



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

# Annual School Report to the Community 2015



## St Mary's Primary School Moruya

Queen Street, Moruya 2537

Phone: 02 4474 2817

Email: [office.stmarysmoruya@cg.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office.stmarysmoruya@cg.catholic.edu.au)

Website: [www.stmarysmoruya.nsw.edu.au](http://www.stmarysmoruya.nsw.edu.au)

### **Principal**

Mr Michael Lowe

## Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

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### Principal's Message

This report seeks to outline some of the significant changes that have influenced the operation of St Mary's Primary school over the past twelve months. School numbers have shown a steady increase with an significant increase in the number of Aboriginal children enrolled at St Mary's.

The school community reviewed the Vision and Mission of the school with discussion from staff and parents resulting in the development of new statements. The school underwent a building project during the 2015 school year with four classrooms receiving much needed refurbishment.

This project modernised the classrooms and provided operable glass doors between the learning spaces.

### Parent Body Message

St Mary's has every reason to be proud of the positive and welcoming environment. The staff are to be highly commended on the incredible efforts they make to enhance the education children receive in a variety of ways. Barely a week goes by without a special event which brings families and the community into the heart of the school and parish. Highlights of the year include the sporting carnivals, Feast Day, whole school Masses, Sacramental celebrations, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day breakfasts and Book Week celebrations.

The school choir sings regularly at key community events such as the River of Art and Granite Town Festival, Markets, Shopping Centres and at the local hospital.

The school hosts parent education programs providing strategies for parents to assist their children with literacy and numeracy. Breakfast and Homework Clubs have been established and are well supported. The Events Working Party continues to demonstrate enthusiasm and imagination with regards to fundraising. The end of year Christmas party was an outstanding success.

St Mary's is enjoying continued growth due to a committed and hardworking staff.

### Student Body Message

Children attending our school believe St Mary's is a school where everybody is caring and loving towards others and considerate about their actions towards them. Students believe people are kind and love to laugh. Children enjoy the fun activities and nice teachers and they learn things in fun and cool ways. Children made mention of the opportunity to play Mine Craft during lunch breaks and the opportunity to use the ipads to record their learning. The senior children enjoy the buddy program as they partner with Kinder and Year 1 children and assist them on the playground and in the classroom.

## Section Two: School Features

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St Mary's Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Moruya.

St Mary's enjoys good relationships with the parish and the children from the school attend Mass on a regular basis. St Mary's is part of the three schools that provide pathways for Catholic education in this area. The children from Year 6 met with the children from St Bernard's as they prepared for and celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation at Carroll College. The three schools meet on a regular basis with the Parish Priest to discuss issues and plan events together. The combined three schools Mass is a highlight on the school calendar.

The classrooms are being occupied by the children after a significant refurbishment. New floors and carpets, operable glass doors and new lighting are installed with the assistance of a State Government Grant (BGA) and a loan taken out by the school community.

The leadership of the senior children and Student Representative Council result in the implementation of special event days, a focus on anti bullying, visits to the hospital and aged care facilities and involvement in the community through attendance at ANZAC Day services and participation in Council run competitions.

The participation in NAPLAN is showing pleasing results and improvement for the Year 5 cohort with additional support offered to the Year 3 children to further support their progress. 2016 will see a continued focus on early literacy with the implementation a a new Catholic Education supported strategy.

## Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

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Our school follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

### Religious Life & Religious Education

At St Mary's the children are encouraged and supported to live out their faith in a number of different ways.

Prayer is foundational to all that is done at St Mary's and each day begins with a whole school prayer and each class engages in daily prayer and prayer before meals.

Christian meditation is undertaken in each class at least three times each week.

Attendance at the parish Mass is available to all classes and whole school Masses are held at the beginning and end of each term as well as on special feast days.

Classes present focus assemblies to the school community each term.

Sacramental preparation is a cooperative endeavour involving both parish and school with the parents asked to support the children through discussion and working together through workbooks. The whole school is involved in supporting the Sacramental classes on their journey.

The establishment of a Mini-Vinnies group has motivated the children to reach out to others as they visit the sick and elderly and raise money for Caritas.

The senior children enjoy arranging the Mission Fete each year as they learn about supporting those less fortunate.

For three morning each week volunteer staff and parishioners provide a breakfast club. The breakfast club is open to all students.

Needy families are supported at St Mary's by fee remission, the provision of uniforms through the uniform pool and the supply of lunch and fruit when needed.

## Section Four: Student Profile

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### 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 |
|-------|------|--------|----------------|
| 114   | 128  | 8      | 242            |

\* Language Background Other than English

### Enrolment Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn has established an *Enrolment Policy for Catholic Schools*. The Catholic Education Office monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements.

Information about enrolling in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn may be accessed at the [Catholic Education Office](#) website.

### Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2015 was 91.53%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

| Attendance rates by Year group |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Kindergarten                   | 93% |
| Year 1                         | 91% |
| Year 2                         | 91% |
| Year 3                         | 91% |
| Year 4                         | 89% |
| Year 5                         | 93% |
| Year 6                         | 91% |

### 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 Catholic Education Office designated School Services 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 Five: Staffing Profile

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The following information describes the staffing profile for 2015:

| Total Teaching Staff* | Total Non-Teaching Staff | Combined Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 20                    | 6                        | 26             |

\* This number includes 13 full-time teachers and 7 part-time teachers.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Percentage of staff who are Indigenous | 4% |
|--|----|

### Professional Learning

Staff engaged in professional learning opportunities in line with school priorities and individual goals. The whole staff were involved in rewriting the school Mission and Vision statements as well as involvement in the rewriting of the school discipline and pastoral document. Our Religious education day was a focus on different forms of prayer.

Professor Kaye Lowe led the staff through workshops to reinforce the Inquiry model of literacy teaching. The workshops also included a parent meeting to inform them and invite them to take a greater role in supporting reading at home.

### Teacher Qualifications

All teachers are qualified as required by the relevant authorities.

## Section Six: Academic Profile

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<br>3           | Reading                 | 34%                              | 48%       | 18%                                 | 11%       |
|                     | Writing                 | 29%                              | 47%       | 8%                                  | 7%        |
|                     | Spelling                | 26%                              | 41%       | 26%                                 | 15%       |
|                     | Grammar and Punctuation | 37%                              | 52%       | 18%                                 | 11%       |
|                     | Numeracy                | 30%                              | 34%       | 22%                                 | 15%       |

| NAPLAN RESULTS 2015 |                         | % of students in the top 2 bands |           | % of students in the bottom 2 bands |           |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
|                     |                         | School                           | Australia | School                              | Australia |
| Year<br>5           | Reading                 | 46%                              | 34%       | 12%                                 | 18%       |
|                     | Writing                 | 27%                              | 19%       | 12%                                 | 18%       |
|                     | Spelling                | 35%                              | 33%       | 8%                                  | 15%       |
|                     | Grammar and Punctuation | 50%                              | 36%       | 12%                                 | 17%       |
|                     | Numeracy                | 19%                              | 28%       | 12%                                 | 16%       |

## Section Seven: School Review and Improvement

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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 Plan and informed by the Internal School Review process. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Regional Consultant.

### Key Improvements Achieved in 2015

A key improvement target in Catholic Identity and Faith was a rewriting of the Vision and Mission statement and this has been achieved during the school year. The process involved staff and parent representatives through the Community Council.

Agreed consequences for classroom behaviour have been developed and displayed in all classrooms. Collaborative practices have been improved through the introduction of a mentor system for all staff at St Mary's Primary School. Teaching and learning has been enhanced through provision of opportunities for reflective practice and sharing.

Learning expos for parents have enhanced the partnership between home and school. Literacy and numeracy were targeted during the night time expos.

The provision of additional activities for children in the playground has assisted with behaviour regulation during play times.

A whole staff focus on Inquiry Learning has provided a vehicle to improve the quality of teaching and learning at St Mary's. The focus will be further developed during the 2016 school year.

### Priority Key Improvements for 2016

Our main focus during the 2016 school year will be implementation of the inquiry based literacy block model in all classrooms. The approach will look to improve the quality of reading and writing across all grades at St Mary's. It will involve support from Catholic Education and visits from Professor Kaye Lowe. This will be supported by the implementation of the Early Literacy Initiative and continued support of children through the Numeracy Intervention Program.

The mental health of the children will be the focus of the whole school as we work towards becoming a Kids Matter school. Staff meetings and focus groups will be established to ensure the programme is embedded in the culture at St Mary's. Members of the parent community will be invited to join the focus group.

A focus on oral language will be made during 2016 in Kindergarten with resources and play areas developed to support oral language development.

Staff sharing of expertise will be enhanced with regular sharing sessions run by teachers each week. These sand pit sessions will cover a range of topics of interest to teachers.

## Section Eight: School Policies

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### Student Welfare Policy

The Student Welfare Policy has been redeveloped during the 2015 school year and approved by the Community Council.

The key features of this new policy include belief statements that have been written by all staff. Of these belief statements the idea that discipline needs to be consistent and communicated to all members of the school community was emphasised. The policy seeks to treat all children fairly and not equally. The implementation of the policy has a focus on proactive actions to reward and acknowledge appropriate behaviour. The school continues to care for the welfare of children by providing breakfast on three mornings each week. Whole staff discussion of behavioural issues seeks to keep all informed of potential or developing social issues.

Staff when supervising on the playground use the restorative questions to help deal with issues that may emerge. In classrooms all teachers have displays of the behaviour consequence sequence that is followed at St Mary's. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons to enforce discipline at our school.

