



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

Annual School Report to the Community 2015



St Benedict's Primary School Narrabundah

Tallara Parkway, Narrabundah 2604

Phone: 02 6295 8027

Email: office.stbenedicts@cg.catholic.edu.au

Website: www.stbenedicts.act.edu.au

Principal

Mr Matthew Garton

Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

Principal's Message

This year we were pleased to celebrate the school's 60-year anniversary in providing Catholic education to students throughout the local community. We celebrated with three significant events. Firstly, with Mass and activities for students on St Benedict's Feast Day. Then, through their fun performance, our students led over 400 family members and friends through each decade in our history. Lastly, our Parish community celebrated with Mass and an Open House Morning Tea.

Enrolments of boys and girls were accepted throughout our school, continuing our tradition as a coeducational school from Kindergarten to Year 6. The nature of our smaller school is that every student is seen, known and supported by a community and our teaching staff continued to show the same dedication and commitment to each and every student in their care, enabling them to reach their potential.

We continued to work closely with St Benedict's Parish and recognise the privilege it is to work with the Missionary of God's Love priests who serve this active and growing parish community. We thank them for their ongoing prayer and support for our students and families.

Parent Body Message

Through 2015 the School Board and Parents and Friends Association (P&F) have worked together to build and support the school vision to create an effective place of learning for all children. They have continued the tradition of an annual joint meeting to develop a shared perspective on their future work.

The P&F were a great source of support for the purchase of 40 new ipads for students to use while the School Board worked with the School Executive to prepare policy and procedures around the introduction of a BYOD Program in Years 5 and 6.

The school courtyard was a particular focus for development by the P&F and supported the work of the Morrison family in developing an exciting space that included a stage, playground markings and an interactive aboriginal garden.

The School Board continued its focus on developing ways to increase parent engagement throughout the school and regularly included this perspective in all decision making.

Thank you to the many parents in the community who generously supported the work of both the School Board and P&F throughout 2015.

Student Body Message

As school leaders we helped lead the celebrations for our 60th birthday this year. We learnt a lot about our school history, including the life of the students and teachers that were here before us. Our favourite celebration was the school performance *St Benedict's: This Is Your Life*. We filled the hall with parents and enjoyed performing a very entertaining show.

We helped run a variety of clubs for students at lunchtime including games, lego, colouring and craft activities and Library. We were proud to run a Mini-Vinnies club and held a sleepover at school to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness in Canberra and hear about the work of Vinnies Night Patrol.

At our Walkathon this year we all raised over \$9000. This was much more than we thought we could raise and so we decided to give \$3000 to Caritas to help the people in Nepal who were affected by the earthquake.

Lastly, this year we have really enjoyed a lot more opportunity to write each day and publish our own stories. We have become more confident writers and have a much better understanding of the work needed to be an author.

Section Two: School Features

St Benedict's Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Narrabundah.

St Benedict's Primary School is Catholic Primary School located in Narrabundah. The school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. At the time of the August Census of 2015 the student population totaled 167 students that included:

- 77 boys and 90 girls
- 8 students identifying as indigenous
- 4 students with a validated disability
- 19 students with English as an additional language or dialect.

The school was staffed by 19 employees of Catholic Education. This included 8 full-time and 11 part-time employees. Full time employees included the school executive, teachers and office manager. Part-time employees included primarily specialist teachers and teaching assistants.

Class structures in 2015 included one each of Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2. This was followed by two multi-age classes of Years 3/4 and then of Years 5/6. The multi-age structures continue to be a deliberate strategy to provide students with the opportunity to broaden their friendship base, receive extension when required and develop leadership capacity. The success of this has been evident through the feedback received from visitors to the school and parents of students who have proceeded to high school.

The school environment was warm, vibrant and accessible to all. The outdoors included a large, fenced and supervised playing field. Students had access to several safe and well-maintained areas of playing equipment. This was supplemented by the opportunity for students to access sport equipment and other play equipment for borrowing. Teachers also voluntarily ran clubs for those wishing to relax and play in a quieter way, including Lego Club, Art Club, Gardening Club, Mini-Vinnies, Drama Club, Choir and Library.

The classrooms also exhibited the same vibrancy and enthusiasm for learning. They comprised of flexible wall display areas and doors that could alter the arrangement of the classroom to suit the learning goals. The computer room was disbanded and the hardware placed in classrooms to allow for increased access by students and teachers on a daily basis. Additional ipads were purchased at the end of the year to further develop students' learning opportunities and skills.

As well as the provision to access and participate in the standard Australian Curriculum the students were provided with the opportunity to receive specialist teaching in Music, Italian Culture and Language, Dance and Gymnastics. Those students who wanted private instrument tuition on site could receive this through a number of approved providers.

Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

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

Religious Life & Religious Education

As a Catholic School St Benedict's Primary School remained true to its mission, faith and tradition.

