



Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Evatt, ACT

2013 Annual Report



SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
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This report was prepared by:

Carmel Maguire

PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

St Monica's is a Catholic primary school, catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 in the Belconnen area of Canberra. Our vision of GROWING TOGETHER ~ BELIEVE DISCOVER ACHIEVE encapsulates all we stand for as Catholics and educators for the students of today and tomorrow. As a learning community, the staff at St Monica's provide an enriched, holistic curriculum in which the Gospel values are central to all learning experiences, thus integrating faith and life, in cooperation with our Parish. St Monica's has, as its mission, the formation of the whole child and offers all children many opportunities to enable them to reach their full potential.

School Council Message

The Community Council provides the opportunity for parents to support the mission of Catholic education at St Monica's. By working together with staff the Council provides leadership to the school community by contributing in areas of school policy development, providing parental and community opinion on areas pertaining to student education, as well as engaging in a range of school activities.

Catholic education at St Monica's is truly a partnership between the home and the parish school. As parents we play the key role in the growth, enrichment and education of our children embedded in the Catholic faith, with the daily learning and pastoral environment provided by the school.

Student Representative's Message

This year of 2013 has been one of the best years at St Monica's. The school participated in our concert; showcasing 'Step Back in Time' to celebrate Canberra's 100th Birthday. All the parents loved it and it was a big success. St Monica's also participated in lots of sport carnivals and organised many fundraising events. These events included the School Fete, Walkathon, Book Fair, Jeans for Genes and the Mini Mission fete. We raised over \$15,000 this year for the Walkathon and achieved all our goals. For the mini mission fete we raised over \$1500 which went to the relief efforts in the Philippines. 2013 has been a wonderful year for all the students and teachers. Good luck for 2014.

SCHOOL FEATURES

St Monica's Primary is a Catholic Primary School located in Evatt, ACT. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 461 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 227 male and 234 female students; 4 indigenous students; and 3 with a Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 38 staff comprising 28 teachers and 10 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including school officers, welfare officer, learning support assistants, canteen manager and janitor.

St Monica's endeavours to develop in students problem-solving and thinking skills, within a climate of discovery. Students are provided opportunities to develop understandings across all areas of the curriculum. Programs that enhance the students' learning and promote a healthy balanced lifestyle include Japanese, Music, Drama, Dance, individual music tuition, online learning and a wide range of sporting activities including gymnastics, athletics, cross-country, swimming, football, netball, cricket and basketball. St Monica's is committed to providing innovative, state of the art learning facilities and resources.

The school's website can be found at www.stmonicas.act.edu.au

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Monica's Primary follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

St Monica's Primary bases all its decisions and actions on the Gospel values and from the charism of St Monica. The school motto "Respect" is a key factor in all aspects of school life. During 2013, St Monica's used the theme of 'Community' to explore our Vision Statement: Growing Together - Believe, Discover, Achieve in all areas of the curriculum and community life.

St Monica's Primary School gathers throughout the year with St Monica's Parish community to celebrate liturgies and special feasts together. Invitations to the parish community are extended for occasions such as Ash Wednesday, Mary Help of Christians, the Feast of the Assumption, St Monica's Feast Day and Grandparent's Day. The school provides venues for parish events and supports the annual Mission and St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeals. Class groups join the weekly parish mass throughout the term. Our Parish Priest takes an active role in the school community, with the school and parish working together to build stronger connections. In 2013 students represented the school at a Mass to celebrate the Centenary of Canberra and the installation of our new Archbishop.

Prayer is an integral part of school life with classes praying every morning. The school community gathers on a weekly basis to pray for each other and in response to particular needs. School prayer takes as its focus appropriate liturgical celebrations and our school values. Each class leads the prayer sessions and an invitation is extended to all members of the community to join us each Wednesday afternoon in St Monica's Church.

Sacramental programs at St Monica's School are based on a parish/school partnership. The following Sacramental timetable applies: Sacrament of Penance - Year 3, First Eucharist - Year 4, Confirmation - Year 6. This year St Monica's trialed a new format for the Confirmation Program holding a parent and child night at the school replacing the Home Groups. Home groups continue to be a focus of the Eucharist and Reconciliation programs.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN

Students in **Years 3 and 5** sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) in May this year. 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.