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

### Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn Catholic Education Office has established a *Complaints Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Archdiocese. 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.

The full text of the *Complaints Policy* may be accessed on the Catholic Education website at <https://cg.catholic.edu.au>.

Parents are the first educators of their children and as such we take their complaints seriously. If a parent has a complaint about a school issue they are encouraged to make an appointment with their child's teacher. Should it be necessary, a member of the leadership team may be present at the meeting. Should the issue not be resolved then parents are most welcome to discuss the matter with the principal or another member of the leadership team.

At St Mary's school the handling of serious complaints is conducted and investigated in line with Catholic Education policy which is available on the CE website.

## Section Nine: Community Satisfaction

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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 parent survey was completed by 36% of all parents in the school community. The results of the survey indicate that the majority of parents believed that St Mary's is a good school and that their child is happy at school; staff are interested in the children and communication between home and school is good. Parents believe they are made to feel welcome at school and that the school leaders make themselves available to parents. A concern was raised in relation to bullying and the school has responded by examining the anti bullying policy and taking part in the National Action Day Against Bullying. A parent forum on this issue will be held during the 2016 school year.

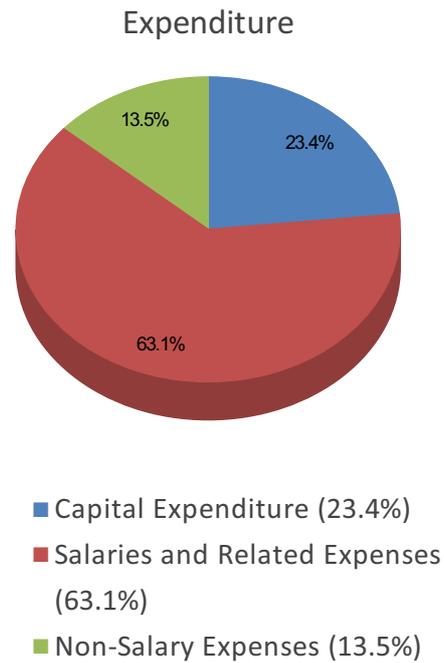
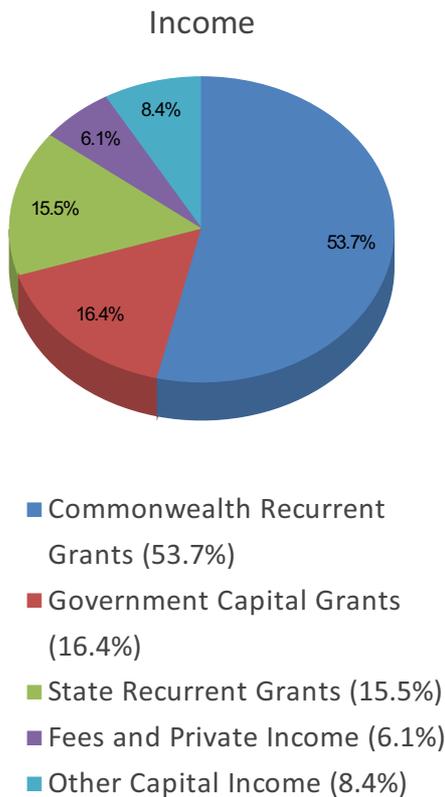
### Student Satisfaction

Children are happy to come to St Mary's and feel they are listened to by their teachers. Children enjoy the opportunity to engage in their learning with comments being made about the improved use of technology across the school. Children enjoy opportunities for different forms of play at lunch and recess breaks. Children are proud of their school and are honoured to represent the school at community functions, sporting carnivals and excursions. Children see the importance of St Mary's being a 'Jesus' school where prayer and celebration are important.

### Teacher Satisfaction

The staff at St Mary's school are the greatest asset of the school. Staff enjoy their work and feel supported in their teaching. Staff are very generous with their time and support events outside their expected work commitments. Staff feel they have a voice in the running of the school with regular administration meetings being conducted. Minutes of meetings are taken and e mailed to all staff to keep them informed of decisions. Staff expressed a desire to have additional electronic communication outlining the coming events for the week. This will be made available during the 2016 school year via a weekly e mail of events.

## Section Ten: Financial Statement



| RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME               |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup> | \$1,902,193        |
| Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>     | \$579,287          |
| State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>        | \$547,699          |
| Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>       | \$217,589          |
| Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>          | \$296,027          |
| <b>Total Income</b>                        | <b>\$3,542,795</b> |

| RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE          |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>           | \$857,368          |
| Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup> | \$2,311,770        |
| Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>           | \$496,338          |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                   | <b>\$3,665,476</b> |

### Notes

- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
- Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
- State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
- Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
- Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
- Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture

and Equipment.

7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes 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.