About the Annual School Report

St. Patrick’s Primary School Cessnock is registered by the Board of Studies as a member of the Catholic system in the Dioceses of Maitland-Newcastle.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2014 and gives information about 2014 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act, 2008.

The information in this Report is complemented by the school website where other school publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained from the school.

Messages from Key School Bodies

Principal

Dear members of St. Patrick’s Community

Each time I reflect on the passing of another year I think about the wonderful community that we share at St. Patrick’s. We are very lucky to have such a great mix of talented teachers, supportive parents and eager, happy children. This really enables us to carry out the mission that we share as a community where we seek to – “..welcome, care for, and support each other.” Thank you to everyone; teachers, parents, students and parishioners, for being an integral part of our contribution as a school in answering this great call to serve each other in a true Christ-like fashion.

These challenges of our modern society are a very important focus for all staff since the world of today is barely recognisable when compared with the world that faced us in our early years. And it is a radically different world to the one that challenged our grandparents’ generation when they were young adults. Of course, change has always been with us, but the difference today is that the pace of global change is quickening. Globalisation is shaping and reshaping today’s world and the world of tomorrow – our children’s world - in extraordinary and far-reaching ways.

The school at present has an enrolment of 358 students, representing 245 families. A staff of 27 strives to provide the very best in education for all students at our school and I take this opportunity to acknowledge their contribution in so many ways. The students, as always, have worked very hard to achieve so much this year. The standard of work and the heights to which they have risen mean that we continue to achieve excellence in many areas of endeavour. We are continually provided with exciting future challenges as our school evolves to meet the needs of our students in an ever-changing environment.

Students now enrolled in schools will have adult lives stretching beyond the middle of the 21st century. Schools have a direct and important stake in the future, and - perhaps uniquely amongst professional groups - educators have a responsibility to prepare students in the most well-informed way possible for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of a life which will be very different from our own. This means educators must undertake adequate and careful preparation for the longer as well as the shorter view. This rethinking needs to turn its back on certainty, and place complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty at centre stage. This is not something to bemoan. In my view it presents an exciting challenge. But it does suggest that there is a need to think about working in different ways, and it does have significant implications for what it means to be an educator.

To the Year 6 students and others leaving our school community I offer the following... education is, perhaps, the only wealth that cannot be robbed. It is the bridge between cultures. Knowledge transcends education; it transcends the walls of this school. If you want something to change, you personally have to do something different. You have to defy your own group, rebel against yourself, knock down your walls and get out of your way. The best path is not always the one that leads to wealth and fame, or to someone else's expectations. The best path will lead to happiness, and can be taken by working hard at something you enjoy. Do not strive for success solely for success's sake. Discover what you truly want to do and then pursue it with all you have, and if your dream changes then so be it, don’t be afraid to change with it. Sometimes life may force you to take another path, out of necessity, but do not forget your dreams and don't stop looking for that opportunity to follow them.

But it's equally important that the dreams you follow are our own. Friends and family want what's best for you, but only you can know what is truly in your hearts. The best path is not always the one that leads to wealth and fame, or to someone else's expectations. The best path will lead you to happiness, and can be taken by working hard at something you enjoy. Do not strive for success solely for success's sake. Discover what you truly want to do and then pursue it with all you have, and if your dream changes then so be it, don't be afraid to change with it. Sometimes life may force you to take another path, out of necessity, but do not forget your dreams and don't stop looking for that opportunity to follow them.

On behalf of our school community I would like to thank everyone for your continued support - especially those who have shared their talents so unselfishly to make St Patrick’s such a wonderful place. Your support and encouragement of me personally is very much appreciated, and for that I also thank you.

Andrew Latham

Parent Body

The Parents and Friends Association (2014) is very proud of its continued role within the school community, volunteering and contributing to the school in many ways. In 2014 the P&F, in conjunction with the school, appointed a permanent part-time canteen coordinator. This position, along with a team of volunteers has seen the reopening of the school canteen to 5 days a week and the introduction of online ordering. The canteen continues to be a major fund raiser for the P&F.

Another major fundraiser this year was the Spring Fair. This was the first fair held at the school in a number of years. It was a great school event with lots of activities including rides for the children, show bags, food and market stalls and a chocolate wheel. Money raised from the fair is going towards and area of artificial turf that will be installed early in 2015. Other popular and profitable events included Mother’s Day and Father’s Day stalls, various raffles, a Bunnings BBQ, sale of The Entertainment Books and International Food days.
These events, made possible by the parents and friends of the school have enabled some major contributions to the school in 2014. This has included financial assistance towards the purchase of 32 iPads, 32 Lap Tops, three water coolers for the playground and a collection of reading resources. The P&F Association, as well as contributing to the school, continues to provide an opportunity for parents and friends of the school to actively participate in their children’s school life.

