

***St Michael's
Catholic Primary School
Nowra***



***Annual School Report
2011***

About This Report

St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Nowra is registered by the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wollongong. The CEO is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report to the Community for this year provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines information regarding School Review & Improvement initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School's Annual Action Plan.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the CEO. This Report has been approved by Wollongong CEO to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the NSW Board of Studies, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and be available on the school's website by 30 June 2012.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school:

St Michael's Catholic Primary School

PO Box 126

Nowra NSW 2541

Ph: (02) 4421 6360

Fax: (02) 4423 2861

Email: info@smndow.catholic.edu.au

Website: www.smndow.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr Patrick Faherty

Principal: Mr Paul Croker

Date: 16 December 2011

Vision Statement

St Michael's is a Catholic Parish Primary School where, through faith and virtue,
we are called to Catholic discipleship.

We are an inclusive community that gathers, prays, celebrates and
welcomes all in unity with the Parish of St Michael's.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal's Message

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School our vision for education is based on our motto of "Faith and Virtue" and having teaching activities that focus on the excitement and success of learning. Our ethos promotes core values of supporting and challenging each child to learn and grow in an educational environment based on the Catholic Faith tradition. In this environment we have quality key learning area programs that are supported by positive partnerships with parents/carers and inclusive pastoral care.

In 2011 we have enjoyed a very positive community building year and witnessed the great enthusiasm our students display for participating in a wide range of educational, environmental, cultural and sporting activities. In particular, students have responded very well to the new School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) program. High Distinctions, Distinctions, Credits and many successful Participation certificates were given to students who joined in the NSW University Competitions for English, Maths, Spelling, Computing and Science. This 2011 Annual Report highlights the vibrant and enthusiastic St Michael's school community, and the harmonious partnership we enjoy between home, school and the Parish of St Michael's.

Parent Involvement

Once again St Michael's Parents' & Friends' Association (P&F) had a very successful year in 2011. There were two main areas on which the P&F focused, the first being fundraising, where we held a "math-a-thon" this year with proceeds going towards literacy and numeracy resources and books for the library. Also the P&F ran its popular Easter Raffle, along with the Diocesan Cross Country and Soccer Gala Day Canteens. The major fundraiser was the Fete held in November, which despite the heat of the day was once again a success. The P&F also tried to focus on building community spirit within our school families, by holding our annual welcome disco which was very well attended and hosting a morning tea for Grandparents' day. There has been plenty of support from parents this year and good attendance at the monthly P&F meetings.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

As School Captains, this year we have learnt a variety of things. We have become a lot more confident in our public speaking. Our roles as School Captains have enabled us to meet new people that we wouldn't have met otherwise. The staff and other captains have been so supportive. We would like to thank the other prefects and colour house captains for their efforts. This year has been an amazing experience. We thank Mr Croker and all of the St Michael's community for this 'life changing year.'

School Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Michael's Catholic Primary School is a Catholic Systemic co-educational school located in Nowra. The school caters for students in years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 423. There is a Centre for Learning for children with special needs. The provision of sound educational programs is a shared responsibility of the Parish Priest, Principal, Staff and Parents under the supervision of the Catholic Education Office, Wollongong. The Principal is responsible for administering the school assisted by an Assistant Principal, three Coordinators and a Religious Education Coordinator.

In 1893, the Sisters of the Good Samaritan established St Michael's to serve the needs of the Nowra Catholic Community. The school still maintains the Good Samaritan tradition. The Parish covers most of the Shoalhaven region.

Student Enrolments

2011	Boys	Girls	Total	Indigenous	LBOTE
	232	191	423	32	38

The Diocesan Enrolment Policy and Procedures exists to assist schools in the equitable prioritising of enrolment applications and in order to ensure that the requirements of State and Commonwealth legislation are met. This documentation can be found on both the school website www.smndow.catholic.edu.au and the CEO website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2011.

Student Attendance

2011	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	87.7%	92.9%	90.3%	90.3%	90.9%	91.1%

Management of Student Non Attendance

It is a requirement of the Education Reform Act 1990 that a daily record of attendances is accurately kept and that we obtain a signed note from the parent/caregiver explaining any absences.

