

Annual School Report

2015



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

About This Report

St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Nowra is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) and managed by Catholic Education, Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW). The CEDoW 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 Action Plans.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and CEDoW. This Report has been approved by CEDoW to ensure compliance with all the BOSTES NSW requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the BOSTES, the Report will be presented to the parent body and be available on the school's website by 30 June 2016.

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

St Michael's Catholic Primary School

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Parish Priest: Fr Patrick Faherty

Principal: Christopher Paton

Date: 20 December 2015

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

As a State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan school, St Michael's Nowra continued the journey that commenced in 2012. A Teacher Educator worked closely with Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 teachers to ensure that data and classroom practice assisted the students to attain the benchmarks required. An external audit by the NSW State Government indicated that the school had made substantial growth. Using the School Review and Improvement (SRI) process, significant achievements occurred including the establishment of Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) in each Grade. Using professional reading and an assigned facilitator, these teams explored assessment in Mathematics with an emphasis on meeting the needs of all students in each Grade. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results showed continued learning gains. Areas for further development in 2016 will include writing and spelling. In the sporting field a number of students represented the school in a variety of gala days and Diocesan events. The Parents and Friends Association (P&F) were again a very supportive group with many parents assisting within the school and supporting the various fundraising opportunities provided by the P&F. In 2016 an additional Year 6 class will be added to the school, resulting in 21 permanent classes for 2016 and beyond. Thank you to all members of the school community for your support and assistance in 2015.

Parent Involvement

The members of the Executive Committee retained their roles this year. This allowed the committee to build on the strong footing that they had set in 2014. In 2015 the Parents and Friends' Committee (P&F) continued to develop new ways to communicate events and information through the very popular Facebook page, which now has a following of over 300 people. Combined with the schoolbag App, the profile of the P&F continued to grow within the local community.

The year started with the very well supported Welcome Disco and BBQ, closely followed by the Diocesan Cross Country Carnival, Easter raffle and soccer gala day. The car boot sale with a food stall was a new event in 2015. The School Fair was the last big event of the year and was a huge success. We are very grateful to all the volunteers who supported the fundraising events, enabling the donation of \$25 000 to purchase new computers and iPads.

Parents and Friends Association, President (or other Executive)

Student Leadership

Being School Captains for 2015 was a brilliant experience. Leadership to us means responsibility and guidance to others. We spoke at Masses and assemblies, learning to speak confidently in front of crowds and controlling our nerves. As Captains, we had many opportunities; laying the wreath in the Anzac ceremonies, attending special Masses in Wollongong and just leading our

school. We would like to thank everyone who gave us help and support. Thank you to all helped us have an unforgettable year.

School Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Michael's 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 532. There is a Learning Support Centre 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, 4 Middle Leaders 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 and includes five station churches.

Student Enrolments as at August 2015 census

2015 enrolments	
Boys	283
Girls	249
Total	532
Indigenous	38
LBOTE	50

The Diocesan Primary 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 CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to this Policy in 2015.

Student Attendance

2015 Attendance	Male	Female
Kinder	92.2%	94.0%
Year 1	92.5%	94.5%
Year 2	92.1%	93.3%
Year 3	91.2%	92.4%
Year 4	92.6%	91.0%
Year 5	88.8%	92.4%
Year 6	90.8%	92.0%
Whole school	91.6%	92.8%

Management of Student Non Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are 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.

It is a requirement of the Education Reform Act 1990 Section 22A that a daily record of attendances is accurately kept and that we obtain a signed note from the parent/caregiver explaining any absences.

Parents will be contacted regularly about unexplained or repeated absences in accordance with the CEDoW Student Attendance Policy and the School Attendance Guidelines and Procedures (January 2015).

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 30 teachers and 15 support staff at St Michael's Catholic Primary School. This number includes 22 full-time and 8 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 2 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

Teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* guidelines	100%
A bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education	0%

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

Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2015 was 95.5%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 99%.