**Student Body**

As the School Leaders we can’t believe that our time here at St. Patrick’s has come to an end. When we first started in Kinder it seemed like an eternity until we would be going to High School. The 2014 Leaders and Year 6 have achieved a lot together. Ran swimming and Athletics Carnivals, Assemblies and participated in many forms of fundraising. We have shared some fun times with countless laughs and happiness together. St. Pat’s has provided us with an exceptionally good education by some dedicated teachers and we thank them for that! So many people have had an impact on our lives and as leaders of the school we can say 'We Made It!'

**Who We Are**

**History of the School**

In response to the perceived need of the Catholic Community of Cessnock, the first Catholic School commenced in January 1887 by the sisters of St. Joseph. St. Patrick’s Church at Nulkaba was used for this purpose. A new Church was built in 1893 and the Church-School was fitted with permanent fixtures and the building converted to St. Patrick’s School. On 15th July 1906 a hall was moved to the High St. site and furnished as a school. It also served as a temporary Church. It was known as St. Joseph’s Church-School.

In 1936 a new brick Mt. St. Joseph’s School on Bridge’s Hill replaced the old hall. This served as a Primary School and later as a Junior Secondary School for girls. There was also a Catholic School close by at Bellbird from 1937-1958. In 1937 St. Patrick’s School was relocated from Nulkaba to Wollombi Rd. The 1970’s saw the completion of a brand new brick school which is still the complex that we reside in today. The school has undertaken two major building projects over the last 10 years to expand and renew the facilities. We thank the Sisters of St. Joseph who are the pioneers of our school.

**Location/Drawing Area**

St. Patricks Primary School Cessnock is located in the lower Hunter Valley in N.S.W. Neighbouring towns are Kurri Kurri, Branxton and Lochinvar. Our school is part of the All Saints Cluster Region comprising of 3 High Schools, 9 Primary Schools and 1 Infants School. We are geographically a 50 minute drive to the nearest major city which is Newcastle and where our head office ‘The Catholic Schools Office Maitland/Newcastle Diocese is located.

**Characteristics of the Student Body**

The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE)</th>
<th>Students with Disabilities (SWD)</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE); Students with Disabilities (SWD)*

**Religious Dimension and Culture of School Life**

**Catholic Identity**

The Catholic Identity of St. Patrick’s Cessnock has its foundations in its long association with the Sisters of St. Joseph commencing in 1887 with the formation of the first Catholic School in the area. Sadly, this is the first year that we haven’t had a Josephite sister on Staff. However we were happy to have a ‘Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth’ from Poland with us to work with the children. The commitment to living the Gospel and the dedication shown by the sisters throughout our long history are very evident in the Catholic Identity of the School today.

St. Patrick’s also displays an acknowledgment and respect for the original owners of the land, the ‘Wonarua’ people, who are remembered weekly in our school assembly. Their Aboriginal heritage is embraced daily by the raising of the Aboriginal flag and also through the Aboriginal perspectives taught in class lessons.

As a Catholic school community the day commences with a shared staff prayer before morning bell. This is followed by the school prayer, led by the leadership team, at the morning assembly. Throughout the school environment our Catholic Identity is visually evident in the artworks, crucifixes in every room and the sacred spaces set up in the classrooms and office areas. More importantly, it is evident in the treatment of each person with respect to their uniqueness and the gifts they share. As a faith community we also celebrate through class and school liturgies where parents and community members are often invited to attend. The students are also encouraged to participate with the wider faith community by attending weekend Parish Masses.

In our quest for ‘justice for all’ the students donate at lunch times to the ‘Mission Well’ which is our ongoing donation to Caritas and the Catholic Missions. Students and staff also hold fundraising activities throughout the year for selected Charities. To increase growing awareness of the poverty and injustices of the world on an individual level, each class plans a special mission fundraiser.