If any student is absent from school for longer than three days at a time, parents are required to telephone the office, and then send in a written note on the child's return. If any student has holidays during the school year, a note is sent in ahead of time explaining the absence.

Parents will be contacted regularly about unexplained or repeated absences in accordance with the Diocesan Student Attendance & Roll Marking Policy and Procedures.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 27 teachers and 11 support staff at St Michael's Catholic Primary School. This number includes 18 full-time, 9 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 3 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*	100%
Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications	0%
Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context	0%

**Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff Retention*

Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2011 was 94.39%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 96.29%.

Professional Learning

During 2011, St Michael's personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement priorities.

These included:

A. St Michael's whole school Staff Development days.

These days focused on:

- Staff Spirituality day – Suz Marden (all staff);
- Assessment and Reporting – Wendy Bean (all staff); and
- Anaphylaxis and Asthma Training (all staff).

B. Other professional learning activities provided at the school level including CEO run courses were:

- School Wide Positive Behaviours For Learning (SPB4L) Training Days (7 staff x 3 days);
- Focus on Reading (6 staff members x 4 days);
- Persuasive Writing (7 staff members x 10 hours);
- Phonemic Awareness (9 staff members x 8 hours);
- World Environmental Education (1 staff) - \$2000; and
- Reading Recovery Training (1 staff member).

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$4026.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the Catholic Education Office with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$798.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

St Michael's Catholic Primary School actively seeks to immerse all staff and students in the traditions and practice of the Catholic faith. As a Parish school we provide the opportunity for Mass attendance and celebrate significant Church Feast Days throughout the year. The Parish have provided Sacramental Programs for Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation that have been supported by the school. Fr Pat Faherty, Parish Priest, and Fr. George Condookala, Assistant Parish Priest, work in collaboration with teaching staff to support the faith formation of the children and to discuss current events in the life of the Church. Both Priests incorporate teaching of tradition into the Parish Mass on Fridays, which are attended by grades on a rotational basis. Throughout the year, significant Church and community occasions are celebrated including: the beginning School Year Mass, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week Liturgies, Grandparents' Mass, Catholic Schools Week, Mother's Day, St Michael's Feast Day, ANZAC and Remembrance Day liturgies, National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week and the Grade 6 Graduation Mass. St Michael's Year 6 children hosted the Prayer and Conversation with Bishop Peter Ingham at St Michael's, proclaiming the Word with reverence. Opportunities for the children to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Benediction were also provided.

The school and Parish support each other in the Sacramental Programs: First Reconciliation in Year 2, First Eucharist in Year 3 and Confirmation in Year 6. Each Program is enhanced by parent involvement and two parent information evenings and a parent prayer evening are included.

The staff continued their faith formation through weekly staff prayer and a Spirituality Day conducted during the year, which focused on the faith journey of each one of us linked to the journey of the Magi at the first Christmas.

Reaching out to those who are less fortunate than us remains a priority for our school. The school community was once again very generous and supportive of social justice outreach initiatives. All classrooms had a collection box for Project Compassion during Lent. In Term 2 the children participated in a school Beanie and Scarf day, raising money for the St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal. In Term 4 the children participated in “house building” raising funds for Catholic Mission. A total of \$2 800 was raised, whilst also supporting other local charities.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully implemented within schools across the Diocese in 2011. In 2011 the St Michael’s school cohort consisted of 44 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 29 August 2011 and 49 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task is based on the Unit: *Mary, Mother of God: First Among The Saints* and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

Students demonstrated a high level of performance when answering true/false and questions.

This high performance was particularly noticeable in their ability to:

- demonstrate an understanding of Jesus' teaching on the practice of giving, and
- demonstrate an understanding of an image from the scriptures.

Students’ responses showed a need for them to develop their capacity to answer matching questions.

This is evidenced in their ability to:

- demonstrate a basic understanding of the Sacrament of Penance.

Students in Part B displayed their work and were asked to present a project that required them to apply their religious literacy knowledge about the responses to God of Mary, Mother of God and St. Mary MacKillop of the Cross.

For Part A, 13.3 % of students were placed in the developing level, 53.3 % in the achieving level, and 33.3% were in the extending level.

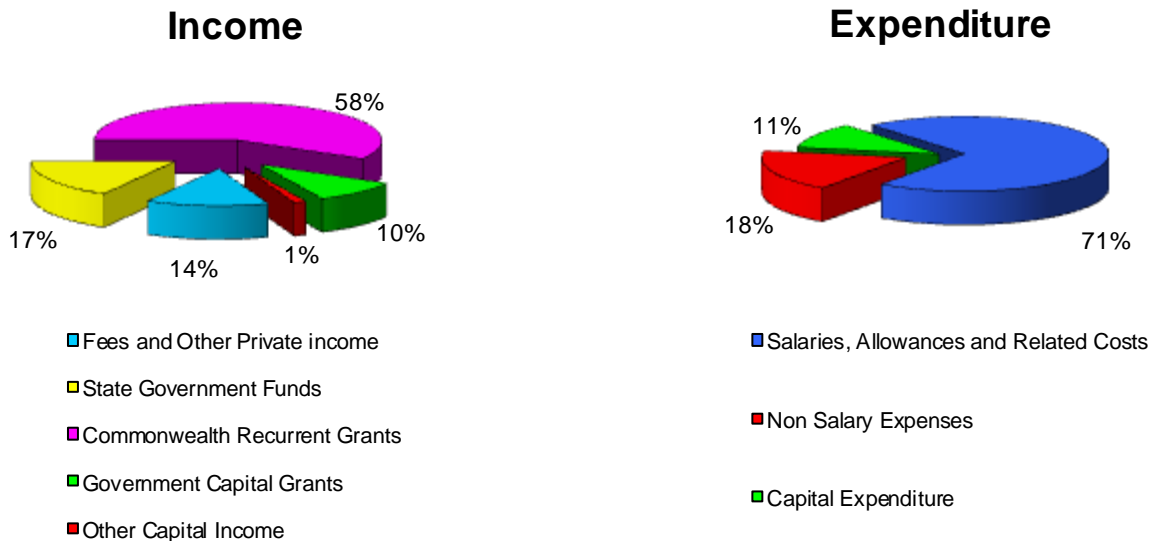
For Part B 14% of students were placed in the developing level, 68% in the achieving level, and 18% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 15.6% of students were placed in the developing level, 64.4% in the achieving level and 20% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

Financial Summary

During 2010 there were three main sources of income for St Michael's School. These were the Parish/School Enhancement and Debt Survey Obligation (SEDSO) Account, Catholic Education Office and Parents' and Friends Association.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Nowra for the year ended 31 December 2011. This data is taken from the 2011 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.



Student Welfare

Introduction

During 2011, St Michael's School staff has continued to implement 'School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning' (SPB4L) across the school. The school team continued to meet fortnightly to assess, reassess and analyse behaviour data to carry on with adapting and improving the school culture and environment. Fortnightly whole school behaviour teaching sessions assisted in formalising the strategies used to continue to support students in making positive behaviour choices. The school team have also been working on updating the Behaviour Management and Support Policy, as well as, the Pastoral Care Policy.

Pastoral Care

As a school we have participated in and offered the following initiatives:

- Mentoring of Indigenous (and non-Indigenous) students with an Aboriginal Mentor;
- 'Knitting Group' with the Catholic Woman's League;
- Liaison with outside agencies Community Services, Mission Australia, Aboriginal Medical Service and the local Indigenous community;
- Peer Support: Lead by Year 6 students on the topic 'Resilience'. Meetings were held weekly in Term3;
- Home/School Liaison; and
- School Counsellor provided by CatholicCare.

St Michael's has provided a number of specific programs to support the physical and emotional needs of students and families in our school community. Some of these programs include:

- Booster Training to support students with specific needs in utilising the appropriate behaviour strategies and make positive behaviour choices;
- Social Skills stories, particularly supporting students on the Autism Spectrum;
- Behaviour Intervention Programs;
- Extended Transition Programs – Preschool to Kindergarten, Year 6 to Year 7 at St John's;
- Safe Haven Lunch Program for those who find the playground a little difficult;
- Enrichment Group Activities; and
- Environmental Group linked with the Rainbow Shop incorporating parents, teachers and students growing and maintaining gardens of vegetables and selling the products.