Professional Learning

During 2015 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 development days involving 36 staff.
These days focused on:
 - History Curriculum
 - The Charism of the Good Samaritan
- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEDoW run courses:
 - Inaugural CECNSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Forum (1 staff)
 - Write Now! PETTA Conference (4 staff)
 - Thinking and Learning Institute Conference (3 staff)
 - PLT Facilitator (4 staff)
 - Reading Recovery Support Teacher (1 staff)
 - Learning for Leadership (1 staff)
 - SPB₄L Graduation day (5 staff)
 - Sentral Training (3 staff)
 - MSPEC Team Training (4 staff)
 - Religious Literacy Marking Day (1 staff)
 - Bill Rogers Behaviour Management (3 staff)
 - Lamp Lighters Spirituality (4 staff)
 - Shining Lights Spirituality (3 staff)
 - Middle Leaders day (3 staff)
 - Graduate Mentor Day (4 staff)
 - Early Career Network (2 staff)

- Mathematics leader's day (1 staff)
- Literacy leader's day (2 staff)
- Primary Assistant Principal's Retreat day (1 staff)
- Mathematics Conference UOW (2 staff)
- State Action Plan – Mathematics (4 staff/ 2 days)
- Professional Coaching (1 staff/ 4 days)
- Professional Learning Teams (21 staff)
- First Aid (38 staff/ 1 day)
- Epilepsy Essentials (1 staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$217.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$1 964.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

During 2015 St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Nowra actively strove to immerse all staff and students in the traditions and practices of the Catholic faith. The school provided the opportunity for Mass attendance and celebrated significant Church Feast Days throughout the year. Sacramental Programs for Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation were also provided, supported by the Parish. The Parish Priest and 3 Assistant Priests worked in collaboration with teaching staff to support the faith formation of the children and to discuss current events in the life of the Church. All Priests incorporated teaching of tradition into the Parish Mass each Friday, attended by Grades on a rotational basis; and at Sunday *Grade Masses*, which occurred on the first Sunday of each month when school was in session. The School Chaplain played a pivotal role in the school this year assisting in school pastoral work with students as well as coordinating the school Mini-Vinnie's group.

Throughout the year, significant Church and community occasions were celebrated including: the beginning School Year Liturgy, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week Liturgies, Grandparents' Mass, Mother's Day, Father's Day, St Michael's Feast Day, Mission Mass, ANZAC Day liturgy, National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, the Grade 6 Graduation Mass and the Christmas Concert. St Michael's Year 6 children attended the 'Prayer with the Bishop Peter Ingham' at St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Albion Park proclaiming the Word with reverence. St Michael's Year 3 students joined with St Mary's Star of the Sea students to celebrate their Feast Day. St Michael's Year 5 students attended an excursion to Mary MacKillop Place to learn more about Australia's first saint. Opportunities for the children to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Benediction were also provided. The rollout of the 'Understanding Faith Online' resource was taken up by Stage 2 and 3 teachers and students with the intention of expanding this resource to Stage 1 in 2016. Four students had their art entries placed in the Diocesan Christmas Art Competition during Term 3.

The school and Parish supported each other in the Sacramental Programs: Penance in Year 2, First Eucharist in Year 3 and Confirmation in Year 6. Parental involvement with two parent information evenings and a parent prayer evening provided adult Spiritual formation opportunities. The staff continued their faith formation through weekly staff prayer and a Spirituality day conducted during the year, which focused on the Charism of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict – the founding order of St. Michael's. Two teams of 3 and 4 staff members respectively attended the Spiritual Formation Programs: Igniting the Fire

and Lamplighters during 2015. These programs will continue in 2016. The Lamplighters team commenced guiding staff prayer and spiritual development during the latter part of the year. Reaching out to those who are less fortunate than us remained a priority for the school community which was once again very generous and supportive of social justice outreach initiatives. All classrooms had a collection box for Project Compassion during Lent. Throughout the year the Mini-Vinnies team ran a school 'Café' to raise funds for the St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal and other Catholic charities. In Term 3 money was raised for Catholic Mission, and was sent with students from St. John the Evangelist High School Nowra Immersion Group going to Timor Leste. This was to be used to support schools in Railaco, Remixio and an orphanage in Dili. In Term 4 the children again raised funds for Catholic Mission, which supported their work in Madagascar. The school also raised money for the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal at the annual Christmas Concert. Throughout the year a total of \$ 3 500 was raised and distributed to Catholic charities. The school was also active in supporting a Year 2 student diagnosed with brain cancer.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment framework of *Knowing, Working with, Applying and Valuing the Tradition* informs and shapes assessment in RE across K-6 with a focussed system collection of data in Year 4.