St. Patrick’s strives to live the Gospel by providing a happy, welcoming environment where each person is valued and nurtured. There is an open door policy providing communication between parents, students and staff.
The School as part of Parish and Diocesan Life

The Staff joined together with other teachers at a Diocesan Commissioning Mass early in the year to celebrate the beginning of the school year. Within our own Parish, St. Patrick’s School hosted an ‘Opening School Mass’ at St. Joseph’s Church. Throughout the year the Staff attended a beautiful Diocesan ‘Special Needs Mass’ at Lochinvar School to celebrate and affirm all the good work that is undertaken by Families, Schools and Staff in the area of Special Needs.

The opportunity was offered again this year for families to purchase a Remembrance Rock to commemorate the passing of any loved ones during 2014. These rocks then became part of the special ‘Memorial Garden’. This Year, the Kindergarten students received a “Buddy Box”, made by their Year 5 buddies. The boxes contained items which the school deemed to be important elements of the life at St. Patrick’s School. These items included several prayer cards, rosary beads, how to pray the rosary leaflet, a wooden cross, St. Mary of the Cross medallion, the St. Patrick’s school prayer and the St. Patrick’s “Pride Guide”, just to name a few.

It is always difficult trying to blend Parish and School communities together, especially when many of our parents and students are not actively part of the Parish of St. Joseph’s at Cessnock. However, we believe that we try to do this quite well. The School and Parish community continued to work harmoniously throughout 2014. The School Principal, REC, Assistant Principal, Music Co-ordinator and Parish Priest met to discuss issues and provide opportunities for School and Parish involvement together as a community on a regular basis. Seven members of the staff are actively involved in the Parish Sacramental Team and Children’s Liturgy and provide an excellent link between School and Parish. This is also supported by the teaching of the Religious Education Programme taught in each classroom. The students are also encouraged to be active as altar servers and participate in a variety of roles at the School/Parish Masses. These Parish/School masses are scheduled for each term and a different Stage is in charge of the organisation. Parishioners are invited to all school events and liturgical celebrations on a regular basis via the Parish Bulletin, School newsletter and on the School’s intranet and website.

Our Principal regularly attended Pastoral Meetings with the Parish Priest, local Catholic Principals in the Vineyard Region and representatives from the Kurri Kurri, Abermain and Cessnock Parishes to help organise and co-ordinate up-coming events.

The REC and Principal met regularly in 2014 with the Parish Priest to organise School and Parish liturgies. There was also regular electronic communication with the Parish secretary providing information on school events for the weekly Parish Bulletin. Students in the school are actively involved in the Junior St. Vincent DePaul. The school provides support for the local St. Vincent DePaul, the sisters of St. Joseph, the Catholic Missions, Caritas and a variety of Charities. St. Patrick’s students are very aware that their commitment is to the School, Parish and the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. St. Patrick’s Staff and students attended any events that were hosted by the Diocese in 2014.

During 2014 the School community met every morning in the School Quadrangle to pray together. This prayer time was led by the Student Leadership Team. The Staff also gathered early before school each day to pray together in the sanctuary of the Staffroom at 8.45am. Teachers are on a prayer roster to lead the Staff in reflection on a daily basis. This continued regularly throughout 2014 and was seen as a very beneficial spiritual and team building exercise.

The highlight of the year was the ‘Open Air Mass’ that was celebrated in the school grounds as the Saturday Night Vigil Mass in November.

Teaching of Religion

The teaching of Religion receives high priority at St. Patrick’s in terms of time and resources. All classes K-6 have Religion at 12.30pm – 1pm Monday-Thursday and on Fridays for half an hour at varying times during the day, due to fitting in with the Sport’s time-table. The school follows the Diocesan K-12 Religion Syllabus. The students are provided with a variety of learning styles to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Christian Traditions. In keeping with our vision statement, ‘to provide education within the context of the Catholic faith,’ religion is not only taught as a single subject but is incorporated across all Key Learning Areas.

As a Staff we continue to support the Parish Sacramental Team by teaching the Sacramental units of work at the same time that the students are enrolled and completing the Parish Sacramental Programme. During 2014 five of the teachers continued to complete units of work for their Graduate Certificate and Masters in Theology Degree. During the course of the year the REC provided updates on current topics and resources available for the teaching of religion. This year only a couple of staff meetings were set aside for the REC to professionally develop the Staff.

Through our class programmes, liturgies and daily prayer we aim to nurture a love and understanding of Christian values that will be part of the daily life of our students. St. Patrick’s was once again very proud of their exceptionally high achievements in the Diocesan Religion Examination for Year Six. We performed well above the Maitland-Newcastle CSO average for this examination.