Through the running of these programs within St Michael's School we received a Safe Sport School Award from the NSW Government Sporting Injuries Committee. St Michael's also received an Excellence Award for the work done through SPB4L.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to a safe and supportive environment. The principles, guidelines and procedures set out in the Policy documents ***Maintaining Right Relationships*** and ***Safe Work Environment*** are the framework for school leaders, students, staff, parents and the wider community to develop a safe and supportive environment.

The Diocesan ***Complaints Handling Procedures*** forms an important element in the Diocese's commitment to ensuring safe and supportive environments for school communities. These documents can be found on the Catholic Education Office website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2011.

In compliance with the ***NSW Reform Act 1990***, Corporal Punishment is banned in all schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Learning and Teaching

Introduction

At St Michael's students are encouraged and supported to realise their potential in all areas. Through the School Review and Improvement (SRI) process, components 3.1 Curriculum Provision and 3.3 Assessment were a particular focus in 2011.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

During 2011, the school focussed on 'Assessment & Reporting' introduced through a whole staff Professional Learning day led by Wendy Bean from the University of Wollongong. This was followed by several staff meetings during which standard assessment procedures in the area of English were refined and a whole school recording system developed. The delivery of English at St Michael's was further enhanced through professional learning in this area. The Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework (DLTF) continued to be implemented through teacher educator mentoring and staff meetings throughout the school. The staff incorporated DLTF into classroom practice and program evaluation. The DLTF has contributed significantly to the increased level of professional dialogue between staff.

Mathematics continued to be an area of focus for St Michael's with significant development achieved through the establishment of a Mathematics Pedagogy Team. This Team have led professional learning, collaborating with staff on establishing a scope and sequence of basic facts and working towards establishing an 'Agreed Practice' statement for Mathematics teaching at St Michael's School.

Cross Curriculum

2011 has seen the establishment of significant Environmental Education initiatives, including the School garden, incorporating an Indigenous garden and vegetable garden, as well as, recycling and composting systems throughout the school. 'The Rainbow Shop' was introduced to reinforce the benefits of sustainable products and to sell produce from the school garden. The school also introduced an 'in school' enrichment business selling 'Wacky Worm Wee'. Students were involved in all aspects of designing, producing, marketing and selling through school stalls and eventually through the Rainbow Shop. Indigenous Educational initiatives continued through our Aboriginal Education Assistant working closely with indigenous students academically, but also through cultural groups. During 2011, an Indigenous Mentor was appointed to work with Indigenous students throughout the school which was of enormous benefit to all students.

Meeting the needs of all students

The teachers at St Michael's offer a differentiated curriculum to ensure that all students achieve their best possible academic results. Learning is diversified for students in our school

through the implementation of individual education programs and by utilising small group work. There are School Support Officers who withdraw students to complete tasks individualised to the specific needs of students, both those with additional needs and who are achieving above grade level.

The Centre for Learning caters for students with a variety of additional needs. A full time teacher and School Support Officer work in the Centre and children attend for sections of the day dependent on their specific needs. English, Mathematics and social skills are the main components currently taught in the Centre. All students in the school with Special Needs have an Individual Plan that is devised collaboratively each semester by the Centre for Learning teacher, the child's classroom teacher and the parents.

The enrichment opportunities for the students at St Michael's include groups that occur in lunchtimes and within teaching time. They include: woodwork, environment gardening group, outdoor learning, chess, talent quests, choir, band programs, knitting, Japanese language, Indigenous culture, Didgeridoo players and a writer's group. This year the school implemented an elective sports program for all Primary students to encourage participation in school teams. Extension groups are also conducted in the areas of Mathematics, debating and Tournament of the Minds.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

The students at St Michael's were given opportunities to enter the University Of NSW competitions in the following areas: Mathematics, Writing, Spelling, Computers, and Science. Students received several Distinctions and pleasing results in these competitions. The Stage Three students entered a team in the Maths Olympiad and Tournament of Minds. Public Speaking was also offered as an optional competition for Stage Three classes.

