

St Patricks Primary School Lithgow
Annual School Report to the Community
2015



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Principal

M/s Helen Mulholland

Principal's Message

It is with pleasure that I provide our 2015 Annual School Report. This report includes information about our school's activities and performance over the past year and outlines our future goals. It demonstrates accountability to the Catholic Education Office, Bathurst, to the NSW Board of Studies, to parents and the wider community. The Sisters of St. Joseph established St. Patrick's and our motto is "Charity and Truth". Religious Education is given top priority at our school and we thank Fr. Mark McGuigan and Sr. Anne Houston RSJ for providing religious direction and pastoral support to our school and parish.

Our school is blessed with a staff of hardworking, dedicated professionals who deeply care for children and I thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm in providing quality education to the students in our care. The school continues to build on its strong traditions of educating the whole child and we believe strongly in inclusive education. We also provide many enriching academic, cultural and sporting opportunities encouraging every child to give of their best. The charism of Mary MacKillop, who began the Josephite Sisters, permeates each day at our school.

Parish Priest's Message

St. Patrick's School is a faith based school that lives by Mary MacKillop's model. The children attend Mass once a month and the teachers prepare meaningful liturgies including readings, prayers and music. The sacramental program is a parish based program where families run lessons for the children. Bishop Michael McKenna visits the parish for the Year 6 children's Confirmation. St. Patrick's School implements the Diocesan Religious Education Program on a daily basis.

Parent Body Message

The St. Patrick's School Parents and Friends worked hard to raise funds for the school in 2015. The funds went to the purchase of the new school electronic sign. This sign faces the street, that visitors use to cross the Blue Mountains. Up to date notices include sport news, learning news, religious information and parental news. It is an opportunity to congratulate children, teachers and parents on achievements. This has become an important way we connect to the Lithgow Community.

Funds were raised through the school fete, mothers' and fathers' day stalls, raffles and discos. Many thanks to the hard working band of parents who make up our P & F at St. Patrick's School.

Student Body Message

The students at St. Patrick's are friendly, happy and committed students. They relate well to their peers and to the adults in our learning community. The students have a strong focus on learning and appreciate the teachers' efforts to make their learning meaningful and purposeful. All Year 6 students are leaders within our school and they elect school captains and sports captains who lead our school, very capably. All grades go on an excursion each year which is often the fondest memories of our students as they leave. Our Kindergartens are welcomed with our pathways program. This involves parent meetings, open classrooms, tour of the school, parents and child interview with the principal and ongoing visits to the Kinder classrooms with Kinder teachers. The older children look out for and keep an eye on the younger ones. The buddy system works very well.

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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

St Patrick's School is a parish school, proudly serving the Lithgow Community. St. Patrick's School is a Catholic primary school in the Bathurst Diocese. Our mission is to bring quality Catholic Education and outstanding pastoral care to the children and families. We are a K-6 primary school with two classes in each grade adding up to 14 classes in total. The average class size is 23 and we have a total of 308 students. Lithgow is situated on the western foothills of the Blue Mountains and only an hour and half from Sydney. Our school is located in the centre of the town and easily accessed from all areas of the city and surrounding villages.

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-curricula programs both cultural and sporting. By providing a varied curriculum and extra curricular activities for our students, we offer students the opportunities to develop their own gifts and talents. In 2015 our focus was on learning and student voice and choice. Engagement of all students is our goal.

The staff entered a learning, inquiry journey with regards to contemporary learning. The Model of Christ Centred Learning was the guide for this journey. The focus being on a Rich Catholic Curriculum, Personalised Learning, Expertise and Collaboration, Insight and Meaning and Engaging and Adaptive Environments. Our mantra became "We are educating students for their future not our past." (Ian Jukes)

In 2015, 42 Kindergarten students started their school journey at St. Patrick's. They felt the benefits of a well planned orientation program which we call pathways. They settled in quickly and had a very productive year socially, emotionally and academically.

Students requiring specialist support were able to access the learning support program provided by the learning support teachers and teacher assistants. 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.

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
151	171	9	322

* 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 91.89%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	93.35%
Year 1	91.23%
Year 2	92.59%
Year 3	90.10%
Year 4	92.67%
Year 5	91.41%
Year 6	91.86%

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
23	11	34

* This number includes 16 full-time teachers and 7 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	3%
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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	Professional Learning Communities, WH&S Compliance
Term 2	PLC strategies, Principals' state Catholic Schools Conference
Term 3	Spirituality Day, Formative Assessment
Term 4	Contemporary learning practices and strategies, School visits to observe contemporary learning and literacy blocks, ACEL conference for leadership

In 2015 there was a focus on Professional Learning Communities, Contemporary Learning and Spirituality of staff.

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.	22
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. 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. Our Religious Education Program is given a high priority by all staff and gospel values permeate across the curriculum.