Retreats and Faith Development Programs

This year the Staff attended a Diocesan Spirituality Day with a number of other schools. Mr. Brendan Hyde facilitated the day. The Staff were given a variety of tangible and practical ways to enhance the student’s spirituality.

On -going opportunities were provided for the staff in Faith Development by the Principal, our local Parish Priest, CSO RE Consultant and the School REC. Many of the Staff participated in the Lenten and Advent Prayer Groups offered and facilitated at the School by the REC.
Values and initiatives to promote respect and responsibility

The students of St. Patrick’s are encouraged to live the Gospel values through the respect they show to each other and this was supported by the continuation in 2014 of the ‘Positive Behaviour’s Programme’ where each child was challenged to follow the school ‘Pride Guide’ and live the values taught. The Pride Guide reads: Be Respectful, Be an Active Learner, Be Safe. At the weekly school assemblies we continued to develop responsibility and Christian values through class awards and the ‘You Can Do It’ Programme. A special Anti-Bullying programme was also taught in each class regularly to address issues that may arise in this area.

At St. Patrick’s we have a responsibility to help the less fortunate in our community and abroad. The students were given ample opportunities to help the poor through daily and class contributions to our mission fund. This money is then given to ‘Canatas Australia & Catholic Missions’. A special mission effort ‘Socktober’ was held in the month of October to raise funds for this year’s focus mission. The students also donated food, gifts and money for our annual ‘Sharing and Giving Mass’. These donations were made into baskets and hampers to be delivered to the less fortunate in the Cessnock Community over the Christmas season.

In 2014 the students of St. Patrick’s continued to fundraise for a variety of independent charities. A disco was held to raise money for some Catholic Schools in Cambodia. Many of the children attended ‘Relay for Life’ and raised money for the Cancer Foundation.

Policies

Enrolment Policy

St. Patrick’s Primary School Cessnock follows the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office Enrolment Policy 2013. This Enrolment Policy has been devised in order to accommodate the needs of families seeking a Catholic education. It aims to set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices and assist the system of Catholic schools to provide schooling, where possible, for all Catholic children who seek enrolment, cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources and to encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Copies of the Policy are available from the school, or from the Catholic Schools Office website. Parents concerned about school fees should ensure they make contact with the school. Diocesan provisions (including standard discounts for those with a Health Card) exist to help in this area, and the Principal can also exercise discretion where genuine need exists.

Student Welfare

St. Patrick’s continued to follow the ‘You Can Do It Programme’ as well the ‘Positive Behaviour’s Programme’ in 2014. Furthermore the school introduced a new Social Skills based programme called ‘The Second Step Programme’. A full time ‘Lunch Club’ was also set up to accommodate students who were having socialising or behaviour issues. Sr. Milla was lucky enough to come to St. Patrick’s in 2014 and work with the students during the Lunch Club Break as well as during the day with students who were struggling to concentrate due to external issues impacting on their lives. All these programmes supported the Welfare and Pastoral Care Policies within the school.

A brief outline of St. Patrick’s policies in relation to Student Welfare is as follows:

- To develop in the children the concept of rights and responsibilities, for themselves and others.
- To acknowledge the individuality and differences of all people and promote appropriate attitudes and behaviours towards others.
- To encourage positive behaviours and relationships between all groups of the school community.
- To develop disciplinary policies and strategies which support and encourage self-regulatory behaviours.
- To create an atmosphere of welcome and hospitality for both those within the school community and members of other groups.
- To provide support and practical programmes and strategies for those with special needs.
- To consider the financial situation of all families in the planning of incursions, excursions and other school expenses.

In 2014, there have been NO significant changes to these policies. All Welfare issues are tracked via the use of Gate 21. Full text of the policies can be accessed by the school community via the school intranet. Hard copies are available in the office and school foyer.

Discipline

A brief outline of St Patrick’s Policies in relation to Discipline for 2014 is as follows:

- At no stage is Corporal Punishment of any form administered in the School.
- At St. Patrick’s we believe that the consequences of behaviour should be clear, consistent, relevant and immediate.
- Students must be encouraged to take responsibility for their actions by making restitution whenever/wherever appropriate.
- Teachers engage in a dialogue with the student regarding their behaviour and try to implement strategies to help the child in order to avoid a repeat of this type of behaviour.
- Where possible teachers will administer a consequence that most suits the behaviour.
- Professional judgement must be used in determining the consequences. Repeated offences by the same students may result in Reflection Room time or Community Service. Parents are always informed of repeated offences.

