goals were achieved as well as developing future goals to ensure technology continues to support and enhance the learning of all students.

To showcase the learning that occurs through the use of technology, an IT Expo, We Lead...We Learn, was held in conjunction with the annual Leadership Day. Parents, community representatives and visitors were invited into Stage 3 classes to observe learning with iPads in
action, including the use of Work-Flow to represent the learning process. An IT Expo was then facilitated by the TECHsperts and nominated class leaders to demonstrate the learning with technology that has occurred in each class throughout the year.

**Cross Curriculum**

*Literacy strategies*

Literacy continued to be a priority at St Michael’s in 2015, ensuring quality daily practice across all Stages. This year teachers continued to use the Literacy Continuum to monitor and track student progress in literacy. A significant part of Book Week celebrations at St Michael’s was the involvement of all students in literacy-based experiences involving short listed texts. There was a day of rotations as well as an opportunity for all students to visit the local community library. In 2015 St Michael’s once again participated in the Premier’s Reading Challenge. The experience encouraged students’ love of reading and provided an opportunity for students to participate in a state-wide initiative.

*Numeracy strategies*

Numeracy was a significant focus area at St Michael’s in 2015. The school implemented a school-based initiative which involved two leadership team members working with teachers in the classroom to further enhance pedagogy. There was ongoing professional learning focused on quality practice in numeracy. This was used to inform and guide quality teaching rounds throughout the year.

A data wall was established with the focus on place value and monitoring student progress. Intervention plans and learning plans were designed to address the needs of the students that were identified from the data. In addition, a parent workshop was conducted as well as a Numeracy Fun Day for the students. The parent workshop was an opportunity to inform parents about the strategic approach to the initiative and celebrate progress. The student fun day had a focus on investigative tasks and problem solving. The students enjoyed collaborating to solve their Maths tasks.

**Meeting the Needs of All Students**

The diversification of learning at St Michael’s continued to be a priority during the year. Learning is diversified through the daily delivery of the curriculum using the explicit teaching model: guided, modelled and independent teaching. Using assessment data that identifies students’ knowledge and skills the explicit teaching model ensures the learning needs of all students are met. Self-directed learning opportunities are also provided in varied forms including Personalised Interest Projects (PIPs) and through Challenge/Problem Based Learning models.

Where the needs of students require further support Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) are designed, implemented and monitored. PLPs are developed to target the precise needs of students in literacy and numeracy as well as for students identified as Gifted. PLPs are informed and evaluated through the analysis of student assessment data.

Throughout the year identified students in Stages 2 and 3 were provided with the opportunity to participate in the Wollongong Diocesan Gifted Education Program - *Stretching Potential Through Learning in Interactive and Challenging Environments (SPLICE)*. Identification of Year 3 students requiring support in the area of Gifted Education occurred during Term 3 with the administering of the Australian Council For Educational Research (ACER) General Ability Test (AGAT). As per
school policy, students who scored highly on this test then sat the SLOSSON Assessment. The results of this assessment then identified students requiring a PLP.

Students were offered various other opportunities to extend their learning including participation in:

- University of NSW Competitions
- WRITE On competition
- Holiday workshops at the University of Wollongong
- Diocesan Sport Gala Days
- Diocesan Swimming, Cross Country and Athletic Carnivals

A new process for monitoring the behavioural, pastoral and academic needs of students was introduced this year. The Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MSPEC) Team was formed to provide systematic and effective support for students referred to this team. The Team met once per week and provided advice and support to classroom teachers regarding specific needs of students. Specific goals were set to support these students and their progress was monitored at following MSPEC meetings. When required, professional advice was sought to inform decision-making and the design of learning plans for specific students, including psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and specialist Diocesan Education Officers. A school counsellor also provided specialist support to identified students once per week.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

Throughout the year students were offered various opportunities to expand their learning across academic, sporting and artistic domains. The school choir and band continued to provide musical opportunities with the students displaying their talents at a number of performances including at the Northern Illawarra Combined Schools Showcase. Further opportunities for students to display their talents were provided through the annual talent quest in Term 4.

Year 5 and 6 students entered the Diocese of Sydney Christmas Art Competition with 3 students having their artworks represented at the final judging in Sydney.

For the first time this year a team of Stage 3 students participated in the Da Vinci Decathlon. This academic competition is designed to challenge and stimulate the thinking of students across 10 disciplines including Engineering, Mathematics, Code Breaking, Art, Poetry, Science, English and Philosophy. Our team of 8 students, and 2 reserves, competed superbly winning the English, Mathematics, Science and General Knowledge disciplines and placing third in Art and Poetry.

All students participated in the annual class and school public speaking competitions. School representatives gained placings in the Regional Public Speaking Competition, qualifying for the Diocesan public speaking final where the Year 6 student achieved first place.

Students from Years 1 to Years 6 were involved in a Friday chess competition against several schools in the Illawarra.

The students participated in a wide range of sporting activities at school, Diocesan, Regional and MacKillop levels. A highlight of the sporting events this year was the Cross Country team placing second at the Diocesan Carnival. Four students also received medallions at the annual Diocesan
Sports Awards in November. Throughout the year, various school carnivals were conducted including swimming, cross country and athletics. These events encouraged maximum student participation and developed community spirit.

All classes attended excursions during the year which enhanced students’ in-school learning. Places visited included Canberra, Mary MacKillop Place, the Buddhist Temple and Wollongong Botanic Gardens.

**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 2015 students in Years 3 and 5 at St Michael’s Catholic Parish School achieved a high standard of results in all aspects of NAPLAN. In Year 3, 100% of students were either at or above the National Minimum Standard for both literacy and numeracy. Year 3 achieved well above the State average in all aspects of NAPLAN with particular strength in reading, writing and numeracy. In Year 5, 98% also achieved at or above National Minimum standard across all components in literacy and 100% in numeracy. Year 5 results were above the State average in reading and writing.

NAPLAN results were released in September and parents were given the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their child’s results with the class teacher. The data was analysed and shared at a whole school level, focusing on the strengths and areas for improvement. As a result goals and targets were created for 2016 with an emphasis on all students achieving their expected learning gain as well as a focus on problem solving strategies in numeracy.
Student Achievement in Bands

Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2015: % 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>School</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>17%</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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN 2015: % 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>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>96%</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>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction**

At the end of the 2015 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.

**Parents**

All parents were given the opportunity to respond to the survey. Respondents agreed that the school helped the students develop a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic tradition. They also believed that opportunities were provided for parents to be involved. They confirmed that the school provides a safe and supportive environment and that the teachers were genuinely interested in the welfare of each child. A small group of parents indicated that they would like more information about their child’s progress. A small group also believed that the school should do more in challenging students to maximise learning outcomes.
Students
In December students from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 were surveyed. There were seven questions in the survey covering areas such as teacher encouragement, opportunities for involvement and whether they felt safe at school. The students agreed that they knew their rights and responsibilities. Students also stated that the school helped them gain an understanding of the Catholic faith and they were proud of their school. A small group of students indicated that they were unsure of whom to approach for help if they had a problem.

Staff
An analysis of the responses 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 also believed that the school helped students develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition.