



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

Annual School Report to the Community 2015



St Bernard's Primary School Batehaven

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Principal

Mrs Jacqueline Heffernan

Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

Principal's Message

St Bernard's is well placed as one of the leading schools in the Eurobodalla. Our K-12 pathways with St Mary's, Moruya and Carroll College, Broulee has enabled many opportunities for our students to grow and develop from Kindergarten to Year 12.

We are in a time of rapid educational change. We are teaching children how to learn; not just what to learn. We face new challenges with curriculum development, innovation, globalisation and constant technological change. Our secular society demands more from us in educating our students with the skills and capacities to meet our changing world. At St Bernard's, our focus is on engaging students with their learning in a way that personalises and motivates. Self-direction and collaboration have become essential skills for student engagement. Our role as educators is such that we now facilitate rather than instruct. As we guide the students to become independent learners, we are growing confident, relational and discerning individuals with a thirst for knowledge and a passion to enact change.

Above all else, we celebrate the ethos and identity of our Catholic school and aim to enhance the faith life of each individual.

Parent Body Message

The 2015 School Board successfully fulfilled its role of providing support to the School Executive, and at times playing a decision making role in certain policy areas and an advisory role in other areas. The board worked well together in a year that saw several new members join it to make several decisions to continue to take the school forward and to the benefit of the whole school community. It was also pleasing that greater links were developed throughout the year with the parent bodies representing our fellow Eurobodalla Catholic schools (Carroll College and St Mary's, Moruya). As incoming chairperson I would like to thank the outgoing chairperson for his leadership of the Board over the last two years and for fulfilling the role of Parent Representative for the South Coast region at Archdiocesan level, and for his involvement in the St Bernard's community in many different ways over the last twelve years.

Board Chair

Student Body Message

Student involvement in the Caritas Leadership Day, the Year 6 World Expo, the Buddy system between older and younger students, sporting events and the Stage 2 & 3 Public Speaking Competitions are some highlights of 2015.

Students have participated in the ANZAC Day March, Remembrance Day, Mission Day, The Talent Quest, Pirate Day to raise funds for cancer research and a number of smaller fundraisers to raise awareness within the school.

The Student Representative Council is encouraged to build their leadership through leading assemblies and connecting with students K-6. The SRC set the fundraisers for each year. A successful combined sports event with St Mary's students from Moruya and secondary students at Carroll College, Broulee developed strong friendships and further enhanced the K-12 pathways for students in our Catholic Schools on the South Coast.

The transformation of the iCentre and completed renovation of Years 3 - 6 classrooms into flexible new learning spaces has been wonderful for the students. They enjoy having different furniture and the Makerspace in the iCentre is very creative and students can choose to do coding, robotics, garage band and create different objects.

Section Two: School Features

St Bernard's Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Batehaven.

The level of parent, staff and student feedback at St Bernard's has been very positive throughout 2015. Our enrolment numbers have continued to grow as we were able to continue with three Kindergarten classes for 2015. Our Indigenous Enrolment numbers also grew. Our Aboriginal Contact Teacher has developed a positive relationship with all families and a strong partnership with local agencies and contacts who have been welcomed into the school. Numerous initiatives and projects have been undertaken to promote St Bernard's as an engaging learning community. Parents are always welcome in the school and there is a high level of support at school functions. The Behaviour Management Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy was reviewed by the staff. Effective communication when issues arise has been appreciated by the parent community.

The School Board and Parents and Friends have continued to play an important role at St Bernard's. Members of the St Bernard's School Board have worked closely with personnel from Catholic Education, to determine the most practical and achievable approach for upgrading facilities for students and staff. The upgrade of Years 3-6 classrooms commenced at the end of 2014 and were finished in 2015. We were successful in a grant from the Building Grant Authority to upgrade Kindergarten to Year 2. These refurbishments will take place in 2016. We also received a \$10,000 grant from Catholic Education to implement a Makerspace to provide hands-on creative ways that encourage students to design, experiment, build and invent as they deeply engage in Science, engineering and problem solving. We were able to purchase a variety of digital technologies to cater for the different levels of experience including MaKey MaKeys and Arduino's Raspberry Pi's. This grant has also enabled us to run an enrichment group that promotes higher order thinking.

The Parents and Friends Committee have continued to hold fundraisers and discos throughout the year. Their focus in 2015 was to purchase a sun shade cloth for the Infants Playground. This was installed during the Christmas school holidays. Our Easter Hat Parade, Mother's Day morning tea, Father's Day breakfast and Obstacle Course Fundraiser had a strong representation from the St Bernard's parent community. School Assemblies were held every second week. The Kindergarten Open Day and Expo were a success, with a number of staff involved, showcasing various learning opportunities provided at St Bernard's.

Our K-12 Pathway with St Mary's and Carroll College continues to be strengthened with Staff Professional Learning opportunities, Concert Band, Confirmation and the Combined Schools Mass held in Catholic Schools Week.

Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

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

Religious Life & Religious Education

St Bernard's Primary School follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*. Two staff members were involved in writing units for revised Treasures in 2015.

Staff spirituality was supported through weekly prayer and an exceptional Staff Spirituality day in Term 2. The locale was well considered, providing ample spaces for reflection time and long sandy walks along the South Durras beach to revitalise staff.

An important focus for 2015 as identified in the Internal School Review (ISR) process, continued to be strengthening our links with the parish community. Regular informal visits from our Parish Priests, together with formal planning meetings, continued to meet this goal. School Masses were more frequent and Stage 3 students continued with their Monday morning prayer gathering in the convent chapel. Stage 3 classes also attended an Anointing Mass to support the sick and elderly in the parish throughout the year.

Further strengthening and celebrating our K-12 Pathways, St Bernard's attended the annual Combined Schools Mass in March at Carroll College, Broulee, as part of Catholic Schools Week. This event was attended by approximately 1600 students, staff and parishioners from the 3 schools/parishes in the area.

Staff were actively engaged in assisting with sacramental preparation; meeting with the parish priests for planning and attending parent information sessions. Combined sacramental retreat days for both Confirmation and First Eucharist, facilitated by Year 10 students from Carroll College and their teachers, helped prepare the students for the sacraments and provided candidates with a greater depth of understanding. For the first time, St Mary's and St Bernard's held a combined Confirmation Mass at Carroll College. A joint Retreat Day at Tuross with St Mary's for First Eucharist also deepened the students understanding of the sacrament and built strong community connections and pathways.

Living our mission as a Catholic School has continued to be an area of which we are justifiably proud. 2015 saw a very successful Mission Market Day in October, raising \$2165 for Children's Mission. The school community continued to support Vinnies Christmas Appeal with donations of food and gifts which were presented at the annual Giving Service. The school year ended with a very special Graduation and Candle ceremony. On Christmas Eve, more than 50 students participated in Mass. In full costume, the students played percussion and re-enacted the Christmas story.

Section Four: Student Profile

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 |
|-------|------|--------|----------------|
| 204 | 194 | 4 | 398 |

* 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 92.81%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

| Attendance rates by Year group | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Kindergarten | 92% |
| Year 1 | 93% |
| Year 2 | 93% |
| Year 3 | 93% |
| Year 4 | 93% |
| Year 5 | 93% |
| Year 6 | 93% |

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

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2015:

| Total Teaching Staff* | Total Non-Teaching Staff | Combined Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 26 | 10 | 36 |

* This number includes 20 full-time teachers and 6 part-time teachers.

| | |
|--|----|
| Percentage of staff who are Indigenous | 0% |
|--|----|

Professional Learning

The content of Professional Learning in 2015 included: Professional Code of Conduct Requirements, Grade planning meetings, Ralph Pirozzo – Inquiry Learning, Numeracy, Ontrack Reporting, Playground Expectations, Assessment for Learning, SALT, NAPLAN Analysis, Professional Conversations, Compliance Modules, Literacy Block – Professor Kaye Lowe, Literacy, Learning Support, New School Improvement Tool, First Aid and CPR, Technology, Running Records, Spirituality, Makerspace, Diabetes Training, Curriculum. Activities are designed to develop skills and understandings to improve student outcomes.

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 3 | Reading | 34% | 48% | 9% | 11% |
| | Writing | 43% | 47% | 6% | 7% |
| | Spelling | 26% | 41% | 23% | 15% |
| | Grammar and Punctuation | 32% | 52% | 13% | 11% |
| | Numeracy | 23% | 34% | 23% | 15% |

| NAPLAN RESULTS 2015 | | % of students in the top 2 bands | | % of students in the bottom 2 bands | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| | | School | Australia | School | Australia |
| Year 5 | Reading | 36% | 34% | 24% | 18% |
| | Writing | 9% | 19% | 26% | 18% |
| | Spelling | 22% | 33% | 24% | 15% |
| | Grammar and Punctuation | 31% | 36% | 16% | 17% |
| | Numeracy | 31% | 28% | 9% | 16% |

Section Seven: School Review and Improvement

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

At St Bernard's we celebrate the achievements and challenges we have enjoyed throughout our learning journey. We have continued to build the St Bernard's community, providing the experiences and the environment for the students and families to live out their faith in response to their personal connection with God. Our focus in 2015 was centred around the following:

- Catholic identity
- Inquiry Learning
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Whole school focus on growth mindset and explicit feedback to stimulate and improve teaching and learning outcomes.
- Assessment practices

Our School Improvement Project focuses on differentiating teaching and learning. Teachers were working to ensure that all students – including high-achieving students – are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended by designing classroom activities to meet students' learning needs, levels of readiness, interests, aspirations and motivations.

Priority Key Improvements for 2016

Key priority areas for school improvement in 2016 focus on the following:

- Promotion of Catholic Identity and Faith,
- Building leadership capacity among staff,
- Collection of Student Data,
- Increasing student engagement,
- Reporting processes,
- Professional Goal Setting,
- Developing a Growth Mindset across the school,
- Whole School Agreed Practices for Assessment.

All students can learn. Our focus is to provide added support for our students' social, emotional, and mental health which is paramount to achieving learning outcomes and developing functional and resilient people.

Teachers are working to ensure that all students – including high achieving students – are engaged in their learning and teachers are identifying and responding to diverse needs.

Our success of these goals will be measured from the analysis of Student data, teacher observations, pastoral care of students and staff, teacher feedback, students articulating their learning goals, student engagement, Parent feedback, Report writing, and overall academic growth. Increasing academic rigour and raising standards remains at the forefront.

Section Eight: School Policies

Student Welfare Policy

The goals of the Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy at St Bernard's Primary School are to:

- promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and support by establishing a network of Christian relationships among the students, staff, parents, clergy and the wider community;
- ensure that Pastoral Care and Welfare is integral in all that we do;
- increase communication between home and school;
- encourage and affirm each other;
- ensure that each member of the community accepts responsibility for the Pastoral Care and Welfare of others;
- respect the rights and freedoms of each individual
- respect confidentiality;
- ensure that students, staff and parents are supported by the processes in place to support all students;
- promote restorative justice practices that build relationships.

St Bernard's follows the principles of Restorative Practices when helping students, parents and teachers to resolve issues of interpersonal conflict. 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>.

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's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures is available from the Front Office. The school follows the Catholic Education Policy as listed on the Catholic Education website.

Section Nine: Community 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

Parents are invited to complete a satisfaction survey annually. Feedback is welcomed and appreciated. From this we gain valuable insight into key improvements that have informed part of our Strategic Plan. A common concern were class sizes in the early school years. Research and planning resulted in consultation and action in working with parents to educate and advise on a way forward. A change in class structure was proposed for implementation in 2016.

Parents at St Bernard's feel valued and contribute significantly to the life of the school. Parent education is relevant and engaging. There has been a particular focus on literacy development and how parents can be better equipped to assist their children at home. Communication is an essential element in all aspects of the school life. A Skoolbag app was introduced to enhance communication in order for parents to receive information quickly and effectively. This has been well received.

Parents and staff are continually encouraged to foster a strong partnership and open communication. Parents express their gratitude for the many ways the St Bernard's staff are committed to raising standards and providing a nurturing environment.

Student Satisfaction

The Student Representative Council (SRC) meets weekly with two teachers who work with the team of students to guide and mentor them in their leadership duties. The SRC are charged with the responsibility of gaining students' views and reporting these back to the group as a whole. The fundraising initiatives they plan are gathered from conversations with other students and from ideas they would like to introduce to the school community. The SRC also meet regularly with the Principal to discuss areas of concern and assist in solving issues as they arise. The students demonstrate a high level of independence and initiative, and readily contribute to the positive ethos of St Bernard's. Their involvement in the religious life of the school, Masses and community events is very much encouraged.

Teacher Satisfaction

Feedback from staff indicates a high level of morale among colleagues. Increased participation in professional learning opportunities has empowered teachers to improve practice and raise self-efficacy. Teachers have expressed appreciation of their involvement in the following initiatives and school priorities.

- The Professor Kaye Lowe spent time at St Bernard's with staff and parents highlighting effective reading and writing strategies to be implemented in the Literacy Block.
- Amanda Mackenzie facilitated a Staff Meeting centred on Professional Conversations. Staff created Professional Learning Plans, developing 3 goals in line with the Australian Professional Standards for teachers.
- Inquiry Learning continued to be a focus across the school, with all Staff participating in Professional Learning with Ralph Pirozzo. The staff were committed to team teaching in the iCentre, creating an engaging and enriching learning environment where the students worked individually or collaboratively on an investigation task.

Teachers feel well supported in their roles and every opportunity is explored to assist them to engage in current pedagogy and best practice.

Section Ten: Financial Statement

Income

- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (63.3%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (18.2%)
- Fees and Private Income (9.8%)
- Other Capital Income (8.6%)

Expenditure

- Capital Expenditure (14.8%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (68%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (17.2%)

| RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME | |
|--|--------------------|
| Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹ | \$2,835,799 |
| Government Capital Grants ² | \$0 |
| State Recurrent Grants ³ | \$816,807 |
| Fees and Private Income ⁴ | \$439,631 |
| Other Capital Income ⁵ | \$384,618 |
| Total Income | \$4,476,855 |

| RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE | |
|--|--------------------|
| Capital Expenditure ⁶ | \$766,715 |
| Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷ | \$3,510,327 |
| Non-Salary Expenses ⁸ | \$888,749 |
| Total Expenditure | \$5,165,791 |

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes 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, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. 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.