



Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Evatt, ACT

2014 Annual Report



SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

St Monica's Primary School 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 Primary School 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 Primary School considers its mission to be 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 Primary School. 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 Primary School 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

2014 has been one of St Monica's Primary School's greatest years. Years 5 and 6 participated in a Wakakirri Story Dance Competition, presenting "*City Of Shadows - Fall From Grace*". The students were so excited because of how well we were received by the audience. We made the finals and had heaps of fun even though we did not win. St Monica's Primary School also participated in lots of sport carnivals and the SRC organised many fundraising events. These events included the St Monica's Primary School Fete, Book Fair, 65 Roses, SIDS 4 kids, The Biggest Morning Tea and the Mini Mission Fete. Another major school event was our Annual Walkathon. 2014 has been a wonderful year for all the students and teachers. Good luck for 2015!

SCHOOL FEATURES

St Monica's Primary School is a Catholic Primary School located in Evatt, ACT. The school caters for students from Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 475 students. Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 211 male and 264 female students; 2 Indigenous students; and 11 students with a Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 39 staff comprising 30 teachers and 9 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including School Officers, Welfare Officer, Learning Support Assistants, Canteen Manager and Janitor. No staff members identify as Indigenous. St Monica's Primary School endeavours to develop the student's 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 and netball. St Monica's Primary School is committed to providing innovative, learning facilities and resources including iPads. The school's website can be found at www.stmonicas.act.edu.au.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Monica's Primary School follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*. St Monica's Primary School bases all of 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 2014, St Monica's Primary School used the theme of 'Belonging' 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 feast days. 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 Grandparents 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.

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 Primary 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. The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are complemented by the Home Group program.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN

Students in **Years 3 and 5** sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) tests 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	402	412	426	402
School	436	414	416	449	410

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	501	468	498	504	487
School	514	453	494	509	495

Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	94%	94%	93%	94%	95%
School	95%	99%	95%	97%	97%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	93%	90%	93%	93%	93%
School	100%	95%	95%	97%	97%

Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 6	40%	5%	23%	38%	21%
Band 5	16%	45%	27%	26%	23%
Band 4	22%	26%	19%	19%	18%
Band 3	13%	18%	13%	12%	26%
Band 2	4%	4%	12%	3%	9%
Band 1	5%	1%	5%	3%	3%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 8	20%	0%	11%	20%	5%
Band 7	18%	1%	20%	20%	18%
Band 6	25%	26%	31%	21%	40%
Band 5	23%	49%	25%	28%	25%
Band 4	14%	18%	9%	8%	9%
Band 3	0%	5%	5%	3%	3%

The above tables show that the students achieved significantly above the National Mean - Year 3 in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy and Year 5 in Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. The 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 Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. The tables indicate 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 6 to 8 in Reading, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy.

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 Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (CEO) website at <http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx>

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

Attendance Policy

St Monica's Primary School adheres to the requirements of the CEO ACT policy regarding school attendance. Parents are required to notify the school of all absences from school which are recorded daily at the commencement and conclusion of each day. 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 absences or long unexplained periods of absence, the teacher will inform 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 Primary School 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 Primary School is contained in the statement of our three basic rules: When I am Being Respectful, Responsible and Safe, I am being my best. At St Monica's Primary School 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.

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.

PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

In 2014, professional learning teams (PLTs) were developed to promote professional dialogue in key areas of need – Religious Education, English, Mathematics and Assessment. Staff meeting time was given to allow PLTs to meet and plan along with time to showcase and share with the whole staff. Staff had the opportunity to engage in the sharing of personal reflections on results from individual projects with colleagues and propose future direction for professional learning and the improvement of pedagogy and student results.

PLTs focused on the Helen Timperley Inquiry Cycle and centred their discussions and research on student need and improving student learning outcomes.

St Monica's Primary School Teachers professional goals were developed in 2014 with a Professional Learning Coach. The coach mentored teachers in the development of goal setting aimed at student improvement, Assessment for Learning and developing an understanding of the National Professional Standards for Teachers and Principals.

The Assessment PLT was established to evaluate, develop, plan and lead a review of current assessment practice across the school.

- The team explored how to consistently record student learning for the preparation of semester reporting and use effective assessment strategies that inform future learning centering on each individual learner.
- In 2014 formative assessment strategies were trialled and team members explored the effectiveness on learning of setting learning intentions, self/peer-assessment and feedback.
- The Assessment PLT identified the development of students knowing and the use of the 3 key questions in relation to their learning; Where am I going? How am I doing? Where to next?

The English PLT was established to focus on improving levels of inferential comprehension, an area of concern identified in the 2013 NAPLAN analysis.

- Research was carried out and discussed to establish a common understanding of Reading Comprehension Strategies with a focus on Inferring.
- Teachers trialled a variety of resources to explicitly teach inferential comprehension for implementation across the school.

The Mathematics PLT was established to improve the teaching and learning in numeracy and engagement of students, as identified in 2013 by teachers and through NAPLAN analysis.

- The PLT researched and explored feedback and how effective spontaneous 1:1 feedback was over written comments.
- The PLT conducted surveys with groups of students exploring spontaneous and written feedback. They compared the differences between providing scaffolding or no scaffolding when teaching and how effective both methods were. Results were collated and summarised.
- The PLT focused on using Neumann's Prompts to scaffold students for success with problem solving and introduced a range of strategies through RUCSAC (Read, Underline, Calculation, Solve, Answer and Check) to engage students in their learning.

The Religious Education PLT was established to develop a greater understanding of assessment through the use of Understanding by Design (UbD) in programming.