The following procedures are to be adhered to:

- Teachers are responsible for ensuring the safety of students in the classroom and on the playground.
- Teachers must be proactive in their response to dealing with situations as the need arises.
- The school’s Hands-Off Policy is implemented to support the child to protect himself/herself from physical violence.
Procedural Fairness Procedures are followed at all times as outlined in the CSO’s Pastoral Care Policy (2003) in regards any complaints made regarding disciplinary measures at St. Patrick’s.

Procedural Fairness is generally recognised as having two essential elements:

1. **The right to be heard which includes:**
   - The right to know why the action is happening
   - The right to know the way in which the issues will be determined
   - The right to know the allegations in the matter and any other information that will be taken into account
   - The right of the person against whom the allegations have been made to respond to the allegations
   - The right to an appeal.

2. **The right of a person to an impartial decision that includes:**
   - The right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making phases
   - The right to an absence of bias in the decision making.

There have been significant changes to the tracking of student’s behaviour via Gate 21 this year as well as slight amendments to the Policy in 2014.

Full text of the policies can be accessed by the school community via the school intranet. Hard copies are available in the office foyer for perusal.

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers. St. Patrick’s Primary School Cessnock Anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed regularly and is available on the school website.

St. Patrick’s is very proactive when it comes to bullying issues. The children are constantly educated through classroom programmes and visual signs erected around the playground and learning environment. During 2014 the local Police Liaison Officer visited the school and spoke to all students K-6 regarding Bullying.

This Policy was updated in 2014.

**Complaints and Grievances**

The school has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy (2013), developed to provide a consistent approach for all Diocesan schools. This policy aims to address the concerns of Parents / Carers and the wider community. These concerns may include children’s learning, behaviour and welfare, School organisation and management, student health and safety issues.

St Patrick’s School always endeavours to maintain a harmonious and welcoming environment that is free from intimidation, harassment and conflict. **Procedural Fairness** is an obligation placed upon organisations and persons making decisions affecting the rights and welfare of others to engage in decision-making with due diligence, transparency and without bias. **Procedural fairness** affords certain rights to persons including the right to know of matters alleged, the right to respond and the right to appeal decisions made. These rights and responsibilities were referred to in the Discipline section.

A copy of this policy and the informative parent brochure is available from the school office, school website or is available on the Catholic Schools Office website. The policy remains the same in 2014.

**Student Achievements**

**Academic Achievements**

St. Patrick’s continued to set high standards in the academic field in 2014. The staff continued to implement programming techniques with specific learning sequences and integrated technologies, such as use of Smart board, computers, I-pads and related activities to enhance teaching and learning. This allowed for engaged learning.

St. Patrick’s continued in 2014 to implement a whole class, grade based double streamed model of classes with differentiation occurring within each class. This, along with a timetabling change, with stringent timings for English and Mathematics, made for a more structured environment in these two major KLA’s.

The students were regularly encouraged to enter the various School Competitions in Maths, English and Writing. Many of our children achieved distinctions and credits in one or more of these tests.

Many children were also encouraged to participate and enter in a range of writing, poetry, maths, art and drawing competitions that were offered to the school throughout the year. These included the Newcastle Permanent Maths Competition (NPBS) Mathematics Olympiad Challenge. During 2014 some students entered 'The Mayoral Challenge Photography Competition' run by the Cessnock Council. They competed against many other local schools. It was a great experience for our students. St. Patrick’s came 1st and 2nd in the Primary Division. The Mayor presented the winners their prizes at a School Assembly.
St. Patrick’s had its own Public Speaking Competition, which was held in Term 3. All students from Early Stage 1 to Stage 3 competed in this event. This competition was extremely beneficial in developing and enhancing the oral speaking skills of the students. Quite a few students competed in the Regional Debating Competition and were ranked 3rd. Many students participated in the All Saint’s Cluster Gifted and Enrichment Days organised by the various schools in the region. The Staff commented that this was a great programme to develop the skills of the students who present with an interest, gift or talent in a certain subject.

