

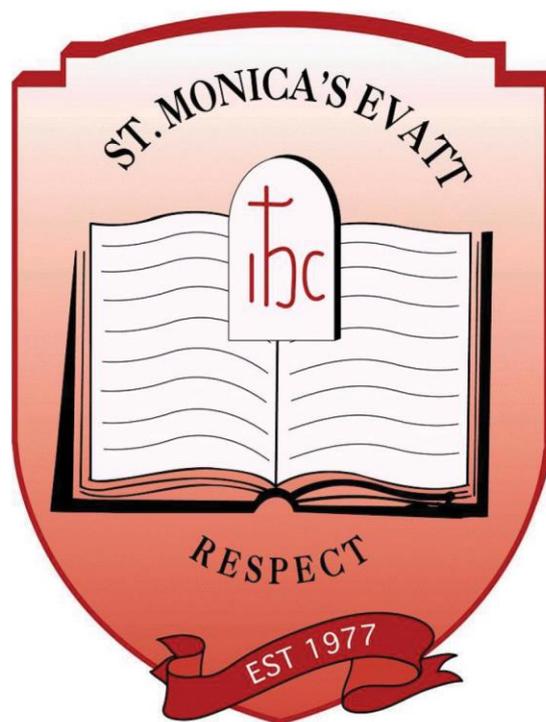


Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Evatt, ACT

2010 ANNUAL REPORT



Welcome to our School

Welcome to St Monica's Primary School!

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 provides an enriched, holistic, integrated 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 strives to enable all students to achieve a high standard of learning and individual achievement by differentiating the curriculum to meet the various learning needs of students.

The curriculum units developed at St Monica's are based on four BIG ideas - Community, Environment, Choices and Change. The development of these concepts, through a range of topics, caters for different learning styles and endeavours to develop problem-solving and thinking skills, within a climate of discovery, using an inquiry approach. Students are provided opportunities to develop an understanding of Science, Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education and Technology.

Programs that further enhance the students' learning and promote a healthy balanced lifestyle include Japanese, music, drama, dance and participation in a range of sporting activities including gymnastics. Students are encouraged to become involved in interschool and regional sporting competitions including athletics, cross-country, swimming, football, netball, cricket and basketball.

The use of technology is incorporated into many aspects of the curriculum with Interactive Whiteboards and computers located in all classrooms and the Library. The introduction of online learning, in 2010, further enhanced the learning opportunities for the students. St Monica's provides students with a variety of enrichment opportunities including Tournament of Minds, Wakakarri, Rostrum, Choir, and individual music tuition. St Monica's is committed to providing innovative, state of the art learning facilities where parental involvement is encouraged and valued.

Highlights of the Year

In 2010 St Monica's was buzzing with activity, energy and exciting learning experiences. Several of the key highlights and achievements include:

- the completion of the up-grade of our courtyard, including landscaping and sails, the building of our new and impressive school hall and improvements to the outdoor basketball courts. These improvements were made possible due to various grants received and the generosity of parents to raise funds to support targeted school initiatives.
- a very successful school Fete. The Fete is a wonderful annual event that focuses on bringing the school community together. The theme for this year's Fete 'Our community - you belong, now be a part of it', reflected the desire of the parents and teachers to bring the community together.
- the generosity of the community to support those in need. As part of the student leadership program the senior children actively engaged in coordinating a range of special fund raising events and activities including the Mini-Mission Fete. Funds raised support the less fortunate both in the local community and overseas.
- many special school celebrations. Throughout the year the school community came together in a variety of ways to acknowledge and celebrate special events. These events included: Grandparent's Day, a Father's Day Breakfast and stall and a Mother's Day stall and afternoon tea.
- involvement in extra-curricular activities. This year two teams took part in Tournament of Minds, several students participated in the GATEWAYS program, Year 3-6 students participated in the Chief Minister's Reading Challenge, MS Read-a-thon and the Australian Mathematics Challenge and Competition. Many sporting teams competed in a range of sporting events with the K-Year 2 students participating in an AFL Super Clinic and Years 3-4 students participating in an AFL Gala Day.
- opportunities to engage in stimulating experiences that supported specific areas of inquiry or raised awareness in a range of issues. These experiences included excursions to see Wombat Stew, Lanyon, Symphony for Kids, AIS Swimming and Water Safety Program, the Year 5 and 6 camps and visits by several authors during Children's Book Week, Healthy Harold and representatives from the AFP, SES and the ACT Fire Brigade.
- refinement of the differentiated curriculum. This has been achieved through the implementation of the Numeracy Project in Years 3 and 4.

