

St Patricks Primary School Lithgow
Annual School Report to the Community
2014



School Contact Details

Mort Street, Lithgow 2790

stpatslithgow@bth.catholic.edu.au

www.stpatslithgow.catholic.edu.au

(02) 63 51 3719

Principal

Mr Robert Keady

Principal's Message

2014 has been a year that we, at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, can look back on with pride and a sense of accomplishment. Staff have created and followed a detailed and comprehensive 2014 School Improvement Plan. This included the development of a new Pastoral Care Policy covering anti bullying, behaviour and codes of conduct, as well as comprehensive training on the WHS compliance requirements.

The spiritual heart of the school has included sacramental programs, daily RE class, regular school masses and the introduction of school/parish masses. Many acts of Christian living from staff, parents and students were witnessed and this vital characteristic of our school is living within us.

Parish Priest's Message

As we move towards the end of the school year, I reflect on another year of growth and learning.

Congratulations to all the students for their efforts and achievements particularly those who celebrated the wonderful sacraments of their faith: Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Thanks to the parents and grandparents for your support of your children and grandchildren, and the sacrifices you make for them.

Our teachers have again shown dedication and commitment to those in their care – facilitating their growth and faith.

We bid farewell to our Principal, Mr Keady, at years end. I thank Robert for his dedication and commitment, his leadership in faith and the further upgrading of facilities at St Patrick's. He has been a wonderful Principal. We wish Robert and Christine every blessing for their future.

May God's blessing be with you all in the coming holy season of Advent and Christmas, and may the peace and joy of Christ be yours. God bless everyone in the school community.

Father Owen Gibbons

Parent Body Message

St. Patrick's School is a family school community. We acknowledge that parents are the first educators of their children especially in their faith. Parents are friendly and are supportive of the school. They appreciate the teaching staff and all that they do for their children. The Parents and Friends work to raise important and much needed funds for the students. The school fete held each year is an opportunity to raise funds but also for families to gather socially in our school grounds. Parents also help in the classrooms with reading and writing activities. Parents are valued partners in learning in our school learning community. We also value and appreciate the contribution grandparents make to our school. We celebrate our grandparents with Grandparents Day.

Student Body Message

St Patrick's Catholic School has a special spirit which is attributed to the beautiful children who attend our school. They are country children who enjoy life and value all that life has to offer them. They are polite and courteous. There is a strong sense of respect and they value learning. The academic expectation and standard is high. We have formal student leadership in the roles of school captains, vice captains and sports captains. All Year 6 students are leaders in our school and take on this role with pride. Elected members from each grade form the student representative council. Year 6 students have a kindergarten buddy to help in their first year at school. St. Patrick's students know about Mary MacKillop and the work she did in her life. Her motto "never see a word without trying to do something about it" is well known by the children.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

St Patricks Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-Educational School located in Lithgow.

St Patrick's is a parish school, proudly serving the Lithgow Community. Our mission is to bring quality Catholic Education and outstanding pastoral care to the children and families of our unique city. We are a K-6 Primary school with two streams in each grade. Our school is situated on the western slopes of the Blue Mountains and we enjoy a temperate climate in Summer and a cool temperature in winter. We are located in the centre of town and easily accessed from all areas of the city and surrounding villages. In 2014 we have 342 students enrolled.

Overall we have very supportive parents, wonderful students who are very well behaved, courteous and mindful of the needs of others. The school provides a rich mix of curriculum based and extra-curriculum programs both cultural and sporting.

Our 52 Kindergarten students felt the benefits of a thorough orientation programme and settled in well to their new "big school". Because we had over 25 in each class, we were able to have a TA in each class to assist the teacher. This was of huge benefit.

All students participated in Music, Computers and Library during teacher release. They also had the opportunity to join the school bands and choirs. Chess was very popular during lunchtime. We competed successfully in the Bathurst Eisteddfod and are blessed to have two music teachers, as well as regular tuition in specialist musical instruments from tutors employed by the Mitchell Conservatorium of Music.

By providing a varied curriculum and extra curricular activities for our students, we hope that it will help them to discover and develop their own gifts and talents.

Students requiring specialist support were able to access the 'Learning Support Room' which provides respite for students. Support was also provided by the Learning Support Teacher and five Teacher Assistants to funded students both in small group withdrawal, in-class and on the playground. Selected students were able to access Multi-Lit, Mini-Lit and QuickSmart to reinforce basic literacy and numeracy skills. The results were very encouraging with some great gains made.

Staff continue to train in, and implement, 'Reading To Learn' literacy strategies across the school and continue with the 'Jolly Phonics' program. Many staff attended professional learning across a range of areas but particularly in the literacy, numeracy and RE areas. Our new Assessment Policy encouraged feedback, emphasised the development of assessment rubrics and a range of outcome focussed tools. The adoption of the PAT online English and Mathematics testing for grades 1-6 provided additional data for classroom use and was very well received.