### School Academic Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Steps taken to achieve the priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved Comprehension Skills across K-6</td>
<td>All Staff were Inserviced in the FOR (Focus on Reading) Programme by the Teaching &amp; Learning Team at the CSO (Catholic Education Office)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff attended an Inservice (Whole Day) facilitated by Alison Davis (Guest Speaker from New Zealand) on Comprehension Strategies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All Staff attended Workshops on another day held by Alison Davis on the best implementation approach for the various Comprehension Modules.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Executive attended Workshop Afternoon at Adamstown Public School to listen to Alison Davis deliver an Inservice on Effective Comprehension Strategies sponsored by PETAA.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop Afternoon at St. Patrick’s chaired by Guest Speaker: Meryl-Lyn Pluck</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Many resources purchased both for teachers and students. Professional reading &amp; Resources bought for each classroom teacher and numerous books purchased for the Library and classrooms to complement the NEW ENGLISH SYLLABUS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of the NEW ENGLISH SYLLABUS</td>
<td><strong>Extensive Training days:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Full day Inservice at CSO by Teaching &amp; Learning Team</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Networking Afternoons at various Cluster Schools</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Executive attended a Conference in Sydney on the Implementation of the NEW ENGLISH CURRICULUM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation of PLC’s (Professional Learning Communities)</td>
<td><strong>Inservice Days:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The whole Staff attended 2 Workshop days on PLC’s which were facilitated by Kyle Lipscombe.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Executive attended a one day Inservice in Newcastle on PLC’s hosted by Hawker-Brownlow Education Company (Organised by CSO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Teaching Framework Implementation</td>
<td><strong>Inservice Days:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 teachers attended 4 days of training workshops for the Quality Teaching Framework. The facilitators were from The University of Newcastle (Hosted by CSO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation for the NEW SCIENCE SYLLABUS</td>
<td><strong>Inservice Day:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Teachers attended a full day Inservice for the New Science Syllabus (Hosted by the CSO)</td>
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Performance in National Testing
National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 2014

Students in Year 3 and Year 5 across Australia participated in National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in May 2014. The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in aspects of Literacy and aspects of Numeracy. The test provides a measure of the students’ performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching with a view to improving student performance.

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum acceptable standards for literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling at particular ages. These are referred to as national minimum standards. Band 2 is the minimum standard for Year 3 and band 4 is the minimum standard for Year 5. Student performance in NAPLAN in our school is compared to these standards. The percentages of students achieving at or above these national minimum standards, and the percentages of students in the top three bands are reported in the table below.

**School Outline**: St. Patrick’s was very impressed with their Year 5 NAPLAN Data results with majority of students showing exceptional growth in both Literacy and Numeracy. St. Patrick’s was above the State Mean in all areas. However the Year 3 NAPLAN was very disappointing. We were basically below the State Mean in all areas. The Yr. 3 boy’s results were significantly poor. Our plan is to definitely look at the programmes in the Infant’s Department and introduce Pre-Lit & Mini-Lit to complement the Lexia Programme. We will also look at restructuring the Staff in the Infants. Also in the Primary Department we intend to introduce a programme called Corrective Learning.

Cultural Achievements

St. Patrick’s School is very lucky to have some very talented staff members who were able in 2014 to continue some of the rich cultural traditions of previous years.

The children participated in a wide range of activities and events at school level and also within the local and wider community. Many students entered individually in bible reading and public speaking categories in the Abermain Eisteddfod and also in class/small groups for verse speaking, percussion band, drumming bands and choir sections. The school performed at an exceptionally high level in all categories with many awards being won. St. Patrick’s also offered guitar lessons in 2014 free of charge before school on a Wednesday. Another Staff member also offered piano lessons after school to some students.

St. Patrick’s children regularly participated with great pride in cultural activities within the community such as Clean-up Australia Day, Annual Anzac Day March, Relay for Life March and also they performed at The Bunning’s Christmas Carol’s Night.

The St. Patrick’s community is very proud of their Aboriginal heritage. Important celebrations were held during Naidoc Week and Harmony Week. Sorry Day was also celebrated and remembered with a liturgy. The children were often called upon to participate by singing, dancing, moving and showcasing art work and literature centred on an Aboriginal theme. Many of our cultural liturgies contained the use of Aboriginal music and artefacts.

In 2014 the school Aboriginal garden was added to and tended to by our students with Aboriginal heritage. The garden exhibits many native Aboriginal plants, artefacts and paintings with the highlight still being the large and beautiful Cross symbolically painted by an Aboriginal Artist. Many of the students visit this garden to pray and reflect when they feel the need.

The Chess Club Competitions, Annual Christmas Pageant & Carol’s Night featuring the school choirs and percussion band performances also allowed further opportunities to develop and promote the children’s talents.