School Overview

Parent Satisfaction –

Forty-eight families responded to the school wide annual survey. Parents were very positive towards the school as they agreed or strongly agreed with the following - the Catholic ethos and values were obvious, staff were approachable and parents were provided opportunities to meet with teachers regarding student progress, the school provides a safe environment and was adequately resourced and parents were kept well informed and provided opportunities to be involved. Areas for improvement include the provision of activities to cater for individual needs, in particular the extension of students and information provided on the school report.

Teacher Satisfaction -

Fifteen staff responded to the annual survey with the results indicating a positive response to the school. The key areas that rated highly include: staff were provided opportunities for professional development, they were involved in decisions that affected their workplace and felt their role was important; colleagues set good examples for the students and encouraged student responsibility and the school encouraged a climate conducive to learning. Areas for future growth include management of change, decision making processes and the consistency of approach to student management.

Teacher Absence –

The average number of days teachers were in attendance in 2010 was 194.9 or 96%. The total number of days in the school year was 204.

Teacher Retention –

Of the 30 teaching staff at St Monica's, in August 2009, 25 or 83% were still at the school in August 2010. Of those staff not retained one moved overseas, two took up positions in other locations and two members completed temporary contracts.

Teacher Qualifications –

All the 30 teaching staff at St Monica's are dedicated, highly qualified professionals who are committed to improving their knowledge and qualifications when opportunities become available. All full time teaching staff hold a Bachelor of Education. Five teachers hold a Masters with another teacher nearing completion. Two teachers are completing a Graduate Certificate in Religious Education.

Teacher Participation in Professional Development –

Throughout 2010 the teachers participated in a range of professional learning activities. These activities included Student Management, Literacy Blocks, First Steps Writing, Write On, Brain Gym, Mental Computations, Godly Play, Assessment and CPR.

During 2010 the teaching staff attended courses in the following areas:

Leadership: Annual Principal, Assistant Principal and Religious Educator Retreats, Principal Leadership Workshops, Library Conference, CPR and Anaphylaxis Training.

Teaching and Learning: ACT Curriculum Implementation, Early Career Teacher Induction Day, Downs Syndrome, Dyspraxia Workshop, Positive Partnerships, Primary Connections, Literacy, Numeracy, Emotional Intelligence.

Technology: Interactive Whiteboards, Activinspire Online Learning.

Workforce Composition –

St Monica's is staffed by the Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, two Primary Coordinators, full time and part time teachers, teacher librarian, learning support teacher, five learning support assistants, an office administrator and finance officer, canteen manager, groundsman and a visiting counsellor.

Principal's Report

St Monica's Primary School 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 2010, St Monica's continued to embed the Vision Statement: Growing Together Believe, Discover, Achieve into all areas of the curriculum and community life.

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 our school values, which have been developed from the 'Values for Australian Schools'. Each class leads the prayer sessions and an open invitation is extended to all members of the community to join us each Wednesday afternoon.

St Monica's Primary School celebrates special events and liturgies throughout the year with St Monica's parish community. Invitations to the parish community are extended for occasions such as Ash Wednesday, Mary Help of Christians, St Monica's Feast day and Grandparent's Day. The School provides venues for Parish events and supports the annual St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal. 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 2010 our school leaders were fortunate to attend the Archdiocesan Masses for NAIDOC and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Sacramental Programs at St Monica's School are based on a parish/school partnership. This year saw the implementation of the new schedule for the reception of the Sacraments: the Sacrament of Penance - Year 3, First Eucharist - Year 4, Confirmation - Year 6. Parents are actively involved in these programs through participation in the Home Group component of the program.

Teachers at St Monica's show great care and dedication to the students. Many hours are spent in preparation to ensure lessons are meaningful to students. Our strong focus on education, based on the inquiry approach, prepares our students for future learning.

Carmel Maguire
Principal

School Community Report

St. Monica's has been involved in many exciting events and activities this year. Not only have we been involved in local and territory events, but also national competitions.

Many students were involved in the World Maths Day, Australian Mathematics Challenge and the Australian Mathematics Competition. St Monica's achieved very good results with one student receiving a Distinction and a special award from the Australian Mathematics Trust. St Monica's is very proud of everyone who entered the competition.

This year the Year 5 and 6 students went to Cooba for their camps. Both year groups enjoyed activities such as: canoeing, buggy driving, Dragon Boating, and The Gladiator Challenge. The students will remember the great time they had on camps.