Throughout the year, we encouraged our students to develop their social conscience by supporting a range of charities such as Project Compassion, St. Vincent De Paul, Christmas Appeal, local causes and the staff sponsored a child in the Third World.

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)	
	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's) determined by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Education Standards (BOSTES) . They are English, Mathematics, History and Geography, Science and Technology, PDHPE and Creative Arts. As we are a Catholic School, Religious Education is also a Key Learning Area. All programming by teachers is based on BOSTES documents and school based scope and sequence outlines. Assessment and the use of data to inform learning is used extensively.

Music is important to our community and there is a specialist Music/Drama/Dance teacher. The children also have the opportunity to join the school band, school choir, participate in Eisteddfods and other musical performances. Private music lessons are available through the Mitchell Conservatorium of Music.

There are many opportunities to play a range of school and inter school sports. 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 2015 many students played their sports at Polding Region level and some at National level.

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	61.00%	52.00%	9.00%	11.00%
	Reading	52.00%	48.00%	8.00%	11.00%
	Writing	30.00%	47.00%	15.00%	7.00%
	Spelling	45.00%	41.00%	20.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	43.00%	34.00%	17.00%	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	43.00%	36.00%	5.00%	17.00%
	Reading	40.00%	34.00%	16.00%	18.00%
	Writing	8.00%	19.00%	8.00%	18.00%
	Spelling	35.00%	33.00%	8.00%	15.00%
	Numeracy	21.00%	28.00%	18.00%	16.00%

Student Welfare Policy

The school's Pastoral Care Policy emphasises the importance of the whole school community working together co-operatively to ensure that students and staff are safe within the school environment. The policy outlines the importance of fostering strong self esteem, developing self discipline and concern with the rights of everyone to have a strong and equitable learning environment.

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 is acceptable behaviour, a Student Code of Conduct was implemented. The emphasis was on positive language and expectations. This fits with a Staff Code of Conduct which is 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

Pastoral responsibilities is supported by the school Behaviour Policy and Anti Bullying Policy. The emphasis here is on ensuring that all members of the school community know their rights and responsibilities.

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

The key improvements for 2015 have been the following.

- Professional Learning Communities
- Building positive and collaborative staff community
- Social justice actions
- Spirituality Retreat
- History and Geography introduction and implementation
- WH&S Compliance
- Improvement to learning spaces
- Move towards understanding and implementation of Contemporary Learning.

Priority Key Improvements for 2016

In 2016 the following will be the focus at St. Patrick's School.

- PLC's and Hawker and Brownlow support
- Year of Mercy focus
- Spirituality Retreat
- Literacy and Maths Blocks
- MCCL implementation with leadership from CCL leader
- Contemporary learning journey continues with visits for high performing schools
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SECTION TEN: PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

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

The parents at St. Patrick's agree on the following.

- our school offers a supportive and safe environment
- our school has strong focus on learning that meets their child's needs
- our school displays a wonderful sense of community
- our school is a faith filled community that brings Catholic knowledge, practices and beliefs to the children
- our school follows and lives Mary MacKillop's motto "never see a need without doing something about it"

This information was sourced from the Parents and Friends Association at the school and informal conversations with parents

Student Satisfaction

The following are comments from Year 6 students

I like being at St. Patrick's School because

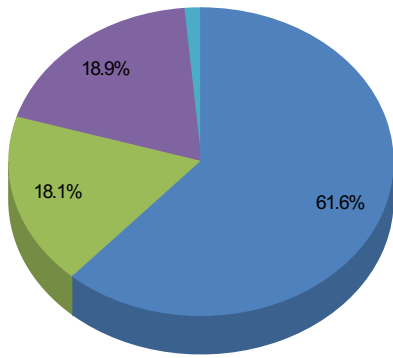
- it is a friendly school and I have many friends
- the teachers care about us
- the teachers really help us with our learning
- we pray to God
- we attend Mass so we can become closer to God
- I can play all the sport I like
- I have a buddy who looks after me
- my teachers are kind
- "never see a need without doing something about it" is a good motto for us

Teacher Satisfaction

Staff at St. Patrick's School find school life satisfying. 80% of staff find it highly satisfying.

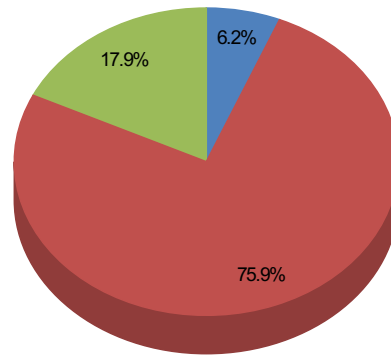
These results were the findings of a whole staff survey on staff satisfaction.

Income



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (61.6%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (18.1%)
- Fees and Private Income (18.9%)
- Other Capital Income (1.4%)

Expenditure



- Capital Expenditure (6.2%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (75.9%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (17.9%)

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.