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2015. The school cohort in 2015 consisted of 70 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 24 August 2015 and 80 Year 4 students who completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *One With God's Creation* and was completed during the first half of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

The students' responses showed a need for them to develop their capacity to work with and apply the religious tradition especially in their ability to:

- Identify key symbols, signs and rituals of the Catholic Tradition
- Recall and sequence the events of Holy Week and Easter
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of Jesus and His teachings, and
- Demonstrate an understanding of responding to and placing their trust in God

For Part A, 15.5% of students were placed in the developing level, 76.1% in the achieving level and 8.5% were in the extending level.

Students in Part B displayed improvement in their ability to work with and apply their religious knowledge. 12.3% of students were placed in the developing level, 75.3% in the achieving level and 12.30% were in the extending level.

Combining Part A and B, 21.10% of students were placed in the developing level, 71.80% in the achieving level and 7.00% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement is an ongoing 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 reviewed and rated in 2015

- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
1.3 Catholic Life and Culture
- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
2.4 Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
2.5 Pastoral Care
- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
3.5 Assessment
- **Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management**
4.2 Professional development of staff
- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**
5.1 ICT Resources
- **Key Area 6: parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**
6.1 Parent involvement

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2016:

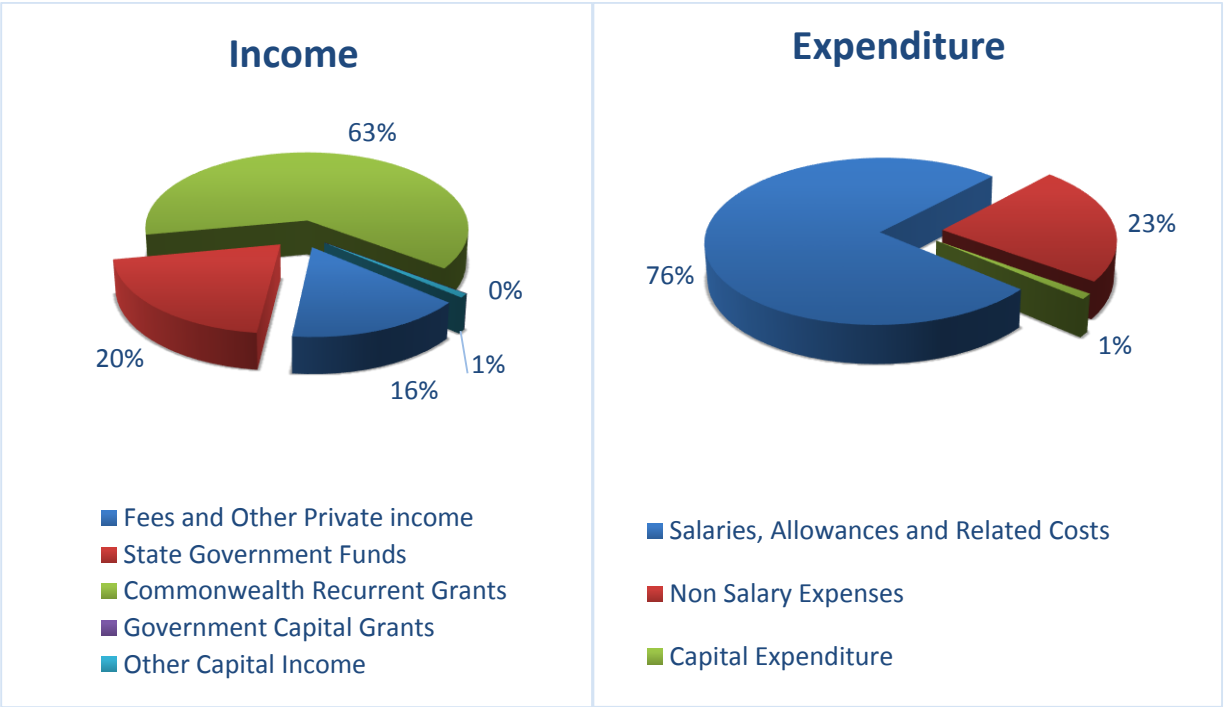
- **Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education**
1.4 Parents, parishes and the broader Church
- **Key Area 2: Students and their Learning**
2.1 Educational potential
2.3 Reporting student achievement
- **Key Area 3: Pedagogy**
3.6 School climate, learning environment and relationship
- **Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities**
5.2 Use of Resources and Space
- **Key Area 6: parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication**
6.2 Reporting to the community

