

St Brigids Primary School Coonamble  
Annual School Report to the Community  
2014



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**Principal**

Mrs Gai Gilmour

### Principal's Message

The strong Brigidine history of St Brigid's is reflected in the school's motto of Strength and Gentleness. This is also a guiding principle in the education of students at our school. St Brigid's strives to maintain a community focus, which encompasses the students, staff, parents and carers of our school. Students are encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability and this is reflected in the results achieved throughout 2014. The staff of the school are professional and at all times work towards achieving the best outcomes for students. The focus is primarily on student learning. In 2014 the school focussed on developing a Professional Learning Community which supports the development of curriculum and the introduction of the new Board of Studies Syllabi. Once again in 2014 the St Brigid's Parents and Friends Association were very active and supportive in all areas of school life. We thank them for their enthusiasm and hard work in supporting our school. Gai Gilmour Principal

### Parent Body Message

What another fantastic year for St Brigid's Parents and Friends. I would like to once again thank everyone for their commitment and help along the way.

Some highlights for the year included a very successful P&F Disco for the students that was well attended and a great night enjoyed by everyone with a fluro theme. Our major fundraiser for the year was the Walkathon and as usual our kids didn't disappoint with an amazing record breaking total of \$8000 raised. To end the year an 80/90's Music Trivia Night which was a great success with the venue bulging at the seams to hold a very enthusiastic crowd who thoroughly enjoyed herself.

Of course our commitment to the school and our children continued as we funded equipment and resources for direct use of the students. Highlights of these included major funding towards computers and ipads. We were very pleased to fund the infants sound systems and further resources to the amount of \$10000. Further funding towards the end of the year saw us purchase both netball and football uniforms, a new softball kit and a new cricket pitch.

Mark Hoath

### Student Body Message

Our motto is 'strength and gentleness' and students always have respect our school motto by having excellent behaviour. With our peer support program we learn how to stop bullying and show concern for others. Our Kinder Buddy program lets the Year 6 leaders guide the new students into the school. Harvey

St Brigid's students show care and concern for all. Through the Peer Support Program they have learnt how to effectively deal with bullying. The Kinder Buddy program has helped the Kindergarten children fit into the school.

Anita

One of the great programs we have at our school is our Peer Support every Friday. Each Year 6 student also has a buddy to look after.

Felicity

The students at St Brigid's always stick to their motto 'Strength and Gentleness'. We also have a Peer Support Program and a Kinder Buddy Program which run all throughout the year. Students also read on the local Coonamble radio station to help people increase their confidence when speaking to an audience.

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## SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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St Brigids Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-Educational School located in Coonamble.

General Structure of the School St Brigid's is a single streamed Kindergarten to Year 6 School with seven classes. At the time of the School Census (February 2015) the student population was 157. There were 11 teaching staff and 8 non-teaching staff employed at the school. St Brigid's was renamed on the 1st February, 2003 from St Bernard's. This change was to acknowledge our heritage as the first Brigidine School in Australia. In 2008 the Brigidine Sisters celebrated their arrival in Coonamble, a hundred and twenty-five years previous. On completing Year 6 at St Brigid's, students either attend Coonamble High School or continue their studies at various boarding schools. The families associated with St Brigid's are a reflection of the wider community and include self-employed property owners, contractors, professionals, small business owners and local government employees. The children at St Brigid's, coming from a small rural community, are relatively isolated from cultural events. Fortunately due to Rural and Remote funding, talented visitors are employed to come and share their skills with the students eg. authors, illustrators, musicians and sports people. Pastoral Care Initiatives and Programs In 2014, The Buddy System between Year 6 and Kindergarten was continued. • The Peer Support Program for the students from Kindergarten to Year Six was continued successfully. • Students who experienced problems were referred for counselling through Centacare. • The Caught Being Good Program was continued each week. The students receiving the awards are given a free lunch certificate (redeemable from the school canteen) from the Parents and Friends Association. Curriculum Initiatives In 2014 we continued programs to support Literacy. Early identification and intervention for under achieving students took place with the assessment tool DIBELS. The MULTILIT Reading Tutor Program was also continued in 2013. We continued the Live Life Well Program, which will provide a great deal of support to the school in the PD/H/PE area. A school vegetable garden also continued this year and it was very successful. The daily fruit/vegetable break was continued as the Crunch and Sip program. The Active After School Program was conducted at St Brigid's and students keenly participated each term. Facilities The school facilities have been continually upgraded to provide the students with the very best learning environment. • Reading texts were generously donated by the P&F for classroom use. The beautification of the school grounds is ongoing. The students are very fortunate to have so much space to play undercover and on grass.

### Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2014:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
89	70	4	159

\* Language Background Other than English

### Enrolment Policy

The school enrolment policy has been developed in the context of government, system and parish requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. Total fees are made up of the Diocesan school fee, the Diocesan Family Building Levy and local fees and charges.

Detailed information about enrolment at the school is available from the school administration office.

### Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2014 was 91.86%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	95.51%
Year 1	93.80%
Year 2	89.78%
Year 3	90.75%
Year 4	88.47%
Year 5	93.18%
Year 6	91.51%

### Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is 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.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- the Executive Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Education Office Bathurst officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

## SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2014:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
10	7	17

\* This number includes 7 full-time teachers and 3 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	1%
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### Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Education Office Sydney. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

The School held the equivalent of five staff developments days this year with areas of focus as follows:

<b>Term 1</b>	Child Protection and Staff Bullying and Discrimination
<b>Term 2</b>	None Taken
<b>Term 3</b>	Introducing the Concept of a PLC
<b>Term 4</b>	Faith Development and Mission Vision Statement Development

The focus of our Professional Learning at the moment centres around faith development as expressed in the school's Vision and Mission Statement. The staff are developing a Professional Learning Community with a focus on learning, collaboration and data driven results.

### Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the three categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	9
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

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## SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Catholic Schools have a unique role in the evangelising and educating mission of the Church. As a key ministry of parishes and the diocese, Catholic schools encourage and support parents in their responsibility for the faith formation of their children. This formation is supported by prayer and opportunities to participate in the life, mission and liturgy of the broader Catholic community.

The School follows the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student textbooks *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Bathurst.

**School Mission Statement** In the Brigidine tradition of strength and gentleness, we will strive for a Christ centred community, who fully develop the gifts and talents of every individual, to prepare them with the knowledge, skills and attitude to cope with all aspects of the Catholic faith and life. Prayer and Liturgy • The staff commence their weekly staff meeting with a prayer. • Children pray throughout the day – whole school morning assembly, grace before meals, special intentions and the end of the day prayer. • Each class is responsible for preparing liturgies throughout the year and each Thursday before whole school assembly, a class is rostered to organise a prayer. • In each classroom a sacred space is made with a table covered with a cloth in the appropriate liturgical colour according to the church calendar and the use of sacred symbols, e.g. the cross, the bible, the school candle. In the school foyer the Religious Education Coordinator has organised a prayer focus that is regularly changed and the students love to visit the office to view the display. • Liturgies are held to celebrate special events such as the beginning of the school year, Grandparents' Day, Farewell Mass, Feast Days, Ash Wednesday, Easter, Mary's Birthday and the Missions. Classes attend Mass in the church or chapel when a priest is available. • The students of Years Six, Three and Two are involved in the sacramental programs. The parents/carers are expected to support their children and attend the commitment Mass and meeting on a set day. Years 3 and 6 each have a retreat day in the lead up to the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation. Pastoral Care and Social Justice St Brigid's aims to provide pastoral care through the following strategies: • A Buddy System - The Year Six students are allocated a Kindergarten student, which they support throughout the year. The Year Six students assist the Kinder students in the classroom and in the playground. At the beginning of the year they sit together in church. The Kindergarten students know they can go to their buddies if they need a chat or assistance. • At St Brigid's, all the classes are involved in the support of the Missions, particularly during Lent and in October during Mission Week. The classes enjoy cooking and selling their goods or plan fun activities during the lunch break to raise money. •

Students in Years 6 and 8 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Bathurst undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of fifty multiple-choice questions. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 50)	
Year 6	38.00

Further information about the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum and the RE Tests may be accessed at the [Religious Education and Evangelisation](#) site on the Catholic Education Office Sydney website.