School and National Mean Scale Scores

| YEAR 3 | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar & Punctuation | Numeracy |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| National | 419 | 416 | 411 | 428 | 397 |
| School | 435 | 433 | 434 | 466 | 409 |

| YEAR 5 | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar & Punctuation | Numeracy |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| National | 502 | 478 | 494 | 501 | 486 |
| School | 514 | 497 | 503 | 514 | 475 |

Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

| YEAR 3 | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar & Punctuation | Numeracy |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| National | 95% | 95% | 94% | 95% | 96% |
| School | 95% | 100% | 96% | 96% | 95% |

| YEAR 5 | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar & Punctuation | Numeracy |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| National | 96% | 92% | 93% | 95% | 93% |
| School | 90% | 94% | 82% | 95% | 77% |

Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

| YEAR 3 | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar & Punctuation | Numeracy |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Band 6 | 25% | 16% | 26% | 28% | 12% |
| Band 5 | 30% | 40% | 23% | 33% | 32% |
| Band 4 | 26% | 32% | 28% | 30% | 30% |
| Band 3 | 14% | 12% | 19% | 5% | 21% |
| Band 2 | 3% | 0% | 6% | 2% | 5% |
| Band 1 | 2% | 0% | 0% | 2% | 0% |

| YEAR 5 | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar & Punctuation | Numeracy |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Band 8 | 17% | 7% | 5% | 20% | 7% |
| Band 7 | 25% | 20% | 37% | 27% | 10% |
| Band 6 | 33% | 30% | 25% | 20% | 30% |
| Band 5 | 15% | 37% | 15% | 32% | 30% |
| Band 4 | 10% | 7% | 17% | 3% | 17% |
| Band 3 | 0% | 0% | 5% | 2% | 5% |

The above tables show that the students achieved significantly above the National Mean - Year 5 in Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation and Year 3 in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. The above tables show that the students achieved at or above the Minimum Standard in Year 3 in Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation and in Year 5 in Writing and Grammar and Punctuation. The above tables show that a significant number of students in Year 3 are performing in Bands 4 to 6 in all areas, and a significant number of students in Year 5 performed in Bands 5 to 8 in all areas.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Enrolment Policy

In enrolling students we are directed by the Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy which can be found on the Annual Report page of the school's website or on the Catholic Education Office website at <http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx>

Parents wishing to enrol their child into St Monica's can do so by contacting the school directly or visiting the school website to obtain an enrolment package.

Attendance Policy

St Monica's adheres to the requirements of the ACT policy regarding school attendance. Parents are required to notify the school, of all absences from school which are recorded daily. This notification is via an email or a written note. Unexplained absences are followed up by the class teacher who contacts the parents. If there are concerns about patterns of absence or long unexplained periods of absence, the teacher informs the Principal who will contact the family.

If attendance becomes a challenge for a student or family, teachers are committed to working closely with appropriate individuals, parents and community organisations having regard for social, cultural and religious factors associated with indigenous students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and socially disadvantaged students.

When school procedures are not successful families are invited, by the Principal to meet, with an authorised person for the purposes of working together to resolve issues that may be hindering the child's regular attendance. Parents must comply with this request. The role of

the authorised person will vary in each case, depending on individual circumstances. The Principal informs the Catholic Education Office of serious attendance issues and if necessary the relevant authorities.

Students who take extended leave during term time may be given substitute work. This is at the discretion of the teacher, after discussion with parents. Parents are also advised of school events, including assessment, which will be missed during such leave.

Student Welfare, Pastoral Care and Anti-Bullying Policy

At St Monica's the behaviour management approach is based on the School Wide Positive Behaviours Support framework. The system of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support complements the way we conduct our daily lives as people in a Catholic School. The focus of Positive Behaviour Support at St Monica's is contained in the statement of our 3 basic rules: When I am Being Respectful, Responsible and Safe, I am being my best. At St Monica's we have a positive learning environment developed through a proactive whole school approach which assists teachers to define, teach, and support appropriate student behaviours.

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, Pastoral Care and Anti-Bullying Policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. A full text of the school policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

In 2013, the school underwent renewal of Registration. This provided the community with an opportunity to review improvements achieved in student learning and to provide direction for future growth. The external team affirmed the school's initiatives and successes and worked with the Leadership team to identify future directions. These include aligning classroom practice with the need for a differentiated approach to meeting the specific needs of students; apply purposeful assessment to effectively inform teaching and learning; develop and use a teacher mentor model to assist in promoting a culture of high performance across the school; and consolidate the many positive initiatives currently offered by the school. Throughout 2013 the teachers continued to develop their understanding of pedagogy in reading and the development of strategies to improve student engagement. This has been achieved by teachers mentoring one another and the engagement of a consultant to assist staff to effectively differentiate their classroom programs and activities to maintain a high level of student engagement.

Priorities for 2014 will include a major focus on Mathematics to improve student performance. The introduction of the Mathematics Framework will foster an inquiry approach to learning and a focus on problem solving.

Teachers will continue to develop their understandings of pedagogy in Literacy, further develop their understandings of differentiation in teaching and learning and the improvement of assessment strategies. Work will continue on the Australian Curriculum with the introduction and trialling of units of work in the area of Geography.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Professional Learning

All teachers have been involved in professional learning during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff to improve student outcomes. Professional learning can take many forms including whole staff days, subject specific inservices, meetings and conferences.