- The team reviewed the current practice and the relevance of Student Outcomes and the assessment activities were evaluated.
- The UbD process was chosen as the strategy to focus teacher's attention on the assessment tasks required for a unit.
- Teachers focused on assessment as the starting point for unit development with the use of assessment rubrics to provide feedback to students.

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 in-services, meetings and conferences.

The school held five whole staff days in 2014. The content of these days was as follows:

- CEO Mathematics Framework, Literacy with Angela Elmer,
- Staff Spirituality,
- Review of Professional Code of Conduct, and
- the use of iPad Apps for classroom use to support student learning.

In 2014 St Monica's Primary School introduced the development of four professional learning teams (PLTs) - Religious Education, Literacy, Numeracy and Assessment. Each team met twice a term to research, explore and share specific strategies to improve student achievement and engagement in the nominated area. The findings were shared with the full

staff at the end of each semester. Further to these PLT sessions, staff were involved in training aimed at supporting students through:

- the development Individual Plans for identified students;
- workshops with a focus on Mathematical problem solving strategies and Aboriginal Education;
- implementation of KidsMatter;
- attendance at the Edutech Conference, Positive Partnership course and Leadership conferences;
- staff coaching and individual goal setting to improve student learning;
- First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training, and;
- the completion of the online University of Canberra Certificate - Disability Standards.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers are qualified as required by the relevant State and Territory bodies.

TEACHER ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

The average teacher attendance rate during 2014 was 92%.

The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 78%.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The average student attendance for the school during 2014 was 94%.

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

Attendance rates by Year group

Kindergarten	94%
Year 1	92%
Year 2	94%
Year 3	94%
Year 4	94%
Year 5	95%
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

Ninety five parents responded to the school wide annual survey. The parents who responded were positive towards the school. They viewed the school as being a good and safe school where their child was happy to go to school and staff took an interest in their child. Parents indicated they found the school website and the skoolbag app effective tools for communication and keeping parents well informed of school events. They also found the teachers and school executive approachable and made parents feel very welcome. The parents acknowledged that the school takes a balanced approach in providing an all-round education and is well equipped. The key areas identified for improvement include the

communication with parents regarding specific student progress, the school reporting process and the immediacy of responding to parents' requests for information or a meeting.

Teachers

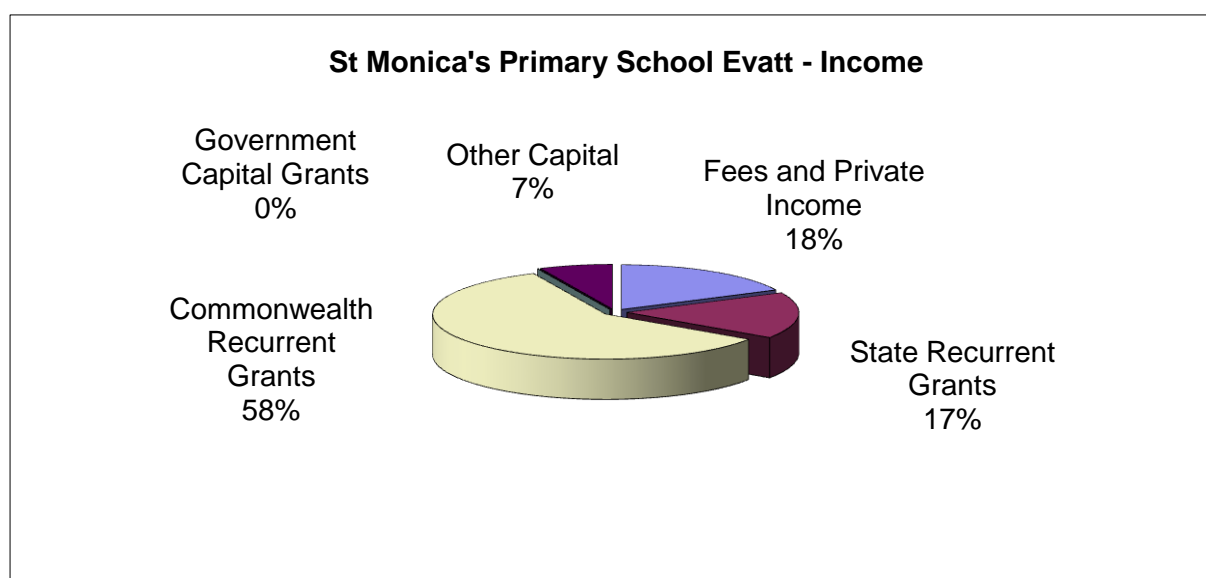
Thirty five staff, representing 80% of the teaching and support staff, responded to the annual survey with the results indicating a positive response to the school. The key areas that rated highly with staff included:

- a belief that their work made a difference to the students,
- that their work at school was important, that they achieved a lot of satisfaction from working in the school and that St Monica's Primary School was a good place in which to work.
- acknowledgement that the school is a well-organised place in which to work and that they have the required resources to carry out their role.
- Staff indicated they were aware of the current school priorities and the reason why the change initiatives were being undertaken. The key areas for ongoing growth include the provision for feedback from colleagues and executive staff regarding successes and areas of growth, access to professional development, staff communication and the management of work demands.

Students

Four Hundred and forty four students from Kindergarten to Year 6 took part in the annual survey, representing 94% of the student enrolment. Most children agreed or strongly agreed that they liked being at school and felt safe, they did interesting things, received a good education, felt accepted by other students and that the school celebrated student achievements. Issues raised by a small percentage of the students included the need to work on keeping the school grounds clean and tidy, listening to student opinions and improving the access to computers, laptops and iPads for student use.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION



St Monica's Primary School Evatt - Expenditure