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## SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

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The school provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the BOSTES syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Education Office Bathurst. School effectiveness is monitored by the Quality Catholic Education self review process and through regular school reviews conducted by CEO personnel. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

Our school follows the syllabi set out by the N.S.W. Board of Studies. The seven Key Learning Areas are: English, Mathematics, H.S.I.E. Religious Education, Science, Creative Arts, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. A number of learning support programs exist within the school including a literacy and numeracy support program in Kindergarten, MultiLit tutoring program from Years 1 to 6, integration of students with special needs and individual literacy and numeracy support. MiniLit and Multilit continued during 2014. There was also extra support provided for identified Aboriginal students by the CEO to increase their involvement in the program and also with Quicksmart to assist in Maths. ICT is integrated into the teachers' programs with a SMARTboard and laptops in every classroom. Sport is very strong at St Brigid's with a number of students representing at state level in swimming, athletics and cross country in 2014. Two students also attended the National Swimming Championships coming away with seven titles between them. All students had the opportunity to participate in the inter-school Ring Sports and Years 5 & 6 took part in the annual McNamee teams day with St Joseph's Gilgandra. School teams played in Rugby League and Netball carnivals. Students are able to participate in choir on a voluntary basis. Students audition for the local Moorambilla Festival. We integrate the Musica Viva Schools Program into class music each year. St Brigid's has a successful excursion program, which is integrated into the class units of work and is part of our annual Rural and Remote Funding Plan. Kinder – Farm Visit Year 1- Dinosaur discoveries to Coonabarabran Year 2- Zoo Snooz Dubbo Year 3- Warrumbungles National Park. Year 4- History and Communications two days in Dubbo and Wellington Years 5 & 6 – Discovering Gold, 3 days in Bathurst or Government, 5 days in Canberra (two year rotation). They attended Bathurst this year.

## SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	77.00%	50.00%	9.00%	12.00%
	Reading	64.00%	46.00%	5.00%	13.00%
	Writing	73.00%	39.00%	5.00%	11.00%
	Spelling	68.00%	44.00%	5.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	55.00%	36.00%	0.00%	14.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	59.00%	37.00%	7.00%	16.00%
	Reading	41.00%	34.00%	11.00%	16.00%
	Writing	26.00%	16.00%	11.00%	21.00%
	Spelling	41.00%	33.00%	7.00%	16.00%
	Numeracy	30.00%	26.00%	11.00%	18.00%

### Student Welfare Policy

Student Welfare Policy The pastoral care policy is found in the school information book. The staff continually remind students about acceptable behaviour. Every second year all students work through the Peer Support Modules in their peer support groups on a Friday during Term 2 and Term 3.

No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the School's Pastoral Care Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

### Discipline Policy

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this School. The School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by School persons and non-School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the School.

### Discipline Policy

There were slight changes made to the Student Management Policy (Discipline Policy) in 2012. They included adding examples of bullying behaviour to the Demerit Point categories. The Student Management Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy are closely linked. The full text of the school Student Management Policy (Discipline Policy) may be accessed via the School Information Book, which can be obtained at the school office. The updated policy was introduced during 2013 through both Staff and P&F Meetings to allow for feedback and further input. It was included and ratified during 2013.

There were no changes made to the policy in 2014

The full text of the School's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

The Diocese of Bathurst has established a *Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy* which is used to guide the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) monitors the implementation of this policy as part of school compliance requirements. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the *Anti-Bullying Policy* may be accessed at the administration office.

### Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Diocese of Bathurst has established *Guidelines for the Management of Complaints* which is implemented by our school through the Complaints Policy. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) monitors the implementation of this policy. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the *Complaints Policy* may be accessed on the School's website, or the administration office.

### Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The students take great pride on marching on ANZAC Day and attending the service with the community of Coonamble. The school has a tradition of donating books to the local library each ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day. St Brigid's have had a very successful Peer Support Program for many years and this is valued by the students and parents/carers. Year 6 leaders attend the Young Leaders Conference in Sydney at the beginning of each year and including sports leaders. Students participate in Mission Week activities raising money for children in need overseas. The students also spent some of the money raised in Mission Week to sponsor children overseas to obtain an education.

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## SECTION NINE: QUALITY CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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The School implements the Catholic Education Office Bathurst Quality Catholic Education Framework which outlines the processes and benchmarks for creating the culture and practice of continuous improvement with students as the focus.

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the School's Strategic Improvement Plan. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against standards in collaboration with the School Consultant.

