

St Brigid's Primary, Coonamble
Annual School Educational and Financial Report
2013



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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

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ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Brigid's Primary School, Coonamble is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and is part of a system of schools managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Bathurst. The CEO, Bathurst is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Educational and Financial Report for this year provides the school community with reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education (NSW) in conjunction with requirements of the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

This Report also outlines information about 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 Annual Development Plan.

Accordingly, this Report demonstrates accountability to the school community and the CEO, Bathurst.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, yearbooks and other regular communications. This report will be available on the school and CEO websites by 30 June 2013 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 68221511.

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 2013. The staff of the school are professional and at all times work towards achieving the best outcomes for students.

In 2013 the school focussed on Professional Development and Curriculum Development in the areas of Contemporary Learning and preparation for the introduction of the new English Syllabus in 2014. These two areas compliment each other with the pedagogy of Contemporary Learning being reflected in the teaching within the classroom.

Once again in 2013 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

MESSAGE FROM PARENTS and FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

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.
- As part of our anti-bullying program every second year, the Peer Support Foundation Program-'Speaking Up' is used in the peer support groups each Friday during Terms 2 and 3. The peer support leaders, from Years 5 or 6, talk to the younger students about how to deal with bullies and to make sure they do not bully their friends. This program has involved staff professional development and special training for the upper primary students.

Religious Education Program

Religion is formally taught daily in lessons that may range from 30 to 40 minutes in duration. The curriculum for religion lessons comes from the program "To Know Worship and Love". The units of work have been produced by the Bathurst Catholic Education Office.

A compulsory Religion Test was introduced by the C.E.O in 2010. The St Brigid's Year Six students conducted themselves very well in 2013.

Parish Contact Details

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour
Tooloon Street, Coonamble NSW 2829
Phone: 02 68221143

SCHOOL FEATURES

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 (August 2012) the student population was 162. There were 11 teaching staff and 7 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 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 CAP (Country Areas Program) 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 2012, 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, Greater Area Health or a private service.
- 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 2012 we continued programs to support Literacy. Early identification and intervention for underachieving students took place with the assessment tool DIBELS. The MULTILIT Reading Tutor Program was continued in 2013. Mathletics was continued to support numeracy in Year 4.

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 the students have 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.
- New Bibles were purchased for use during Religion lessons.
- A donation by the McKeown family saw books purchased for the Minilit program and the school purchased the remainder of necessary resources.
- The school purchased and installed new playground equipment with money generously provided by the P&F and soft fall and surrounds purchased with a grant of \$10118 received from Graincorp.

The beautification of the school grounds is ongoing. The students are very fortunate to have so much space to play undercover and on grass.

ENROLMENT POLICIES AND PROFILES

Enrolment as of Census Date 3/8/13

YEAR	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
Year 6	8	12	20
Year 5	9	13	22
Year 4	17	10	27
Year 3	12	10	22
Year 2	8	13	21
Year 1	6	18	24
Kinder	10	17	27
Total	69	93	162

Number of Indigenous students

There were 31 Aboriginal students enrolled at St Brigid's School in 2013.

Preamble

St Brigid's School is a K-6 School within the Catholic Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Coonamble. The School is administered by the Catholic Education Office, Bathurst. The Principal is responsible to the Catholic Education Office for the operation of the school.

St Brigid's School has as its primary mission the provision of a Catholic Education to the Catholic children of Coonamble and environs. It is recognised, however, that the school can also serve children who are not Catholic but whose parents or guardians would like them to learn about the Catholic values and would like them to learn in a Catholic atmosphere.

The St Brigid's Enrolment Policy aims to enable St Brigid's School to fulfil this mission within the limitations of resources, personnel and finances. St Brigid's is a single-stream school. Catholic Education Office policy is that class sizes should generally not exceed 30.

Enrolment Procedure

The procedure for enrolling a child at St Brigid's School is as follows:

Parents or guardians wishing to enrol a child contact the Principal and receive an enrolment package.

An application form is filled in and returned to the School Office, with all required documents.

The parents or guardians (and the child if requested by the Principal) are interviewed by the Principal.

The Principal considers the enrolment application and determines whether it is accepted.

A reply to the application is given as soon as possible.

Kindergarten enrolments are generally called for at the beginning of Term 3. There is a preparation for school orientation, which commences partway through Term 3 and continues into the beginning of Term 4 on a nominated afternoon between 1:00pm and 3:00pm. It is

recommended that any child enrolling in Kindergarten should have turned five by 31 March or must have turned five by 30 June.

Enrolment Policy

In the consideration of applications for enrolment, the present and anticipated future limitations on the resources of the School are considered. Preference is then given in accordance with the guidelines below.

Guideline 1

The child applying for enrolment is a baptised Catholic whose parents or guardians are involved in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish or another Catholic Parish. Examples of active involvement are: regular attendance at Mass, evidence of faith commitment within the parish, participation in parish activities and payment into the Planned Giving.

Guideline 2

The child applying for enrolment is a baptised Catholic.

Guideline 3

The child applying for enrolment has a sibling already enrolled at St Brigid's School.