During 2016, the School Review and Improvement (SRI) plan will involve all staff in the six components listed. The school will continue to provide support for staff to further improve student achievement in English and Mathematics through the continued use of data and agreed classroom practice. Components 2.1, 2.3 and 3.6 will provide opportunities to guide this improvement. Professional Learning Teams for each Grade will assist to create the most effective learning environment for students and staff at St Michael’s Nowra. The use of differentiation and improved diagnostic testing as part of the school MSPEC process will be explored through SRI in 2016. Through Components 1.4 and 6.2, Spirituality opportunities and links with the wider church community created in 2015 will continue to be strengthened. Following the School Cyclic Review process in 2015, it was recommended that the school review the effectiveness of Parish relationships to consider the growing need for parent evangelisation and the further development of staff liturgical understanding. Components 1.4 and 6.2 will guide this review. With an expanding school population, Component 5.2 will be used review the use of resources and space, specifically planning for future needs.

Financial Summary

During 2015 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 2015. This data is taken from the 2015 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.



Student Welfare

This year saw the development and introduction of a 'response to intervention model' in the form of MSPEC (Managing Student Pastoral and Education Concerns), a school wide system created to enable teachers to meet with a panel including: teachers, special education teacher, CEDoW psychologist, teacher educator and Principal/Assistant Principal. This system enabled teachers to present and discuss the specific needs of individual students and to initiate individual intervention plans for that student. Many students were referred to more specialised services and were assessed formally as a result of the MSPEC process. School wide electronic data tracking for all students was introduced through the Sentral system, as well as academic tracking, wellbeing, attendance and behavioural information, all readily available to all teachers.

SPB4L continued to be a driving force in the school's behaviour management systems, tracking of data and teaching of consistent routines. This year saw the introduction of a Yellow SPB4L committee to case manage and monitor the students exhibiting red and yellow zone behaviours. The Green team continued to be responsible for the maintenance of all green whole school systems. The school has developed a 'check-in check-out process' to cater for students exhibiting red and yellow zone behaviours, these plans were individualised to cater for the developing needs of these students as recorded in student data via Sentral.

The practical day to day needs of the diverse St Michael's Community were addressed by the school in the following ways:

- Breakfast Club and emergency lunches were provided to students in need; this initiative provided food for disadvantaged students as well as opportunities for social skills training;
- uniforms were provided through the clothing pool and the provision of vouchers for school uniforms;
- check-in/check-out systems were provided for students who required additional social or behavioural support through mentoring with a staff member;
- Defence Transition Aide provided service and support to students and families of the defence forces particularly during postings away from families;
- CatholicCare provided additional counselling services to the school this year, as well as small group support groups such as Seasons for Growth for students who had suffered grief and loss;
- the School Chaplain conducted small groups support through social skills programs and a Seasons for Growth program.

Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) introduced in 2013 continued to be effective in ensuring ongoing engagement with Indigenous parents and students. PLPs provided a positive discussion on how students learn best and included their interests and goals. The PLP goals were revised throughout the year and were matched with Individual Literacy and Numeracy Learning Plans created through ongoing assessment. These plans provided the Aboriginal Education Worker with direction to assist students to address their learning needs.

Indigenous cultural and pastoral care continued to be a highlight of St Michael's School, providing a space for community to gather, celebrate, attend meetings and support students and their families. The School Support Officers (SSOs) and Aboriginal Education Workers (AEWs) facilitated the daily breakfast program. The SSOs also provided informal education on healthy food, sleep habits and water intake to these students. The AEWs consulted Aboriginal Elders on cultural sensitivities and assisted teachers to select meaningful and appropriate local Aboriginal

History/Spirituality resources. An Aboriginal mentor regularly assisted the school with cultural activities including visiting classes, boomerang and didgeridoo lessons, dance and painting lessons.

In 2015 a new Aboriginal Community Children's Facility 'Cullunghutti' opened in Nowra. St. Michael's school initiated contact and have planned to ensure ongoing working relationship to further assist the schools Aboriginal students.

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*** is 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 CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2015. 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

The staff at St Michael's Catholic Primary School, strives to implement and provide a contemporary Australian Curriculum under the requirements of the NSW Board of Studies (BOSTES) to meet the diverse learning needs of all students in K-6. In addition to Key Learning Areas prescribed by BOSTES, the students have been provided with courses in Religious Education (RE) in accordance with Diocese of Wollongong's Policy. The Diocesan School Review and Improvement (SRI) process provided a focus for initiatives in learning and teaching in 2015. The components reviewed in 2015 that supported the delivery of quality learning and teaching included Assessment and Professional Development of staff.