One of our teachers was instrumental in organising and co-ordinating the All Saint’s Cluster Showcase and the Dio Sounds showcase for the Diocese. St. Patrick’s School performed at both of these events in the choir, percussion band and drumming band sections with resounding results. Grandparent’s Day was once again a huge event. It was a very memorable day for the children, staff and grandparents.

Sporting Achievements

Throughout 2014, St Patrick’s students took the opportunity to participate in a multitude of sports offered at community and representative levels. The children were as always very enthusiastic and took great pride in improving their skills, fitness and ability to work as team members. The main highlights on the Sporting Calendar in 2014 included the Annual School Athletics and Swimming Carnivals in which the majority of the school participated in with great enthusiasm. St. Patrick’s had students continue through to Regional & Diocesan for Swimming and two students went on to Polding level for Athletics.

Emphasis was placed on teaching children to lead healthy, active lives at St Patrick’s. This was encouraged with regular exercise breaks timetabled during lessons to promote fitness. School incursions were also scheduled where outside sporting bodies came in to promote sport in the local area.
Excellent representation at all levels of sport was evident in 2014. Throughout the year St Patrick’s had large teams of children attend Regional & Diocesan swimming and athletics carnivals with a smaller group of talented sportspeople continuing on to higher representation. There were very talented students who made it through to Polding Level in Soccer, Athletics and Cross Country. Other sports that St Patrick’s children were represented at Diocesan level included: Athletics, swimming, netball, soccer, basketball, and cross country.

Success in team sports was also evident in 2014. Junior and Senior boys and girl’s netball teams competed in a Netball Gala day in Newcastle. Our teams represented the school with great success, with two teams winning 1st place and another came 2nd. Lots of training and effort went into the preparation and participation in sport at St Patrick’s during 2014. Great results and achievements are terrific, but seeing the children at St Patrick’s participate with great skill, enthusiasm and pride is of course the greatest reward.

**Other Highlights for 2014**

This may include additional teaching and learning programs that have been implemented in the school.

- Annual School Walkathon
- Catholic School’s Week celebrations
- Book Week Parade
- School Discos
- School Excursions and Incursions
- Visits to Performing Arts Studio to see plays
- Orientation Days & Playgroups
- Open Air Mass

**Staff Qualifications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications and Experience</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Teachers with teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Teachers with qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by NOOSR but lacking formal teaching qualifications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| III. (a) Teachers not having qualifications as described in I or II above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context | (a) 5           
| III. (b) Of these which are New Scheme Teachers.                                               | (b)             |

The Staff numbers have increased as we have had teachers leave throughout the year and go on Maternity Leave and therefore have been replaced hence increasing the amount of Staff that have worked at St. Patrick’s throughout 2014.

**Workforce composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total teaching staff</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total non-teaching staff</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of teachers who are Indigenous: 0
Professional Learning Undertaken

A lot of Professional Learning was undertaken as a result of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Whole Staff:

- Asthma, CPR, First Aid, Anaphylaxis and Chemical Training
- Focus on Reading (FOR) (one day)
- Spiritual Day by Brendan Hyde (one day)
- Strategies for Comprehension Inservice by Alison Davis (one day)
- Comprehension Workshops by Alison Davis (one day)
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC) by Kylie Lidscombe (two days)
- Comprehension Strategies by Meryl-Lyn Pluck (afternoon workshop)
- English Syllabus Inservice (afternoon workshop)
- Maths Syllabus Inservice (afternoon workshop)
- ICT Skills Snack Training (afternoon workshops)
- Disabilities Standards Training (On-line 3hr course)

Individual Staff:

- Theology Studies (Uni): (9 Staff studying)
- Quality Teaching Framework Inservice by University Lecturers (4 days for 2 Staff)
- Transforming Schools Inservice by Hawker Brownlow Company (1 day for 5 Staff)
- Co-Coaching Inservice by Catholic School's Office (CSO) Staff (3 days 3 Staff)
- Live Life Well Inservice by Newcastle University PE Faculty (1 day 1 teacher)
- Cool Kids Programme by CSO Staff (1 day 2 Staff)
- Mini-Lit Training by CSO Staff (2 days 4 Staff)
- Indigenous Training Day by CSO (1 day 1 teacher)
- Seasons Re-connector Day by CSO (1/2 day 4 Staff)
- Season's Parent Training Day (1/2 day 1 teacher)
- Pastoral Care Assembly Days (4 days 1 teacher)

Executive Training:

- Assistant Principal (AP), Primary Co-ordinator (PC) & Religious Education Co-ordinator (REC) Assembly Days by CSO personnel (3 days per executive)
- Executive Retreats (Each Executive member attends a retreat for 2 days)
- REC Spiritual Retreat (7 days)
- English Syllabus Conference hosted by Petaa (3 Executive 1 day)
- Comprehension Strategies Forum by Alison Davis (4 Executive Afternoon Workshop)
- Transforming Schools Inservice by Hawker-Brownlow (3 Executive 1 day)
- Maths Syllabus Inservice (4 Staff 1 day)
- Science Syllabus Inservice (1 executive)
- Exploring 21st Century Learning in Lismore Diocesan Schools (4 days Principal)
- Exploring 21st Century Learning in Sydney Diocese (1 day Principal)
- Electronic Roll Training by CSO Personnel (Afternoon Workshop 4 Executive)

Teacher Attendance

The average teacher attendance rate for this school is X%.

CSO will insert this information (as for financial data and testing). Principal may add any necessary explanatory comment.

Teacher Retention

The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 100%.

Enrolments

Actual Enrolments 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholastic Year</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Attendance

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2014:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>School Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cf “Guidelines” document for assistance with this calculation.

Managing non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents and guardians, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The compulsory schooling age is 6 to 17. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act (1990) the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation. The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes sound attendance
monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including student and parent interviews, reviewing the appropriateness of the student’s educational program, development of a school-based attendance improvement plan, referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies and support from school - based personnel. If a range of school - based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Catholic Schools Office.

### Annual School Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Steps taken to achieve the priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Increase ICT capabilities across K-6 | • Purchase of 32 Lap tops  
• Purchase of 30 ipads  
• Implementation of ICT infrastructure  
All Priorities in this area were achieved with the help of P & F Funding |
| Increase resources to implement effectively English Syllabus | • Purchase of 2000 resource books  
Priorities achieved |
| Focus on Learning in Mathematics & Improvement of results in this area | • Afternoon Mathematics Workshops presented by CSO Staff  
• Co-coaching Workshops to allow for Executive to engage in professional dialogue and conversations with Staff in order to have discussions around Teacher Performance  
Results in this area could have been better. The benchmark set for the school improvement in this area was not met. |
| Beautification of School grounds | • Garden area re-organised: trimmed, pruned & gardens woodchipped  
• Trees lopped and removed in line with WHS regulations  
All priorities met in this area. |
| Creating a Collaborative Culture | • Various whole school and small group inservices and workshops around the concept of Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s)  
Priorities in this area are on-going. Foundations were laid ready to be fully implemented in 2015. |

### Community Satisfaction

Community satisfaction was at an all time high this year. The P & F raised a great deal of money to help purchase all of the laptops & I-pads that the school had been wanting to purchase for such a long time. The infrastructure needed for this implementation was all up graded and the children were so excited!

The funds were raised from a Spring Fair which was a great community building social event.

### Financial Information

Inserted by CSO
Concluding Statement

With St. Patrick’s welcoming a new Principal this year after 16 years with Miss Tully, there was always going to be some changes to familiarise ourselves with. This transition went smoothly with life continuing to be very busy like it always is. Many major events and liturgies continued to be held throughout the year, with some of the highlights being the ‘Open Air Mass’ held in the School grounds in November for the Feast of Christ the King and the Spring Fair!

The climax for the year was again the Schools Carol’s Night with the Christmas Pageant being performed by the Year 6 students. The staff thoroughly enjoyed planning, practising and entertaining the eager crowd with Christmas Carols.

The Executive would like to thank the Staff for their continued commitment, dedication and professionalism in 2014. We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all our students and their families for supporting and making St. Patrick’s the fabulous school that it is.

Report Access and Publication

This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, The Board of Studies, The Parents and Friends Association, the Parish Priest and to all parents.

Copies of this school’s Annual School Report are available to the general public. Persons wishing to access a copy of the report should contact:

**PRINCIPAL:** Mr. Andrew Latham  
**SCHOOL NAME:** St. Patrick’s Primary School Cessnock  
**SCHOOL ADDRESS:** 155 Wollombi Rd.  
**SCHOOL SUBURB:** Cessnock  
**STATE AND POSTCODE:** N.S.W 2325  
**Phone:** (02) 49 903152

For further information relating to the Diocesan Policy please refer to: [http://mn.catholic.edu.au](http://mn.catholic.edu.au)