St Monica's raised money for many charities including: Jeans for Genes Day, The Starlight Foundation and Caritas. The SRC were responsible for organising and running these events and learnt a lot about the importance of helping others.

St Monica's has had many talented athletes representing the school and has been involved in many sporting activities including: Catholic Schools Netball and Soccer Carnivals, Boorowa Touch and Netball Carnival, Matt Giteau Cup, Super 8s Cricket and the Weet Bix TRYATHLON. In 2010 the school entered the Minister's Challenge, 'Healthy Active Kids for Kids' Competition. As a result of our great efforts we won \$1500 for the school.

This year 'Rising Generations' spent the day with Year 6 teaching them many valuable lessons about effective leadership, how to look after children and how to be excellent role models.

Year 5 and 6 entered the National Story Dance Competition, Wakakirri. After many rehearsals we were ready for the performance. We were very proud of our production titled 'Avatar'.

The students have all enjoyed what has been on offer at our wonderful school and look forward to another busy year in 2011.

Report prepared by Year 6 Leaders.

Student Achievement

The following tables show the school's results in the national testing of literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN) in 2010.

School and National Mean Scale Scores

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	414.3	418.6	399.2	416.9	395.3
School	423.6	438.4	404.3	429.9	414.9

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	487.3	485.2	487.1	499.7	488.7
School	507.2	493.6	498.7	515.0	494.8

The above tables show that the Year 3 and Year 5 students achieved significantly above the National Mean in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. The results indicate the success of interventions put in place in 2010 in these Key Learning Areas.

Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	93.9%	95.6%	91.0%	92.0%	94.2%
School	94%	100%	95%	94%	100%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	91.3%	93.1%	91.9%	92.2%	93.6%
School	97%	100%	96%	97%	97%

The above tables show that Year 3 and Year 5 students are all working significantly above the National Minimum Standard in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. The results indicate the success of interventions put in place in 2010 in these Key Learning Areas.

Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 6	27%	24%	11%	26%	21%
Band 5	19%	40%	32%	34%	16%
Band 4	32%	23%	24%	18%	26%
Band 3	8%	8%	19%	11%	26%
Band 2	6%	5%	8%	5%	10%
Band 1	6%	0%	5%	6%	0%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 8	18%	6%	7%	12%	10%
Band 7	16%	15%	27%	34%	15%
Band 6	25%	49%	32%	22%	33%
Band 5	23%	17%	22%	16%	32%
Band 4	15%	14%	8%	12%	7%
Band 3	3%	0%	4%	3%	3%

The above tables show that St Monica's has a significant number of students performing in Bands 4 to 6 in Year 3 in Writing and Grammar and Punctuation and above Bands 3 to 6 in Reading, Spelling and Numeracy. St Monica's has a significant number of students in Year 5 in Bands 7 and 8 in Grammar and Punctuation and a significant number of students in Bands 6 to 8 in Writing, Spelling and Numeracy.

Student Wellbeing and Engagement

St Monica's has a current enrolment of 460 students made up of 247 girls and 213 boys. St Monica's is a happy place: a warm and safe environment where shared beliefs and consistent expectations provide a framework of support to encourage each individual to grow and learn. Students, staff and parents are valued, have a right to be safe and happy and have responsibility for the care of others. St Monica's school motto of 'respect' permeates our relationships with each other.

St Monica's has a detailed Student Management and Pastoral Care Policy that clearly identifies the steps taken to address behavioural issues including bullying that may occur on the playground and in the classroom. The behaviour management approach is based on positive relationships, Restorative Practices, Stop Think Do, Friendly Schools Friendly Families and the Stride program. The emphasis is on students being responsible for their behaviour and making informed choices. In 2010, the staff reviewed the behaviour management policy and embedded three key school rules - As we grow together we will be: Safe, Responsible and Respectful. Each week the school community focuses on a different aspect of a school rule. This is promoted in the classrooms, at assemblies and in the weekly school newsletter.

Additional policies developed to promote the safety of the students include the use of mobile phones, visitors to the school and expectations of volunteers when working with students on and off the school grounds.

St Monica's currently receives an Australian Government Chaplaincy grant to employ an additional staff member to support and facilitate the connection of students within the school community and the wider community in general. At St Monica's the Chaplaincy Program attends to the pastoral and sacramental wellbeing of students, staff and parents by offering specialised programs including Seasons for Growth. The Chaplaincy Coordinator supports children with friendships and poor self image. Social skill and anger management programs have been developed to assist students to develop a positive self image and skills to deal with conflict.

