

St Brigids Primary School Coonamble
Annual School Report to the Community
2015



School Contact Details

Tooloon Street, Coonamble 2829
stbrigidschool@bth.catholic.edu.au
(02)68221511

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

It is my pleasure to once again give you an overview of your P&F activities for 2015. Being a Fete year we scaled down major activities with only a few small tasks for the P&F along with another successful Disco. This has now become a yearly format for the P&F who have also decided to fund it at no cost to the students from now on. The Fete work started way back in April for this huge task, we were very lucky to have two Fete co-ordinating volunteers in Row and Vicky come on board, both these ladies have shown a dedication above and beyond to make this year's Fete once again a fantastic event the students really did enjoy. We were able to profit over \$15,500 dollars that will go directly back into equipment for your children. Can I congratulate and thank all those involved from the committee, to stall co-ordinators, stall suppliers, sponsors, right thought to parents and friends, students and all that gave a hand for a great evening. Once again thank you to those families that assist for the school, we really do appreciate your effort over the last number of years. To Mrs Pip Brown and her wonderful volunteers, well done again on a great year of canteen support.

Student Body Message

"St Brigid's is a good and safe place" Pearly-Anne, Year 6

"I look forward to school because it is fun" Claudia, Year 6

"St Brigid's is a wonderful school because the teachers are very supportive, kind and caring" Paige, Year 6

"St Brigid's is an amazing school full of wonderful teachers, kind students and helpful parents. Our school follows the motto of Strength and Gentleness and we make sure we follow this." Anna Year 6

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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 2016) the student population was 142. 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 2015, 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 2015. We continued the Live Life Well Program, which will provide a great deal of support to the school in the PD/H/PE area. The daily fruit/vegetable break was continued as the Crunch and Sip program. 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 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 2015:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
79	73	5	152

* 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 2015 was 91.33%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	92.45%
Year 1	93.90%
Year 2	91.78%
Year 3	90.46%
Year 4	89.70%
Year 5	91.12%
Year 6	89.88%

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 2015:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
10	9	19

* This number includes 8 full-time teachers and 2 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	5%
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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:

Term 1	Learning and Teaching Day 1
Term 2	PLC Development
Term 3	Religious Education and ICT
Term 4	NA

Professional learning is aligned to the school plan and allows staff to seek development in areas which compliment this and work towards improved outcomes for all students.

Staff are supported to attend professional development both in person and by virtual means.

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.	10
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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.

In 2015 the school mission and vision statement was updated to

"LIVING AND LEARNING IN STRENGTH AND GENTLENESS"

This simple statement not only reflects our Brigidine Heritage but it also guides the learning which is taking place in our classrooms today.

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.

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)	
	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.

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

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, History and Geography, 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 2015. 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 2015. One student also attended the National Swimming Championships coming away with three titles. 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. The excursions usually are Kinder –Farm Visit Year 1- Dinosaur discoveries to Lightning Ridger 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 in 2015.

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 2015		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	56.00%	52.00%	6.00%	11.00%
	Reading	50.00%	48.00%	6.00%	11.00%
	Writing	78.00%	47.00%	0.00%	7.00%
	Spelling	44.00%	41.00%	11.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	47.00%	34.00%	18.00%	15.00%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	41.00%	36.00%	9.00%	17.00%
	Reading	41.00%	34.00%	23.00%	18.00%
	Writing	23.00%	19.00%	9.00%	18.00%
	Spelling	41.00%	33.00%	9.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	18.00%	28.00%	14.00%	16.00%

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.

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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

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.

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

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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.

SECTION NINE: QUALITY CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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 2015

Development of a collaborative environment focussing on creating a Professional Learning Environment.

A concerted effort to strengthen links between the Parish and School.

Analysis of data to inform and guide teaching of students.

Identification of students requiring extra support and initiatives to support this.

Priority Key Improvements for 2016

Continued development and growth of the Professional learning community.

Development of strong links between the school and Parish.

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

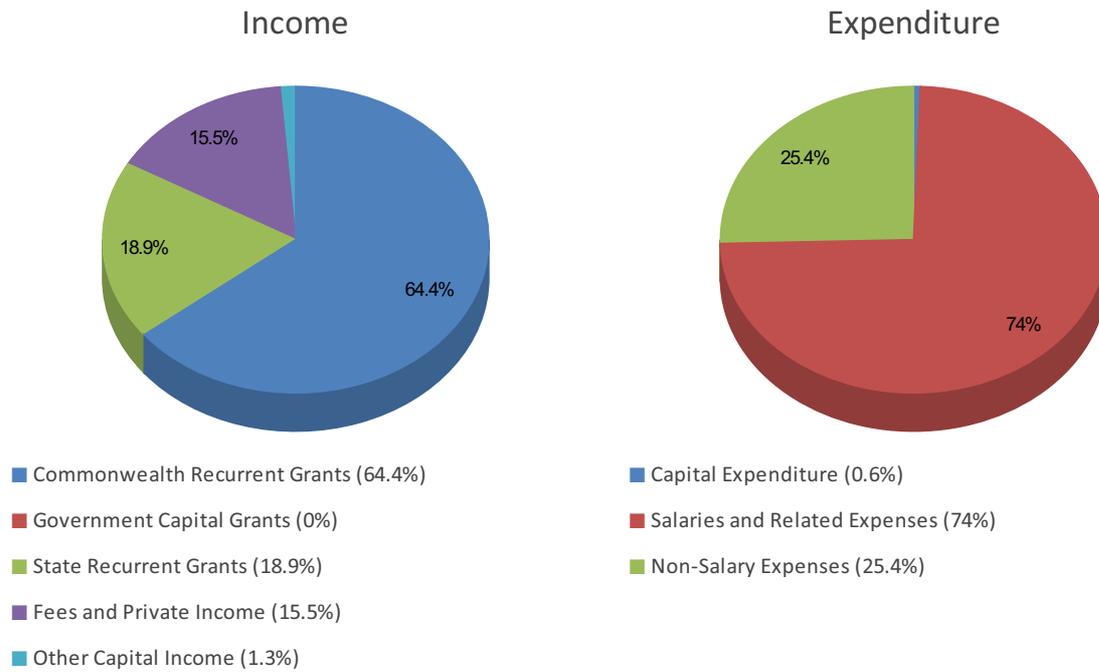
Parent satisfaction with the school is very high. The majority of parents believe that the Catholic Values, Teaching and Learning and Leadership of the school are areas of major strength. People were very satisfied with the resources and facilities and realise these will need updating and upgrading regularly.

Student Satisfaction

Students at St Brigid's are generally happy and learn effectively in the caring, supportive environment provided. Evidence of this can be found in the feedback comments provided by the Year 6 Leaders.

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.