Overall, students made progress in their learning and a range of new initiatives was instituted to foster learning and student growth.

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
165	181	9	346

* 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 95.73%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	95.72%
Year 1	98.40%
Year 2	92.99%
Year 3	95.57%
Year 4	92.47%
Year 5	97.21%
Year 6	97.72%

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
21	11	32

* This number includes 15 full-time teachers and 6 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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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	Beginning of year planning and preparation.
Term 2	WHS Compliance
Term 3	Professional Learning Communities/Staff Retreat Day with Chris Doyle
Term 4	Spirituality and Reflection Day/Planning and handover day

There was a particular focus on the implementation of the new English Curriculum, with teachers joining the Hub and Spoke initiative, run by the CEO and engaging in PETA courses. Several teachers attended a conference on Professional Learning Communities and later, the whole staff engaged in PD on this topic.

Other PD attended included: Reading to Learn, Christmas Story Art, PAT Training, Science Working Party, Jolly Grammar, EduTech, Kadai Music, Meet Manager, using iPads, the Art and Science of Teaching and Learning and Down Syndrome courses.

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.	21
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.

At St Patrick's, we believe that all children should be given the opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential. We live the words of Saint Mary MacKillop, the founder of our school, "never see a need without trying to do something about it."

Our students attend mass regularly and also have the opportunity to participate in Reconciliation and class liturgies. A highlight each year is Mary MacKillop's Feast Day during which we have a range of special activities as well as a whole school mass. Other celebrations include St Patrick and St Joseph's Feast Days, Catholic Schools Week, Easter liturgies, church feast days and an end of year Mass.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to helping our pupils learn about and live their faith. Our Religious Education program is given a high priority by all staff and gospel values permeate across the curriculum. Year 6 students undertook the RE test and received excellent results, indicating a very sound knowledge of the teachings of the Church. Throughout the year, we encouraged our students to develop their social conscience by supporting a range of charities such as Project Compassion, Parish Pyjama Day to aid St Vincent De Paul sleep out appeal for the homeless. Money was also raised to help struggling farmers, cancer patients as well as the staff sponsoring a child in the Third World.

In term four, the Year 5 students participated in a Leadership/Retreat day to help them better understand what would be expected of them as school leaders in 2015. Year 6 have been excellent role models and have worked closely with the Kindergarten students as buddies and mentors. They are well prepared to move onto secondary school and have initiated many fund raising activities which were taken on by the newly elected Student Representative Council.

Our Pastoral Care, Behaviour and Anti Bullying policies were revised this year and are very closely linked indicating the strong relationship between all three elements.

The Sacramental Program is very much a team effort shared between teachers, parents, the clergy and the parish. The program is run through the school and parish with teachers and parents playing a major role in the preparation. Reconciliation and First Communion preparation were well attended and the masses and liturgies were very special family celebrations. The Sacrament of Confirmation was administered by Bishop Michael McKenna to the year 6 candidates.

This year we initiated Parish/School Masses on selected weekends followed by refreshments and socialisation. This was very well received, especially by the parishioners.

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	31.89

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.

The curriculum at St Patrick's is made up of six Key Learning Areas (KLA) determined by the BOSTES – English, Mathematics, HSIE, Science and Technology, PDHPE and the Creative Arts. Because we are a Catholic school Religious Education is also classed as a KLA. All programming by teachers is based on the BOSTES documents and school based Scope and Sequence outlines. Assessment and the use of data to inform teaching practice and validate learning were emphasised.

Music is important to the community and there are two specialist teachers for Music/Dance/Drama and children also have the opportunity to join the school bands, school choirs, participate in Eisteddfods and other musical performances. Private music lessons are available at the school through the Mitchell Conservatorium of Music.

There are many opportunities to play a range of school and interschool sports throughout the year. These include school carnivals, school based intra sports, coaching from a number of professional sport development officers as well as Diocesan and regional representative sports. During 2014, twelve students represented Polding Region. Two students were selected in the NSW PSSA Hockey team which won the National championship.

Increasing use is being made in classrooms to achieve curriculum outcomes using electronic devices such as Laptops, iPads, Chrome Books and Interactive Whiteboards. A large number of these devices were purchased during the year and all students have the opportunity access to an individual device to use for curriculum work. A Technical Officer was employed to ensure problems were solved swiftly and effectively.

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	55.00%	50.00%	13.00%	12.00%
	Reading	47.00%	46.00%	13.00%	13.00%
	Writing	21.00%	39.00%	11.00%	11.00%
	Spelling	45.00%	44.00%	34.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	38.00%	36.00%	11.00%	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	48.00%	37.00%	17.00%	16.00%
	Reading	20.00%	34.00%	20.00%	16.00%
	Writing	9.00%	16.00%	20.00%	21.00%
	Spelling	33.00%	33.00%	4.00%	16.00%
	Numeracy	20.00%	26.00%	17.00%	18.00%

Student Welfare Policy

The school Pastoral Care Policy was collaboratively reviewed by the school community in 2014. The policy emphasised the importance of the whole school community working together co-operatively to ensure that students and staff are safe within the school environment, fostered strong self esteem, developed self discipline and was concerned with the rights of everyone to a strong and equitable learning environment.