Guideline 4

The child applying for enrolment is not of the Catholic Faith, but the parents or guardians are actively involved in another Faith and would like the child to learn about the Catholic view of life and in a Catholic atmosphere.

Guideline 5

The child applying for enrolment is not of the Catholic Faith, but the parents or guardians would like the child to learn about the Catholic view of life and in a Catholic atmosphere.

Please note:

Completion of an enrolment form does not automatically guarantee enrolment. For a child applying for enrolment in higher grades than Kindergarten, the Principal is to be satisfied that the child is of good character before the above guidelines. This may require a verbal or written reference from the previous school and/or parish.

All prospective enrolments are to be discussed with the Principal.

The enrolment of a child not covered by the above criteria and guidelines is at the discretion of the Principal, after consultation with the Bathurst Catholic Education Office.

All parents and guardians enrolling children at St Brigid's School undertake to pay the specified school fees and to contribute where possible in some way to school activities. The families are expected to be sympathetic to and supportive of the Catholic Faith and the philosophy of the Catholic School.

Entry into other Grades or during the Year:

1. Criteria as above.
2. All educational needs of prospective students will be assessed by gathering background material such as reports from previous school(s), other assessment reports and by contacting previous school.

Students with behaviour/special needs will be treated as individual cases depending on student, class, teacher and school needs.

There were no changes made to the enrolment policies during the year.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

Attendance Rates

Year One: 89.1%

Year Two: 92.1%

Year Three: 84.9%

Year Four: 88.7%

Year Five: 77.2%

Year Six: 80.6%

Average student attendance rate was 85.54%

Procedure for Reporting on Absences

In the school information book, it is explained that children are required to attend school every day that it is open. Written or verbal (by an adult) notification to the child's teacher or via the school office, is required for absences. If a pattern of absence occurs, the parents/carers may be contacted by the school and the matter discussed.

SCHOOL 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 was implemented in 2013 and Multilit continued. There was also extra support provided for identified Aboriginal students by the CEO to increase their involvement in the program.

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 2013. Two students also attended the National Championships coming away with six titles between them. All students had the opportunity to participate in the interschool 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 Country Areas Program (C.A.P) 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.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM in LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN)

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN)

Literacy and Numeracy

Students in Years 3 and 5 around Australia sat the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Tests in May 2013. Individual student reports were provided in September 2013. Analysis of these results assists the school in planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving the national minimum standard are outlined separately for Years 3 and 5.

Points to note are:

- In Year 3 students placed in Band 1 are below national minimum standard. Students in band 2 are achieving national minimum standard and students in bands 3 and 4 are “at proficiency”
- In Year 5 students placed in Band 3 are below national minimum standard. Students in band 4 are achieving national minimum standard and students in bands 5 and 6 are “at proficiency”.

Band Distribution (%) - YEAR 3

	Band	1	2	3	4	5	6	%at/above National Minimum
Reading	School	0	5	14	23	23	36	100
	Diocese	2	7	17	25	21	27	98
	State	3	10	16	25	19	28	97
Writing	School	0	0	5	27	59	9	100

	Diocese	1	5	16	27	39	12	99
	State	2	6	15	23	37	17	98
Spelling	School	0	0	14	36	36	14	100
	Diocese	3	6	20	27	24	21	97
	State	4	6	18	23	24	25	96
Grammar & Punctuation	School	0	0	5	23	46	27	100
	Diocese	2	7	14	22	27	28	98
	State	3	8	14	21	24	31	97
Numeracy	School	0	0	32	36	27	5	100
	Diocese	1	6	19	33	31	10	99
	State	3	8	22	29	25	14	97

Band Distribution (%) - YEAR 5

	Band	3	4	5	6	7	8	%at/above National Minimum
Reading	School	0	9	17	30	22	22	100
	Diocese	1	8	23	32	25	13	99
	State	2	9	23	29	22	15	98
Writing	School	4	4	22	48	13	9	96
	Diocese	3	7	23	23	25	19	97
	State	5	9	22	22	23	19	95
Spelling	School	4	4	35	32	16	9	96
	Diocese	4	7	25	33	23	8	96
	State	5	8	21	27	25	13	95
Grammar & Punctuation	School	4	9	17	13	26	31	96
	Diocese	3	7	23	23	25	19	97
	State	5	9	22	22	23	19	95
Numeracy	School	0	17	30	17	13	23	100
	Diocese	2	12	30	32	15	9	98
	State	5	15	26	26	13	15	95

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

Professional learning

The total number of days in professional learning activities for 2013 was 72.

All Staff members at St Brigid's were involved in professional development activities throughout the year. The staff attended three whole staff days which were pupil free days, four extended staff meetings and general scheduled weekly staff meetings. In addition, individual staff members completed staff development activities in other locations or online.

The principal attended a three-day course on Assessment during the holidays as well as diocesan development days for Principals.

The REC/AP attended the Diocesan RE Conference and AP meeting days.

Teachers were involved in professional learning activities on the following topics in 2013:

Religious Education – Women's Spirituality, iPads, , The School Library, Curriculum Development including Stage Days and programming, Child Protection and Cyber Safety.