Benedictine spirituality was always present throughout the school and a cornerstone to all decision making and relationships. Celebrating the 60 year anniversary was at the forefront of much of the year. Staff spent time in staff meetings learning about the history and charism of the school and exploring how to develop this further with students.

The school focus for the year was '*I am the vine and you are the branches*'. The purpose of this was to recognise that while we have a strong history of Catholic Education, our work must be grounded in the person of Jesus and it is in fact Jesus who works through us to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God. This focus was reflected in whole school masses at the beginning and end of the year as well as where appropriate throughout.

Time was spent reflecting on prayer in the classroom and a prayer wall for students was set up in a space accessible to all. This was well used by students, who prayed for and sought prayer for particular intentions. Prayer continued to be an important part of each day in the life of the school, particularly with staff and then with all students each morning.

Staff continued in their own rich faith formation through attendance at the Spirituality Series provided by Catholic Education. The attendance at these was excellent and the cause of much professional and personal discussion between staff members. The series provided staff with greater knowledge, underpinning their classroom RE programs. The school and parish collaborated on a new model of formation for sacramental preparation. While the school taught about each of the sacraments with all classes, the parish helped to lead a series of sessions that assisted parents in their own faith formation and thus in their role in preparing children for sacraments. Working together students and families were assisted to recognise each sacrament as a part of the life of faith in the church rather than a rite of passage in school.

The Principal and members of the the parish met regularly to review the book *Forming Intentional Disciples*. This work will continue into 2016 as we explore how to increase meaningful and fruitful engagement between our families and the church.

The school continued to follow the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasure New and Old*. Two of our teachers participated in the re-writing of units of work in RE and all staff were provided with the opportunity to develop and use assessment rubrics that focused teachers on the fundamental learnings in each unit of work.

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
90	77	19	167

* 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 93.47%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	95%
Year 1	94%
Year 2	94%
Year 3	94%
Year 4	92%
Year 5	93%
Year 6	92%

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
14	5	19

* This number includes 8 full-time teachers and 6 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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Professional Learning

All staff have been involved in professional learning. Teachers' professional learning was based upon school priorities and professional goals determined as a part of each teachers' professional learning plan.

School focuses for professional learning included:

- working with Associate Professor Kaye Lowe to develop deeper understanding about how children learn to write and implementing a new approach to teaching writing;
- professional peer observation for valuable feedback; and,
- exploration of the General Capabilities and Cross Curriculum Priorities of the Australian Curriculum.

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	50%	48%	4%	11%
	Writing	29%	47%	0%	7%
	Spelling	38%	41%	17%	15%
	Grammar and Punctuation	46%	52%	17%	11%
	Numeracy	33%	34%	21%	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	47%	34%	16%	18%
	Writing	11%	19%	11%	18%
	Spelling	16%	33%	5%	15%
	Grammar and Punctuation	32%	36%	5%	17%
	Numeracy	16%	28%	16%	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

The school completed several of its Key Improvement focuses for 2015 including:

- staff successfully participating in a collaborative inquiry project that investigated current research and teaching practices in literacy (writing), enhancing teacher expertise and effectiveness. Students wrote on a daily basis and learnt the skills of preparing a piece of writing for publication. Initially these were shared with parents once a term, increasing to twice a term.

The school partially completed several other Key Improvement focuses and will complete these in the following year. These included:

- beginning the process of implementing sustainable and manageable recycling practices throughout the school. A review of the current practices was undertaken and new contracts were drawn up with waste management providers;
- embedding flexible, mobile learning technologies throughout the school to create greater opportunities for curation, creation and collaboration in learning. Through a CE supported Technologies 4 Classrooms project the school completed planning for the implementation of the BYOD Program in Years 5 and 6 in 2016. The school also invested in new ipads for other classes.

Priority Key Improvements for 2016

Priority Key Improvements for 2016 include:

- Developing an explicit, coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery across K-6 which makes clear what teachers should teach and students should learn.
- Creating robust structures and opportunities that embrace and support the learning of a diverse group of students.
- Ensuring 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.
- Implementing a consistent approach to a differentiated Literacy Block across the school K-6.

The School Board has set the following strategic focuses:

- Strengthening St Benedict's as a school of choice;
- Striving to be a school that welcomes diversity; and
- Supporting the development of a 21st century learning environment.

The School Board has identified specific strategies for achieving these in collaboration with all stakeholders.

Section Eight: School Policies

Student Welfare Policy

Student Welfare at St Benedict's Primary School consists of our Behaviour Management Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, Pastoral Care Procedures and is also embedded in the Curriculum Core Document.

Our Behaviour Management Policy provides a positive framework to support the personal development and positive engagement of all students in all aspects of school life. It is grounded in the charism of St Benedict and is expressed as our *Five Ways of Being*. Each class spends the first two weeks of each year developing a clear and consistent understanding with students about what these 'ways of being' look like and sound like in the classroom and playground. This Policy is reviewed each year with staff to ensure that all are familiar with its intent and actions.