The school held five whole staff days in 2013. The content of these days was as follows: the development of an understanding of the First Steps Reading resource; understanding and development of Smart Goals to improve student learning; the demonstration of effective Physical Education strategies to improve student skill and technique; CPR; skills to improve IT use in the classroom through the use of LIFE; and staff faith formation and spirituality. Additional professional development and training offered to all staff throughout the year included: Development of a school core curriculum document and alignment of policies across the school (Term 1) Reading strategies, Programming with the Australian Curriculum in Mathematics (Term 2); Understanding the National Teaching Standards, Staff mentoring and feedback. iPads in the classroom, Review program - Make Jesus Real, Programming Mathematics using Understanding by Design (Term 3); Effective data analysis using NAPLAN results, Anaphylaxis training, Staff goal setting against the national teaching standards (Term 4).

Teacher Qualifications

All 26 teachers at St Monica's Primary are qualified as required by the relevant State and Territory bodies.

TEACHER ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

The average teacher attendance rate during 2013 was 96.5%.

The teacher retention rate from 2012 to 2013 was 72%. Six teachers took up teaching positions in other educational institutions including the Australian Catholic University and a consultancy position at the Catholic Education Office in the ACT. Other teachers not retained has been filling temporary contacts.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The average student attendance for the school during 2013 was 94.1%.

School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Kindergarten | 94% |
| Year 1 | 93.4% |
| Year 2 | 93.6% |
| Year 3 | 94.7% |
| Year 4 | 94.7% |
| Year 5 | 93.9% |
| Year 6 | 94% |

PARENT, TEACHER AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

The opinions of parents, students and teachers were sought covering a range of aspects including school effectiveness.

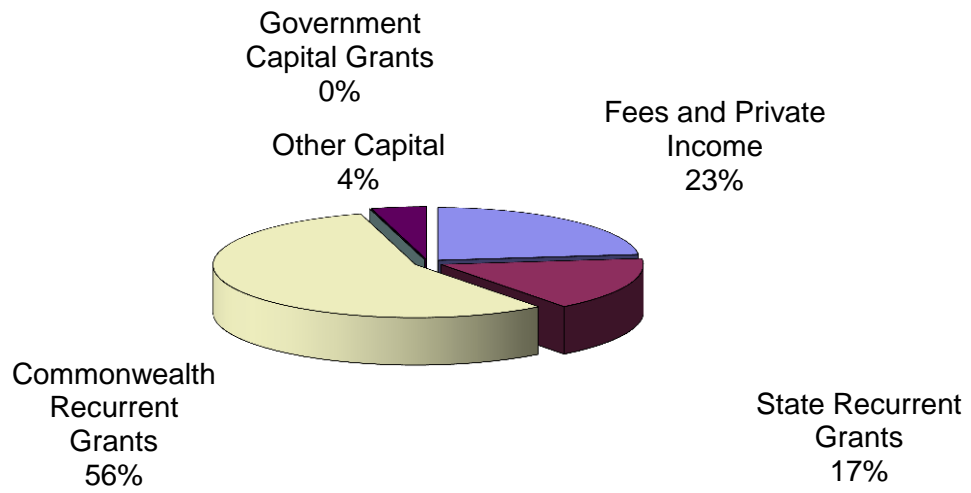
Parents – Twenty eight families responded to the school wide annual survey which represented 9% of the parent community. The parents who responded were very positive towards the school. They viewed the school as being welcoming and provided a genuine experience of community for students, parents and teachers; they acknowledged that the teachers were committed to and interested in the development of their students and strived to provide high quality education, giving emphasis to the fundamental literacy and numeracy skills required for both learning and life; and that St Monica’s met the pastoral needs of their child/ren. Parents indicated that they felt a valued part of the community; they were kept well informed of school events through various modes of communication and offered a wide variety of ways to actively engage in the life of the school. An area identified for ongoing promotion was an awareness of the school's Student Welfare, Pastoral Care and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Teachers - Thirty staff, representing 75% of the teaching and support staff, responded to the annual survey with the results indicating a positive response to the school. The key areas that rated very highly were: there are clear goals and expectations for the staff and acknowledgement that staff set good examples and encourage student responsibility; staff were provided opportunities for professional development; there is a positive ethos where individuals are respected as a professional and the various staff roles are valued; staff members received recognition from their colleagues and school initiatives were executed strategically. The key areas for ongoing growth include developing processes regarding staff involvement in decision making and developing consistency of approaches to student management across the school.

Students – All students from Kindergarten to Year 6 took part in the annual survey. Most children agreed or strongly agreed that they found the school a caring environment where the teachers put a lot of energy into their teaching and preparation; students are expected to act responsibly and are encouraged to improve the standard of their work; and the school is well resourced and offers a wide range of extra curricula activities. Issues raised by a small percentage of the students included the need to work on keeping the school grounds clean and tidy; teachers providing more feedback; and assistance when they experience difficulty with class work.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

St Monica's Evatt - Income



St Monica's Evatt - Expenditure