The school has been involved in many sporting opportunities this year including carnivals for Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country at a school, Regional, Diocesan and State level. The school also entered representative teams for basketball, netball, cricket, football and soccer.

Student Achievement

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

NAPLAN

The NAPLAN was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May 2008. NAPLAN replaces the previous State-based Basic Skills Test and the results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

This year the Year 5 girls, in the test aspect of Numeracy, have improved by 67 scale scores. They were also 16 scale scores above the state average in the test aspect of reading. The Year 5 boys in the test aspect of Numeracy are 46 scale scores above the state average.

While 61% of the Year 3 students scored at the proficiency level in writing in the English strand.

Student Achievement in Bands

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses aspects of Literacy and Numeracy in Years 3 and 5. It provides valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of Literacy and Numeracy outcomes for all students. Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. **Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.**

NAPLAN 2011: % in Bands		YEAR 3			YEAR 5		
		Bands 1 and 2	Bands 3 and 4	Bands 5 and 6	Bands 3 and 4	Bands 5 and 6	Bands 7 and 8
Reading	School	20%	40%	39%	11%	52%	36%
	National	15%	39%	45%	21%	49%	29%
Writing	School	9%	31%	60%	16%	78%	5%
	National	8%	44%	46%	18%	57%	23%
Spelling	School	19%	43%	39%	17%	77%	7%
	National	15%	42%	41%	20%	53%	26%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	15%	43%	43%	11%	60%	28%
	National	14%	36%	48%	17%	46%	35%
Numeracy	School	22%	50%	29%	5%	61%	34%
	National	14%	51%	33%	17%	56%	25%

Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

Students are considered to be achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) if they are in the lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) or if they have been exempt from NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) represents students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

NAPLAN 2011: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	95%	97%
	National	94%	92%
Writing	School	95%	97%
	National	95%	92%
Spelling	School	95%	90%
	National	93%	91%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	94%	97%
	National	93%	92%
Numeracy	School	98%	100%
	National	96%	94%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parents and carers, staff members and Years 3 and 5 students were surveyed to provide each group with the opportunity for input into areas affecting learning and teaching and the general environment of the school. The information provided will be used to assist with future planning, improvements to policies and updating curriculum programs.

Parents

100% agreed that the school helps their child develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 96% agreed that the school provides various opportunities for parents/carers to become involved. 95% felt teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child. 96% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children. 91% believe the school effectively communicates information about activities and events. 26% felt more challenges are needed to maximise their child's learning and 16% felt more is needed about the individual progress of their child.

Staff

100% of staff members agreed that the school helps students develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 92% felt that students understand their rights and responsibilities. 96% felt the school strives to meet students' individual learning needs. 96% felt the school provides a safe and supportive environment for children.

Students

97% of students stated they were proud of their school. 99% of students believed their teacher encourages them to learn to the best of their ability. 99% of students stated that they understand their rights and responsibilities at school. 92% of students feel safe at school. 99% of students agreed there are sporting and other activities they can enjoy.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement is an on-going process of self-evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. It informs action planning at the school level to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Above all, Catholic schools must be good schools with a strong learning orientation and a strong sense of purpose. In all aspects of improving and developing, schools should be learning-centred, constantly striving for excellence and have the student as their primary focus.

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2011:

- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
 - 3.1 Curriculum Provision
 - 3.5 Assessment
 - 3.7 Professional Learning
- **Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management**
 - 4.2 Professional Development of Staff
 - 4.3 An ethical workplace culture
 - 4.5 Overall Compliance with legislation and other requirements
- **Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communications**
 - 6.2 Reporting to the Community
- **Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management**
 - 7.1 Innovation, development and change

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2012:

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
 - 1.2 Religious Education
 - 1.3 Catholic Life and Culture
- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
 - 3.4 Planning, Programming and Assessment
- **Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management**
 - 4.1 Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Staff
 - 4.4 Succession Planning
- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**
 - 5.1 ICT Resources
 - 5.2 Use of Resources & Space
 - 5.4 Financial Management