We work closely with all parents in the enactment of this policy through clear communication and collaboration in supporting students towards positive goals.

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 the 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 Complaints 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. The goal of the complaints management process is always to seek a solution to any problem considering the best interests of all affected.

A full text of the school policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

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

100% of parent responders agree or strongly agree that the school is committed to and enthusiastic in its approach to teaching and learning; a stimulating environment is provided for their child; the school has appropriate standards of student behaviour; the school is meeting the social needs of their child; the school is a safe environment and is managed well, and; that they are given the opportunity to be involved in the school's activities.

Over 90% of parent responders agree or strongly agree that the staff at the school are approachable and that the staff listen to their concerns.

Over 70% of parent responders agree or strongly agree that the school provides significant challenges for their child in other areas (e.g. sport, music, etc) and that their child's report is informative.

100% of parent responders agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied overall with the education of their child at school.

Student Satisfaction

Student responses to the survey were limited in 2015 therefore accurate conclusions were difficult to draw. Of the responses received students agreed or strongly agreed that the school has clear rules and that students are expected to act responsibly. Students also agreed or strongly agreed that the school is a caring environment and that they are encouraged to improve the standard of their work.

Feedback was sought from students regarding the project designed to engage students with writing. There was significantly positive responses from students in regard to the opportunity to write on a daily basis and to choose the topic on which they could write. Most students felt well-supported through the editing and proofreading process and were satisfied with the quality of the writing they produced and published. All students wanted to continue to have the opportunity to develop as writers in 2016.

Teacher Satisfaction

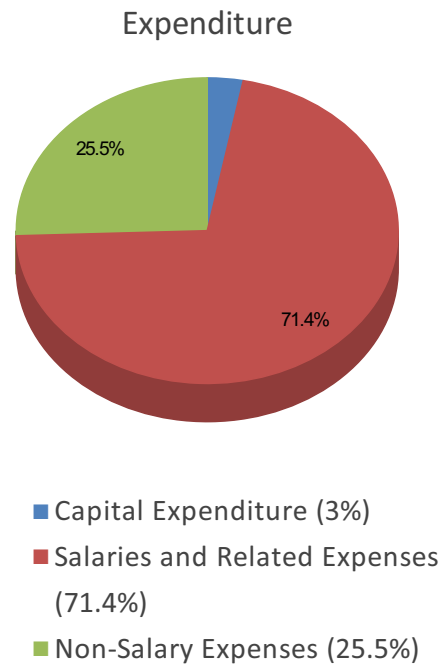
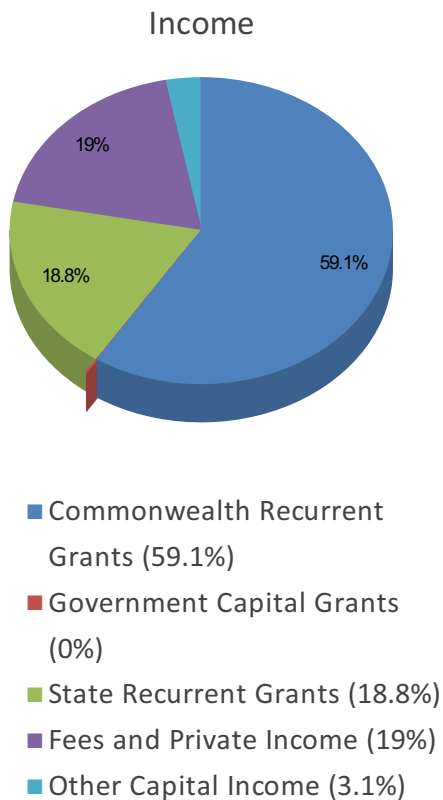
100% of staff responders agree or strongly agree that they can influence decisions affecting their work; they have recognition from their colleagues; they feel like a professional at work; they work in a supportive environment; feel their role is important to the school; feel committed to the school; believe the workplace has a positive ethos and that there are clear goals and expectations.

90% of staff responders agree or strongly agree that they have opportunities for professional development and that the school encourages democratic decision-making.

80% of staff responders agree or strongly agree that communication is effective at the school.

100% of staff responders also agree or strongly agree that their colleagues display trust in administration; that change is planned and executed well; that leadership staff are open and understanding; their performance is reviewed professionally; that all staff set good examples to students and encourage student responsibility; that conflict is handled well and that the school encourages a climate conducive to learning.

Section Ten: Financial Statement



RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$1,310,626
Government Capital Grants ²	\$545
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$416,667
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$420,657
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$67,631
Total Income	\$2,216,126

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$62,638
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$1,482,162
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$529,717
Total Expenditure	\$2,074,517

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.