State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan

The School participated in the State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan (SAP) throughout 2015. This provided the school with the opportunity to focus on a broad range of initiatives designed to lift student educational attainment, especially in K-2. As a participating SAP school, strengthening successful practices and developing innovative responses to meet the needs of all students especially those most in need of additional support, continued to be a priority. The SAP built the teaching skill and capacity of teachers through significant professional learning opportunities focussing on effective quality pedagogy to meet literacy and numeracy learning outcomes for all students, in particular K-2. School involvement in the SAP also aimed to achieve better use of data to drive learning and teaching, the strengthening of school leadership and partnership arrangements between school, parents and the local community.

The School implemented the following initiatives under the State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan:

- Continued appointment of Teacher Educator;

- Tracking and monitoring student growth using literacy and numeracy learning continua and class learning plans;
- Regular collection, analysis and discussion of data to inform the teaching and learning cycle;
- Instructional leadership and walkthroughs providing teachers and students with effective and constructive feedback;
- Development of professional learning teams focused on consistent moderation of teaching and assessment practices in mathematics K-6;
- Development of a Numeracy Team to deliver effective professional learning to staff;
- Tiered learning and targeted intervention for students requiring further scaffolded support for achievement;
- Development of a Writing Project Team to focus on building a community of writers;
- Managing Student Pastoral and Educational Concerns (MPSEC) through regular targeted intervention meetings.

The initiatives in 2015 were funded through the State Government.

Curriculum and Pedagogy

During 2015, the school continued to focus on enhancing student learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy by further developing teaching practices from Kindergarten to Year 2. Data was used to inform future planning and teaching. Staff from Kindergarten to Year 6 used Literacy and Numeracy continuums to track student learning.

Professional Learning Teams were established to focus on improving student outcomes at grade level in the area of Mathematics. Staff Numeracy and Writing Teams were formed to focus on school based professional development needs. It focussed on improving teacher practice of numeracy and writing for staff from Kindergarten to Year 6.

An Agreed School Practice for English and Numeracy was implemented to support a consistent, standard quality approach to teaching English and Mathematics. Scope and Sequences for English, Mathematics and Science were updated throughout the year. Whole staff Professional Development was also provided to support the implementation of the new History Curriculum. Scope and Sequences were developed and resource requirements were made to assist with the planning and implementation of the History Curriculum.

Staff continued to explore the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework, Australian Institute for Teaching School Leadership (AITSL) and continued to incorporate the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework (DLTF) into classroom practice.

A whole school Assessment Plan was used to enable teachers to consistently assess students in all Key Learning Areas, informing future planning and allowing for the tracking and monitoring of student outcomes. Staff examined the need for consistent teacher judgement in the area of assessment and reporting. School staff engaged in professional development supporting the use of the Sentral Student Tracking system.

Cross Curriculum

In 2015 St Michael's school continued to consolidate the Sustainable Schools Initiative. The chicken coop, vegetable garden and orchard were planted and maintained by volunteers and students, produce was sold through the Rainbow Shop. Produce was also used by the School Canteen and it was given to St Michael's Parish to support the Soup Kitchen Initiative. The garden had been a significant resource with the school's implementation of the new Science curriculum.

Students participating in the Environment Group and students working in the Good Samaritan Centre visited the garden regularly to learn life skills. With community to be a major focus, the program 'Grandparents in the Garden' continued. The garden was further expanded with the planting of more native plants to highlight the types of Bush Tucker.

Indigenous Students continued to be supported academically, as well as culturally by working with Indigenous Mentors. This support continued to be successful and beneficial to all students. Developing an awareness and appreciation of local history, significant sites and cultural customs was an emphasis for staff professional development with the new History curriculum. Staff were supported with this through input by local Indigenous Elders and Indigenous Mentors.

Meeting the needs of all students

The teachers at St Michael's school offered a differentiated curriculum to ensure that students were given an opportunity to achieve their best possible academic results. Learning was diversified for students across the school through the implementation of Personalised Plans for a disability, disorder, disease or behavioural need. Teachers and School Support Officers worked with students to complete tasks individualised to their specific needs including those with additional needs and those who were achieving above Grade level.