To further ensure student and staff safety, an extensive review of the Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan was instituted resulting in the development of a comprehensive and meaningful document. This proved timely as the school experienced a severe snow storm in early October which resulted in both a school closure and extensive damage to school property.

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

To further develop the notion of self responsibility and to outline what was acceptable behaviour, a Student Code of Conduct was constructed. The emphasis was on positive language and expectation. This led to the review and development of a Staff Code of Conduct which was closely aligned to both the school and Diocesan Vision and Mission statements.

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

To complete the suite of pastoral responsibilities, the school Behaviour Policy and Anti Bullying Policy were also collaboratively reviewed by the school community. The emphasis here was on ensuring that all members of the school community knew their rights and responsibilities as well as outlining the system for positive reward and consequences for unacceptable behaviour.

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 2014

The Key improvement areas for 2014 have been the following.

- An introduction to Professional Learning Communities
- Spirituality Retreat
- English Syllabus consolidation
- Mathematics and Science Syllabus introduction and implementation
- WHS Compliance

Priority Key Improvements for 2015

In 2015 the following will be the focus for St. Patrick's School.

- Emphasis on building a positive and collaborative staff community.
- Professional Learning Communities will be implemented with a focus on improving student learning.
- Building and strengthening our Catholic Community based on whole school prayer and social justice actions.
- Continue work on English, Mathematics and Science syllabuses.

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

Parents agree St. Patrick's offer their child a supportive and safe environment. There is a strong focus on learning with teachers who care about the children. Parents acknowledge and appreciate the wonderful sense of community at St. Patrick's School. It is a faith filled community that brings Catholic knowledge, practices and beliefs to the children. Parents agree that we are a school that looks out for those who are having difficulties and who need support which follows Mary MacKillop's motto "never see a need without doing something about it." This information was sourced from many conversations with parents through informal processes.

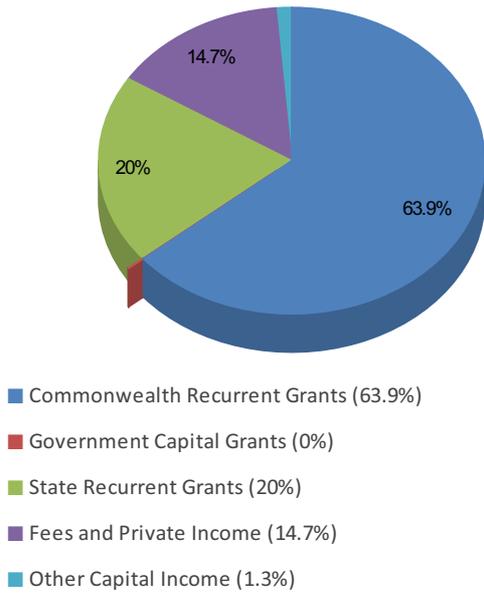
Student Satisfaction

The students have expressed that they are happy here at St. Patrick's School. For those leaving the school this year they have agreed that it has been a good and rewarding seven years of Catholic primary education. They are able to point out so many of the highlights of their time at St. Patrick's School. Students in Kindergarten have benefited socially and academically in their first year of schooling. They see St. Patrick's School as their extended family, as they feel safe and well looked after. Most students at St. Patrick's School enjoy school life and all that it offers. Some children find it a safe haven in their life. This information is evidenced by feedback from students, parents and teachers as well as observation.

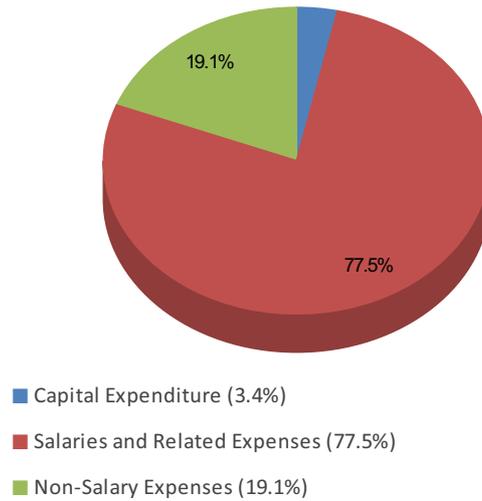
Teacher Satisfaction

We are privileged to have a staff that is both very experienced and fully qualified. St Patrick's School is blessed with very committed and dedicated teachers who "go the extra mile" for students. They focus on the students' well being and their learning. The staff at St. Patrick's acknowledge the importance of community and strive to build a positive learning community. The teaching staff are highly satisfied with their working environment where the child is the focus and the teachers work together and support each other. This is evidenced by informal feedback and observation of school culture and practices.

Income



Expenditure



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.