Teacher Standards

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

Teacher Qualifications	Number of Teachers
1. Those having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or equivalent.	11
2. Those having graduate qualifications (eg Bachelor degree) but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	NIL
3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge. Such teachers must have been employed to teach in NSW before October 2004 and as a teacher in the last 5 years.	NIL

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

Overview of the workforce: 1 Principal, 1 AP/REC, 8 teachers, 4 Teacher Assistants, 1 Teacher Librarian, 1 Aboriginal Education Assistant, 1 Secretary, 1 Groundsman, 1 Cleaner and 1 Canteen Supervisor.

Teacher Attendance and Retention

Teacher Attendance for 2013 was: 97%

Teacher Retention for 2013 was: 93%

SCHOOL POLICIES: STUDENT WELFARE, DISCIPLINE, COMPLAINTS and GRIEVANCES

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.

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.

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.

Complaints and Grievances Policy

St Brigid's, in line with the Catholic Diocese of Bathurst, is committed to providing a pleasant, safe and effective working environment for the students in our school. The duty of care should be paramount in all we do.

Principles

The following principles should govern all complaint handling processes:

- *Impartiality* - Complaints should be investigated in an open and unbiased way with both parties seeking a fair hearing and clarification of the issues. No decisions or judgments should be made until all the facts are clear.
- *Confidentiality* - All parties involved in the concern are asked to maintain confidentiality. The dignity and privacy of all concerned must be maintained.
- *A commitment to fairness* - Repercussions should not be feared following the lodging of a complaint made in good faith. Repercussions will not be tolerated.
- *Timeliness* - It is important that all complaints be dealt with speedily to ensure a quick resolution of the problem.

Processes

1. In general, parents should first address the problem with the staff member most closely concerned, at a mutually convenient time on school grounds, as soon as possible after the incident **OR** contact should be made with the principal. This can often deal with the problem easily and effectively. An appointment should be made to outline the problem and seek a solution. Good will on both sides and clarification of the issue should ensure a mutually acceptable resolution for both parties. It is good practice for the school to summarise the issue and resolution in writing and provide a copy to the complainant.

2. If however, an informal approach is not successful in resolving the problem, a formal complaint may be lodged with the school through the Principal. This should be submitted in writing if possible, outlining the problem and the concerns about the initial handling of the issue. It is important that this is dealt with speedily and that a written response is made.
3. Concerns may also be raised with the Catholic Education Office. Most concerns should however be dealt with at school level and the CEO would encourage this approach. If there is a particular reason why this is not possible, the CEO will appoint a consultant who will seek to resolve the concern by liaising with the school and the person expressing the concern. A written summary should again be provided.
4. If the problem is still not resolved, reference to the appropriate external agency e.g. Anti-discrimination Board, may be made.

NOTE: Child Protection concerns will be dealt with outside this process using the investigative processes set out by the Ombudsman. All Child Protection complaints must be passed on to the Catholic Education Office without delay.

The full text of the school Complaints and Grievances Policy is available in the St Brigid's Information Book, which is available at the school office.

Anti –Bullying Policy

The Anti Bullying Policy was further developed in 2012 and was implemented during of 2013. The definition of bullying and information on types of bullying were updated to the definition and information given in the National Safe Schools Framework. The policy outlines a rationale and the responsibilities of various members of the school community in the implementation of the policy. The steps of action to be taken by staff members in dealing with bullying are included. This policy is closely linked to the Student Management Policy (Discipline Policy).

The full text of the school Anti-bullying Policy is available in the School Information Book, which is available at the School Office.

SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT AND TARGETS

Catholic Life and RE

- Students participated in a parish mass for Mothers Day.
- Target for 2014 is to continue to strengthen and further develop school and parish links.
- Our Catholic School's Older Friends/Grandparents Morning Tea saw a large crowd including international Grandparents.

Learning and Teaching

- To support the students' learning the staff were inserviced on using iPads and apps in the classroom.
- Stage teachers took part in planning days for the new English Curriculum.
- Targets for 2014 - Introduction to the National English Curriculum
 - Preparation for the introduction of the National/State Maths Curriculum in 2014.
 - Introduction of PLC as a concept for staff and student development.

Leadership For School Improvement

- Anti-bullying policy was introduced including cybersafety in line with CEO policy.
- A Critical Incident Policy was introduced.
- 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.
- Targets for 2013 – Working towards completing Contemporary Learning Modules to support updated curriculum.
Introducing and developing a Professional Learning Community as part of ongoing staff development.

Strategic Resources

- Purchased 10 iPads for initial classroom use
- Purchased and installed new playground equipment
- Removed dangerous trees from the playground
- Upgraded locking systems on all Infants classrooms.
- Targets for 2014:
 1. Incorporate a further 10 iPads for classroom use.
 2. Install and incorporate 30 new computers within the school
 3. Installation of sound systems for Years 1 and 2.

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.

PARENT, TEACHER AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

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.

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. Parents were pleased with the introduction of new playground equipment. Parents mentioned in the survey that they would like to see swimming as part of the sporting program.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (2013)

Catholic Schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Catholic Education Office, Bathurst submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the 33 primary, K-10 and secondary schools. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Education Office are audited annually