The Good Samaritan Centre catered for students with a disability. A full time teacher and School Support Officer worked in the Centre and children attended for sections of the day depending on their specific needs. English, Mathematics and social skills were the main components taught in the Centre. All students in the school with a special need had a Personalised Plan that was devised collaboratively each semester by the child's classroom teacher and the parents.

In 2015 the school assessed students for identification of gifts and talents. Year 3 students were assessed using the Acer General Ability Test. From this, students were identified as being in the Core, Higher Average, Superior or Very Superior bands of intelligence. Extension work was provided for students with identified gifts and talents through the Stretching Potential Through Learning in Interactive and Challenging Environments in the Diocese of Wollongong (SPLICED) program, a Catholic Education Gifted and Talented Program.

The MSPEC team was established to discuss and analyse data on individual students who presented as being 'at risk' academically. Classroom teachers were supported in providing targeted learning to cater for the needs of these students. The enrichment opportunities for the students at St Michael's school occurred during lunchtimes and within teaching time. These opportunities included: an environmental gardening group, talent quests, choir, band programs, dance group, knitting, Japanese language, Indigenous culture, Didgeridoo players and an Art group.

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 other substantial results in these competitions. The Stage 3 students entered a team in the Maths Olympiad. Public Speaking was also offered as an optional competition for Stage Three classes. The school was involved in many sporting opportunities this year including carnivals for Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country at a school, Regional, Diocesan and State level. Two high performing student progressed to National Primary School Sports Association (PSSA) level for tennis and athletics and 4 students were selected for

the MacKillop teams for soccer, cross country, swimming and rugby union. The school also entered representative teams for basketball, netball, football, rugby league and rugby union.

Student Achievements

The school used a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These included teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participated 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 was communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results were discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is implemented for students in Years 3 and 5 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.

In May 2015, the students in Years 3 and 5 sat NAPLAN assessments. There were 84 students in Year 3 and 59 students in Year 5 that completed the assessments.

In general, the Year 3 cohort achieved more Band 5 and Band 6 results in writing and spelling in comparison to the previous cohort. The female students in Year 3 achieved more Band 5 and Band 6 results in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation in comparison to the male students.

Overall, the Year 5 cohort performed better in all areas in comparison to the previous Year 5 cohort. Year 5 achieved more Band 7 and Band 8 results in spelling and grammar and punctuation than the previous year. In addition, the results indicated that the Year 5 students achieved expected growth in most areas of the assessments.

The focus in 2016 is to ensure an increased number of students have the opportunity to achieve results in the higher bands, especially in the area of numeracy. The School will continue to seek and provide appropriate professional learning opportunities to support staff in providing a challenging and engaging curriculum, which promotes the individual learning growth of each student.

Student Achievement in Bands

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.

NAPLAN 2015: % 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	4%	52%	44%	17%	41%	42%
	National	13%	39%	48%	20%	47%	33%
Writing	School	4%	57%	40%	9%	82%	9%
	National	9%	44%	47%	19%	62%	19%
Spelling	School	10%	49%	41%	29%	36%	36%
	National	16%	43%	41%	17%	50%	33%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	6%	55%	40%	15%	47%	37%
	National	13%	35%	52%	18%	46%	36%
Numeracy	School	18%	57%	25%	14%	59%	28%
	National	17%	49%	34%	18%	55%	28%

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) are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

NAPLAN 2015: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	99%	100%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	99%	98%
	National	96%	92%
Spelling	School	99%	93%
	National	93%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	100%	93%
	National	95%	93%
Numeracy	School	95%	95%
	National	94%	95%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

During 2015, data relating to parent, staff and student satisfaction was gathered using a variety of measures.

Parents agreed that the school assisted their child to develop knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. Communication structures were also seen to be highly effective. Parents also indicated high satisfaction with the school providing a safe and supportive learning environment and the majority believed that the staff members at the school were genuinely interested in the welfare of their child.

The majority of students surveyed indicated that they were proud of their school and that their class teacher encouraged them to learn to the best of their ability. Students also indicated that they felt safe at St Michael's Nowra and felt strongly that if they had a problem, there were people they could approach for help. Students were appreciative of sporting and other activities that they were able to be involved in. and agreed that the school helped them understand the Catholic faith.

Staff agreed that the school helped students to develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition and strived to meet the individual learning needs of students. They also agreed that the school provided appropriate information to parents about student progress.

