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

Principal’s Message
St Mary’s Star of the Sea Milton in 2007 continued to place strong emphasis on Catholic identity and traditions. The school contributed to the religious, social and academic growth of students through staff commitment to provision of quality learning and teaching programs, peer support structures and community connections. The Catholicity of St Mary’s is reflected in the links that are developed between the school and the Parish community. Prominent in this focus is the learning and teaching of Religious Education, the planning and involvement of the school community in liturgical celebrations and the involvement of staff members in personal and professional learning experiences aimed at continuing their spiritual formation and growth. The school community has appreciated the support of our Parish Priest and would like to recognise his involvement in the liturgical life of the school.

Parent Involvement
P&F Association has continued to work to promote the school and provide financial assistance. Parents have participated in Working Bees and Community Spirit Picnic, Fundraisers included: raffles, stalls, walk athon, chocolate drive and cinema nights. These events are facilitated by P&F and enjoyed by all families. Parents also assisted with the running of carnivals and supported students who represented the school at Diocesan levels. Students are fortunate to have regular parent support in their classrooms as they listen to children read and help with maths activities. Parish events are enhanced by the involvement of the school P&F.

Student Leadership
Year Six students provided an excellent standard of leadership through Peer Support, Whole School Assemblies and Rock & Water. Being strong role models was a focus of leadership and running the Assemblies helped us with public speaking, to delegate jobs, to be diligent, organised and reverent. Positions of leadership helped us be the best people we could be. We had portfolios in Class Parliament. During Assemblies we presented Ministerial Statements. Each morning we raised our School flag, the Australian and Indigenous flags, prayed and sang the anthem as part of our civic responsibility.

School Profile
St Mary’s Star of the Sea was founded by the Sisters of St Joseph in 1913. It is situated on a beautiful setting on the northern outskirts of Milton overlooking the town to the south, the peaceful rural landscape to the west and north-west and views to the sea in the east. The school is a one stream school serving the communities of Milton and Ulladulla. Approval for major capital works refurbishments has been gained. The capital works will begin in the early months of 2008. Plans include expanding some classrooms, provision for a covered outdoor learning area, new administration area, an interview room and student infirmary. Federal Government Green Voucher to the value of $50 000 has been approved for the purpose of reusing and storing water and installing solar water heating. The school will use this grant to upgrade all the student bathrooms with dual flush cisterns, child size pans, and solar hot water for hand basins and shower. A water tank will be installed in-ground.
Student Enrolments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>158</td>
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Student Attendance for 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staffing Profile

The staff consists of the Principal, seven full time teachers and three part time teachers. The Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator and Coordinator work together as the Leadership Team. The three part-time teachers are the specialist support staff and teach Music, Indonesian, Library and Special Education. There are five School Support staff. In addition to the primary teaching qualifications the staff at St Mary’s hold many post graduate degrees and diplomas. Seven teachers have Post graduate Diplomas in specialist areas. Four teachers have Degrees in Arts, Education and Applied Science. Two teachers are currently studying to hold their Masters of Religious Education, Theology and Leadership. Five teachers are Reading Recovery trained. All teachers hold qualifications in Religious Education while three teachers have Diplomas in Catechetics. Two teachers have their Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). All teachers have current First Aid and Anaphylactic certificates. Three teachers have completed Diversifying Learning Experiences K-12 Course, one teacher completed the Quality Literacy and Numeracy Course. Three School Supports Officers provide extra support for students K–6 in Numeracy and Literacy. At the end of 2007 13% of the total staff will be leaving St Mary’s and moving on to other employment. The average daily staff attendance rate for 2007 was 94%.

Teacher Standards

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

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

* Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition

Professional Learning

During 2007, St Mary’s Star of the Sea personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

These included:

A. St Mary’s whole school development days involved 9 members of staff:
   - Gifted Education Module 1 & 2
   - Values Education Kevin Treston
   - Learning to Think, Thinking to Learn – Michael Pohl

B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses in 2007:
   - Professional Conduct & Child Protection (all staff)
   - Certificate of Special Education (ASD) (1 teacher)
   - TEACHnology Primary (1 teacher)
   - Diversifying Learning Experiences K-12 (2 teachers)
   - Quality Literacy and Numeracy (2 teachers)
   - Certificate in Special Education (ASD) (1teacher)
   - BST data analysis Term 2 (2 teachers)
   - BST data analysis Term 4 (2 teachers)
   - Diversifying the Curriculum (2 teachers)
   - ACER (Australian Council of Educational Research) Conference (Principal)
   - ACEL (Australian Council of Educational Leadership) Conference (Principal)
- CPA Catholic Principals Association Conference (Principal)
- UOW Leadership Conference (2 teachers)
- Seasons for Growth re connector (Principal)
- ICLT Information Communication Learning Technology Conference (1 teacher)
- Mathematics Assoc NSW Conference (5 teachers)
- Professional Assault Response Training (4 staff)
- Berakah Spirituality Course (3 teachers)
- Call to Life Spirituality Course (1 teacher)
- Learning Communities Project (all staff)
- myclasses (9 staff)
- Values Education (all staff)
- Gifted Education (9 teachers)
- Anaphylaxis Training (all staff)
- Mathematics – Anita Chinn (4 staff)
- Newcastle Uni Rock & Water (Principal).