### **Key Improvements Achieved in 2014**

SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT AND TARGETS Catholic Life and RE • Students participated in a parish Mass for Mothers Day. • Our Catholic School's Older Friends/Grandparents Morning Tea saw a large crowd including international Grandparents. Learning and Teaching • • Leadership For School Improvement • Anti-bullying policy was introduced including cyber safety in line with CEO policy. • • Work, Health and Safety practices and guidelines are being developed and implemented. Many things have been put in place this year as advised by the CEO and this will be an ongoing process. Introducing and developing a Professional Learning Community as part of ongoing staff development. Strategic Resources • Purchased 10 iPads for initial classroom use • Removed dangerous trees from the playground

### **Priority Key Improvements for 2015**

- A key target for 2015 is to continue to strengthen and further develop school and parish links
- Introducing and developing a Professional Learning Community as part of ongoing staff development will also be a focus for the school

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

### Parent Satisfaction

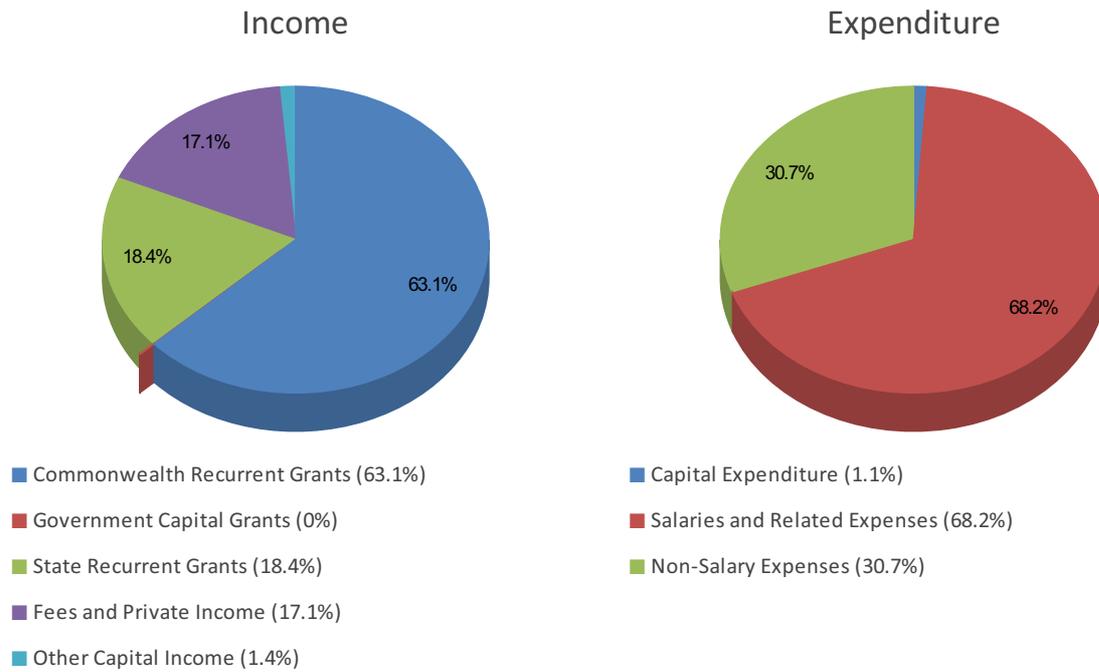
Parent satisfaction with the school is very high. The majority of parents believe that the Catholic Values, Teaching and Learning and Leadership of the school are areas of major strength. People were very satisfied with the resources and facilities and realise these will need updating and upgrading regularly.

### Student Satisfaction

- Following a collection of information from school leaders in Year 6 the following quotes affirm the student perception of our school:
- St Brigid's School is a warm and welcoming school that always displays its motto 'Strength and Gentleness'. It is a very safe school where students feel loved and nurtured.
- Tom
- St Brigid's school is a great and welcoming school that I enjoy coming to every day to learn and play.
- Georgia
- I think that St Brigid's is a fantastic school because of all the wonderful and caring peers who help others around the school.
- Drew
- St Brigid's is a great school and its students always show 'strength and gentleness'. The school offers many fantastic opportunities to students within their primary school career.
- Oscar
- St Brigid's School is a very calm and well-organised school where students have lots of fun and exciting opportunities. The children at St Brigid's are very happy and every single one of them is important and counts. The teachers and students at St Brigid's are very special.

### Teacher Satisfaction

- The majority of staff believe the permeation of Catholic values, teaching of RE and staff development in RE is strongly evident at St Brigid's. Fostering partnerships between school, parish and parents is ongoing.
- The majority of staff believe that teaching and learning, curriculum provision, planning and programming and student achievement are strongly evident at St Brigid's. Assessment and evaluation are areas for ongoing development.
- Leadership for school improvement is strongly evident at St Brigid's with a need for continued improvements of policies being commenced but these need to be continued.
- Strategic resourcing is an area of strength as indicated by the majority of staff with sustainability being an area for ongoing development. ICT resourcing is ongoing.



This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

**Notes**

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants include recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita and special purpose grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes capital funded through the central Capital Fund.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Plant, Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure include all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.