Student Satisfaction –

A cross section of 60% of students, from Kindergarten to Year 6, took part in the annual survey. A high percentage agreed or strongly agreed that the school is a caring environment where they are helped with their work when having difficulties, they are expected to act responsibly, expectations are clear, the teachers put a lot of energy and preparation into teaching and a wide range of opportunities and resources to assist learning are provided. Many students agreed that the school could be made much cleaner and that student management needs to be consistent.

Student Attendance –

The average student attendance rate at St Monica's is based on the sample period in May. The results are Kindergarten - 92%, Year 1 – 94%, Year 2 - 92%, Year 3 - 92%, Year 4 - 94%, Year 5 - 92% and Year 6 - 89%. All absences were due to either illness or family holiday arrangements.

School Based Policies

Management of Non-attendance –

Each year staff review the school policy relating to notification of absences. Parents are required to advise, in writing, the reason for a child's absence. Unexplained or absences of concern are brought to the attention of the Principal. If required families are provided with support should attendance be an issue.

Enrolment –

When enrolling students we are directed by the Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy which can be found on the Catholic Education Office's (CEO) website at http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/schools/act_enrolment.htm

Behaviour –

A full text of the new St Monica's Student Welfare and Pastoral Care agreed practice can be obtained on request from the School Office.

Complaints and Grievances –

St Monica's follows CEO policy when dealing with complaints and grievances. Refer to the following website for an outline of all related policies <http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/policies/complaints.htm>

Priorities and Targets

Priorities and Targets for 2010

- ongoing development and implementation of the Student Management and Pastoral Care Policy
- the improvement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students, targeting students who are not reaching the benchmarks and exploring ways to extend students achieving above their year level
- review of Big Ideas inline with the ACT Curriculum - Every Chance to Learn
- introduction and development of an effective music program from Kindergarten to Year 6
- refine the roles and responsibilities of the School Council Executive consistent with the new draft Constitution.

The area where St Monica's celebrated particular success in 2010 was in the area of Numeracy. This has been attributed to a school wide focus on the development of an effective pedagogical approach, informative and ongoing staff professional development, targeted small group sessions and the use of assessment tools to monitor student progress.

Priorities and Targets for 2011

- introduction and trialling of the National Curriculum for English and Science
- further development of the Student Management and Pastoral Care Policy
- the continued improvement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students, targeting students who are not reaching the benchmarks, and exploring ways to extend students achieving above their year level
- introduction and trialling of Primary Connections Science consistent with the ACT Curriculum - Every Chance to Learn.