School based expenditure on professional learning in 2007 was $5,740. This is in addition to expenditure on professional learning opportunities provided by the Catholic Education office.

**Culture of the Catholic School**

Early in the year, staff of St Mary’s met with other Catholic School staff for the annual Shoalhaven Catholic Schools Mass. We have continued to develop links with the Parish and the wider local communities. Monthly Parish Masses are attended by school families and followed by BBQ & hospitality. Senior Parishioners remain part of the daily life of the school. Parish and school events have been promoted in both newsletters, particularly WYD08 events. St Mary’s plays a key role in the Parish Liturgical celebrations of Lent, Easter and Christmas. A member of the Parish and school staff come together to implement the Sacramental Programs. Children held many activities to raise money for Caritas, Catholic Mission and the Good Samaritan Rural Outreach Program in WA. Mission, Vocations, NAIDOC Week and St Mary’s Feast Day celebrations have remained focal points in the school year. Local community members, guest speakers and Indigenous Dance performers from St John’s played key roles in these celebrations.

Staff organise weekly prayer meetings, attend Staff Spirituality opportunities, three staff members participated in the Berakah Spirituality and one teacher in the Call to Life course this year. School leaders are supported to actively engage in public prayer and liturgical celebrations.

**Student Welfare**

A range of pastoral care initiatives have been continued for students at St Mary’s. Buddy Classes are established between Year Five and Kindergarten. New Kindergarten children come to school to “Get Started” play sessions and Orientation Day. Seasons Program is conducted for students and/or adults experiencing grief and loss in their lives. School has a Student Welfare Committee for students needing extra support to maintain their positive action plan. The Centacare school counsellor visits the school once a fortnight and plays a vital role in the pastoral care and well being of students, parents and staff.

The focus of our Behaviour Management Policy is to develop and reinforce positive behaviours. Part of the students welfare policy has been to implement the Peer Support Program to increase self esteem. Year 5 & 6 have also been involved in the Rock & Water Program which also addresses self esteem.

A Special Education Support teacher and Four School Support Officers provide extra support in Numeracy and Literacy for students who currently attract Student with Disability funding and also work in small groups with students who may have learning needs.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment, characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. Any parent, student or community member who has a complaint or grievance has the right to have this addressed. The key elements of the school’s Complaints Handling procedure and what a community member may do if they have a complaint are detailed in the Diocesan Policy Document. The Complaints and Grievances Procedures can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: www.ceowoll.catholic.edu.au then go to the link Policies. This Policy may also be found on the school’s website: www.sos.woll.catholic.edu.au
The Parish made a financial contribution of $5,000 towards the existing building loan. In conjunction with their annual $4,000 contribution, the P&F Association contributed financial support to the school in the following ways:

- $9,870 for Shade Sail over playground equipment,
- $1,056 associated expense with playground upgrade of turf & bark chips
- $430 Stage 3 excursion
- $675 World of Maths Presentation
- $300 Outdoor Chess Set
- $860 Library books
- $1,000 construction & cover of sandpit and play things for Stage 1

In total the P&F contributed $19,191 towards the needs of the students at St Mary’s.

SEDSO funds were utilised for the repayment of the school loan, some ongoing maintenance, surveying expenses associated with the erection of the school security fence and the construction of a safety fence above the retaining wall bordering the multi purpose court, which completed our investing in our School’ Project from 2006.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Marys Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School for the year ended 31 December 2007. This data is taken from the 2007 financial return to the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
Learning & Teaching

Introduction

Learning and teaching at St Mary’s Star of the Sea, is delivered in an environment that is characterised by the integration of Gospel values and development of the whole person within a Catholic school. There is a range of curriculum opportunities that reflect an awareness of the individual learning and pastoral needs of students and a willingness to meet these needs. Staff are developing a learning culture characterised by dialogue and sharing professional learning.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

There are a range of initiatives to support the development of Religious Education, Literacy, Numeracy and other Key Learning Areas through the use of Board of Studies Curriculum Documents K –6 and Religious Education Curriculum Documents K-6. Students in Year 4 sat the Religious Literacy Assessment, a joint project between the Catholic Education Office Wollongong and the Australian Catholic University. Staff continue to develop Literacy and Numeracy Plans which include professional learning, intervention and support and parent education.

An important aspect of our Catholic identity is that we provide tuition for the children who are ready to prepare for Sacramental Programs. These are Parish based and children meet with students from Milton PS, Ulladulla PS and Shoalhaven Anglican College after school for tuition. Sacramental preparation includes Penance, First Eucharist and Confirmation.

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

Staff are developing Scope & Sequences with planned Assessments in order to build a continuum of learning for K – 6 across all Key Learning Areas including a process of review.

Class teachers and the Leadership Team maintain Review Committee processes that support and monitor the literacy and numeracy needs of students. Leadership Team initiates and monitors Case Management for students with special needs. Implementation of Reading Recovery includes the maintenance of ongoing monitoring of ex reading recovery students up to an including Year 4.

Learning Technology remains a priority for the school as students utilise Information Technology as tools to support their learning and enhance their education. During 2007 St Mary’s purchased 10 new laptops and 4 new desktop computers. Students have access to two mobile pods of laptops (21 computers), making it possible for all students to use the technology when appropriate for research and learning. While using the technology students are provided with the opportunities to become proficient at using a diverse range of software applications. This enables students to research and express their new knowledge in a variety of ways.

Cross-Curriculum

During 2007 St Mary’s has continued implementing a Learning Community Project with the financial and planning assistance of the Catholic Education Office. This project develops a collaborative approach to planning integrated units of work that are taught in all Stage levels.

A whole school plan for the monitoring of reading continues to be implemented and new reading resources to support guided and independent reading programs have been purchased for Stage 2. Assessment methods for all writing text types have been further developed and these assessments provide valuable feedback used to inform teaching. Students have participated in Public Speaking and debating at school, community and regional levels.

Numeracy remains a high priority at St Mary’s and the staff has continued be in-serviced with other schools. Five staff members participated in the University of Wollongong Maths Conference. Students are using Count Me In Too maths games and assessment tools to enhance their understanding of Maths concepts and support the Mathematics Curriculum K-6.

Indigenous Education was further developed in 2007. St Mary’s staff reviewed cross curriculum content in accordance with the implementation of Diocesan Policy, celebrated NAIDOC week with members of the local community and representatives of Land Care and the St John the Evangelist High School Indigenous Dancers – many of whom are ex St Mary’s students. Land Care volunteer group, along with students took to maintaining the bush Tucker garden and planting more native plants. All students in the school have spent
time weeding, planting trees and vegetables with the Land Care Volunteer Group. The mosaic stepping stones made by Indigenous students will be relocated to enhance an Indigenous garden at the new school entry in 2008 as part of the school refurbishment plan.

**Meeting the needs of all Students**

Our School Library provides the staff and students with educational resources supporting individual interest and needs. The standard of literature and other resources available is of high quality. The Teacher Librarian plans collaboratively with teachers to ensure a rich learning environment. Most students completed the Premier’s Reading Challenge this year and the volume of books being borrowed from the Library increased. There has been a substantial increase in the number of literacy resources available in all Stages. Teacher resources have been upgraded to support diversified learning.

Indonesian continues to be taught at St Mary’s to all students from K-6. Lessons focus on language and cultural studies of our nearest neighbour in a positive and meaningful way.

Students participated in Clean Up Australia, World Environment Day, National Tree Day and the local Land Care assisted students by planting boundary gardens.

Students enjoyed participating in the Active After School Communities (AASC) program. Parents were informed via the P&F about the focus of AASC which is fun, inclusive, safe and high intensity – “Play for Life”. We have gained valuable sporting resources and students have access to quality programs and equipment.

**Expanded Learning Opportunities**

St Mary’s students participate in a number of formal and informal competitions. Formal competitions were the UNSW Education and Testing competitions in English, Writing and Spelling, Maths, Science and Computer Studies. Students received Distinction, Credit and Participation Awards. The local and wider community competitions were: Australian Bush Poetry Society Recitation Competition, Nestle Write Around Australia Competition, Milton Scarecrow Competition, TolR8 Competition and Gingerbread House Building Competition for World Youth Day WYD08.

Year 5 & 6 students are involved in Class Parliament. Student leaders are elected along parliamentary lines in order to actively involve them in the democratic process of elections.

Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister are elected, sports house captains and ministerial positions, eg Ministers for the School Environment, Ministers for Media, Ministers for Sport and Recreation are also elected. Students conduct House of Representative Parliamentary Sittings throughout the year with important issues or changes discussed, being taken to the Principal (Senate) for consideration.

During December children performed on two occasions in the local community at the Village Green in Milton. Kindergarten students recited poetry at the Breaking Ground ceremony for the Cancer Care Centre Milton. These are excellent opportunities to promote St Mary’s school community spirit.