Literacy and Numeracy

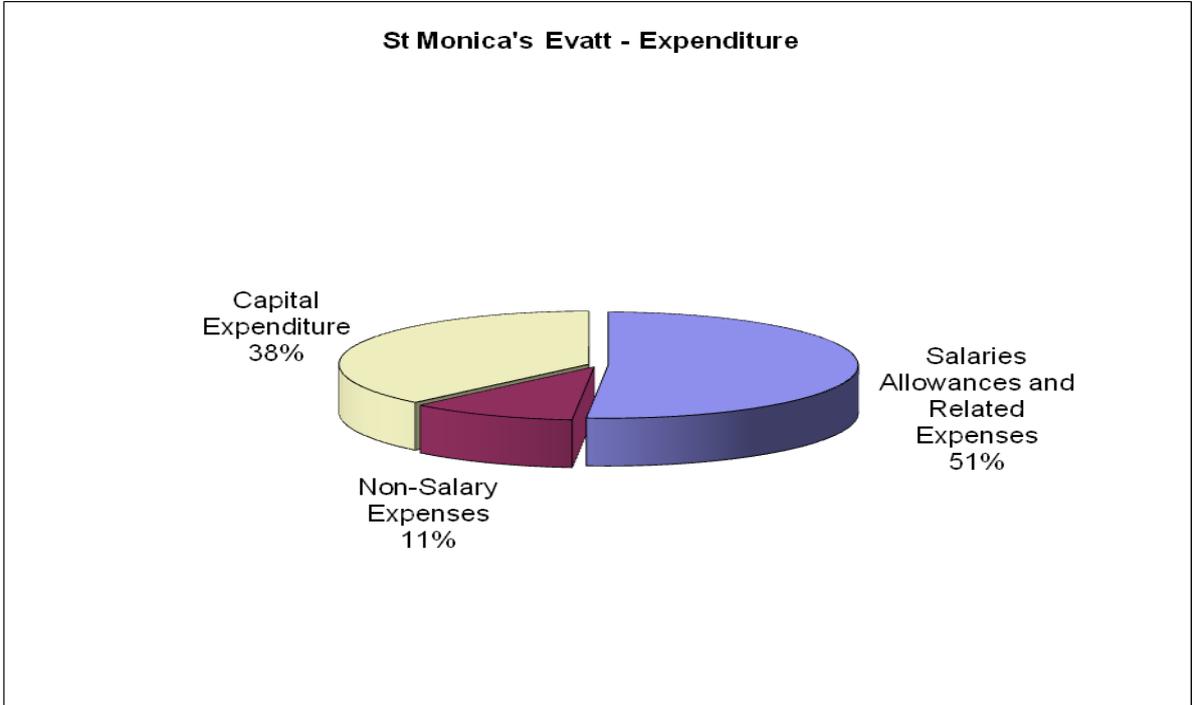
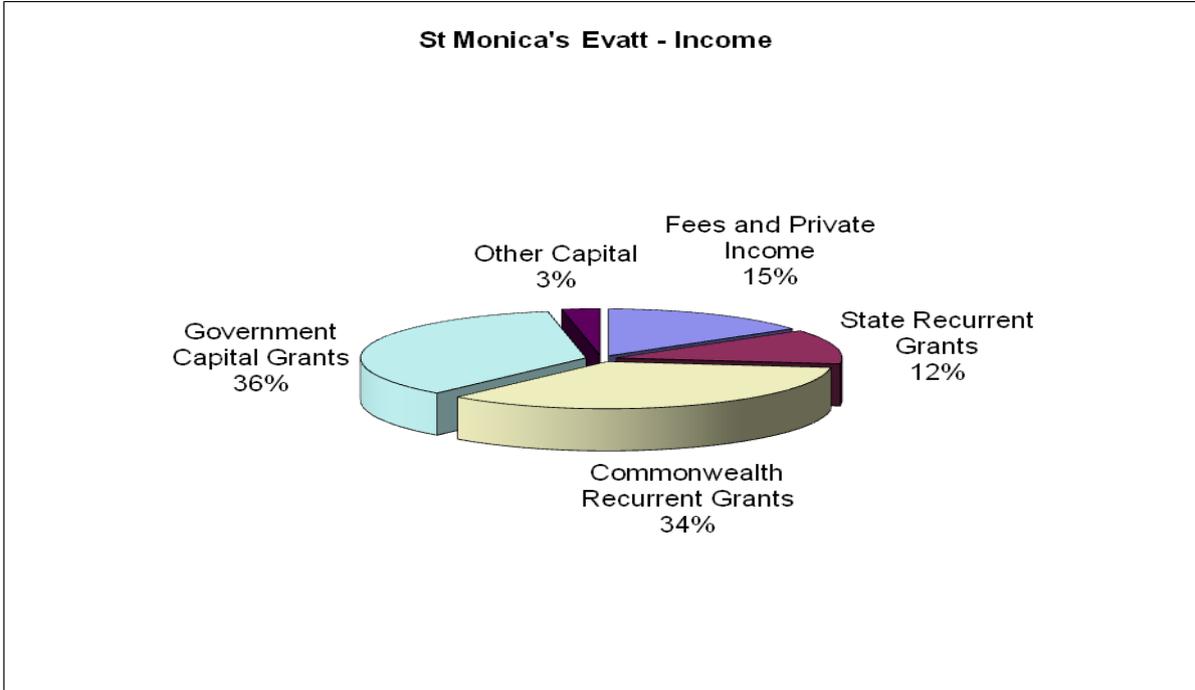
Literacy

- embed First Steps Writing to enhance structured writing programs, incorporating grammar and spelling
- ongoing development of Literacy blocks, incorporating Guided Reading, Four Roles of the Reader and Reader's Circle
- refinement and analysis of effective assessment tasks for literacy activities.

Numeracy

- provide teachers with professional opportunities to develop strategies to effectively enhance Numeracy blocks
- provide professional development for teachers on ways to differentiate learning through a range of tasks
- embed 'Count Me in Too' from Kindergarten to Year 4 and 'Counting On' in Years 5 & 6
- develop strategies to assist students to analyse and interpret the language of Mathematics.

Financial Information



School Contact Information

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