All students participated in the local community Arts Fest during the winter months. Children competed in the Australian Bush Poetry recitations. Some children wrote their own poems to recite. St Mary’s is very closely linked with the local community through the neighbouring schools, preschools, high schools, local businesses and local council.

St Mary’s offers students the opportunities of a specialist Music Program. All students have curriculum based music lessons and individual students choose to learn a musical instrument in small groups. This year, students from Year 5 & 6 performed in the local community as an ensemble on numerous occasions.

Staff and students are working through Gifted Education professional development in order to provide the best learning opportunities for all students. Parents are invited to join the teachers as they further their knowledge and understanding of gifted children.

St Mary’s offers a wide range of sporting choices. Students participate in the South Coast Swim trials, MacKillop Swimming Championships, MacKillop Cricket Championships, MacKillop Tennis Championships. Cross Country and Wollongong Diocesan Athletics and Gala Days in Soccer, Basketball and Netball. Students participated in St Mary’s Sports Carnivals and Intensive Swimming Program in Term 4.

Excursions at our school enrich and supplement the curriculum with relevant learning experiences. Children visited; Mogo Zoo, Ulladulla Harbour, Booderee National Park, Jervis Bay Dolphin Watch, Berry Sport and Recreation Camp and the LandCare Nursery.
**Student Achievement**

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, portfolios, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the state-wide literacy and numeracy testing program 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.

**Basic Skills Test**

There were 24 Year 3 and 20 Year 5 students who sat for the 2007 Basic Skills Test. Year 3 is reported in Bands 1-5; Year 5 in Bands 1-6, with Bands 5 and 6 respectively being the highest.

**Year 3**

Literacy: 25% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 48% of students in Band 4 and 5. The best performance was in Writing, followed by Language.

Numeracy: 52% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 26% of students in Band 4 and 5. The best performance was in Measurement and Data, followed by Space and Geometry.

**Year 5**

Literacy: 6% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 45% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Writing, followed by Reading.

Numeracy: 5% of students were in Bands 1 and 2, with 40% of students in Bands 5 and 6. The best performance was in Number, followed by Measurement.

**Satisfaction Surveys**

Results of surveys show the majority of parents believe the school provides various opportunities for them to be involved, teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of each child and the students are proud of their school. The school can work towards providing parents with appropriate information about their children and the students would like further help in their understanding of the Catholic faith.

**National Benchmarks**

The table below indicates as a percentage the Year 3 and Year 5 of students achieving the national benchmarks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 3 2005</th>
<th>Year 3 2006</th>
<th>Year 3 2007</th>
<th>Year 5 2005</th>
<th>Year 5 2006</th>
<th>Year 5 2007</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: National Benchmarks not included have not yet been published
School Renewal Priorities

The School Renewal Plan is designed to focus our actions to bring about positive change and growth. The following have been identified as key focus areas for the school during the current cycle of this plan. The School Renewal Plan generally sets directions for a period of 3 – 5 years. It is subject to regular evaluations.

Key features of the current School Renewal Plan 2007 – 2008 include:

- The development of a positive learning and teaching community through planned professional development, relevant curriculum integration, the provision of authentic learning experiences which meet the needs of all students and enhance their learning outcomes
- Continued development of quality literacy and numeracy programs across all stages
- Further development of the important role of ICLT within all Key Learning Areas
- Continued development of school facilities to meet the educational needs of students

Progress in 2007 Towards Achievements of School Renewal Plan

- Further development and refinement of School Professional Development plans
- Complete and implement school Scope and Sequence including Assessment Plans for each KLA K-6
- Develop a whole school plan for Numeracy
- Data analysis and implementation into Literacy and Numeracy programs
- Relevant Professional Development and allocation of class resources to Literacy and Numeracy
- Begin implementation of the new School Review and Improvement model
- Purchase of new laptops to be used within each Key Learning Area
- Re-submission of the Block Grant Application to provide funds to enhance the physical aspects of the school and create appropriate indoor and outdoor general learning areas

Priorities for 2008

- Learning and Teaching: to implement a new Learning Community Project which provides analysis of Basic Skills data and differentiated curriculum implementation to best meet the needs of all students particularly those requiring specific support in literacy and numeracy
- Complete Scope & Sequence with Assessment Plans as a working document
- Complete Gifted Education Modules 3 & 4 include interested parents
- Revisit Homework Policy and Behaviour Management Policy
- Continue the implementation of the new School Review and Improvement model
- Work towards completion of refurbishment through public discernment meetings and Block Grant Authority

The information in this report has been verified and the priorities endorsed by the Director of Schools and the Head of School Services.

[Signatures]

Peter Turner
Director of Schools

Hetty Petre
Principal