Annual School Report
2012 School Year

Mary Help of Christians Sawtell

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About this report

Mary Help of Christians school is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report to the Parish School Community for this year provides the parish 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 to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school’s Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office. This Report has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2013 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

The contents of this Report are able to be discussed at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 6653 3122 or by visiting the website at www.sawplism.catholic.edu.au
Principal’s Message

The primary purpose of Mary Help of Christians Catholic Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. Mary Help of Christians offers students a Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the faith and spiritual growth of the students as well as opportunities to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school’s mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students’ achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2012. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards, in the school office and on class webpages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that Mary Help of Christians has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- Students at Mary Help of Christians participated at Credit or Distinction level in various state and national competitions.
- Our school had two teams compete in the regional Tournament of the Minds competition.
- Students participated with success in the regional chess competition.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school’s cultural program and community involvement:

- Mary Help of Christians staff and students were well-represented at the ANZAC march and memorial service.
- Mary Help of Christians drum band supported the ANZAC Day march.
- Our school choir participated in the local eisteddfod.
- Our school choir and various class choirs entertained the elderly in local nursing homes.
- School leaders and staff attended and laid a wreath at the local Police Remembrance Ceremony.
- Mary Help of Christians recognised and celebrated NAIDOC Week.

Students performed well at various sporting events during the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights:

- Our children all participate in the school swimming, athletics and cross-country carnivals.
- Over 25 children represented the school at Diocesan Summer and Winter sports trials.
- Over 30 children represented the school at Zone Swimming and Athletics carnivals.
- Eight children were selected to represent the Zone at the Diocesan Cross-Country carnival.
- The school had one representative at state level for swimming, athletics, and tennis.
- One student represented the Zone in the sport of Golf.

There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. Mary Help of Christians is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people.

Tony Watts
Principal

A Parent Message

The Parish School Forum met twice a term in 2012 to discuss ideas and requests that were submitted from our committees as well as any other issues that arose. The outcomes were then reported back to the relevant committee.

As at the end of 2012 we have eight committees which come under the banner of the PSF. These committees are Basketball, Bingo, Canteen, Class Parents, Fundraising and Social, Library, Parent Assembly, and Uniform.

The Committees are a fantastic way for parents to meet other parents within our school, have some fun while also benefiting the school.

The Bingo Committee continues to be a major fundraiser for our school. Last year the funds raised were used for technology, library resources and contributed towards the cost of a new school lawnmower.

The Fundraising and Social Committee continued to support the school through two Big Banana Family Fun Nights, as well as organizing activities for Father’s Day, Mother’s Day and supporting school families in need.

The Parent Assembly supported information evenings on the subject of building resilience in our children, and creating positive partnerships with the school.

The PSF is grateful for all the contributions made by staff, parents and students who made 2012 such a great year for our school.

Michelle Skrtic
Chairperson
Parish School Forum
This Catholic School

Mary Help of Christians school is located in Toormina and is part of the Sawtell Parish which serves the communities of Sawtell, Toormina, Boambee East, Boambee, Bonville and Crossmaglen. School families are drawn from the towns and communities of Toormina, Sawtell, Boambee East, Boambee, Crossmaglen and Bonville.

Last year the school celebrated 33 years of Catholic education.

The Parish Priest, Father John Casey, is involved in the life of the school.

Mary Help of Christians is a Parish School with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through:

- participation in Sacramental programs
- support for Altar Servers
- participation in School and Class Masses
- involvement with our Parish Feast Day
- support for the Police Remembrance Day ceremony

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text “To Know, Worship & Love”. Catholic life and culture permeates school life with 2.5 hours of religious education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school’s prayer life. The purposes of this parish school are centred on Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate this statement into all aspects of parish school life. Religious Education is always given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.
Mary Help of Christians school caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>TOTAL 2012</th>
<th>TOTAL 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE (Language background other than English)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School Curriculum**

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

The school continues to develop a 21st century approach to pedagogy which underpins learning across the school. All classes operate as collaborative learning teams with teachers working together to support and enable student learning. These teams are known as Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) and focus on school improvement goals, especially in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy, as well as on the individual learning needs of each student.

In 2012 the school commenced the Best Start program in Kindergarten, which provided a clear starting point for teacher planning for curriculum delivery. The introduction of learning continuums for Literacy and Numeracy assisted teachers in mapping student progress.

To encourage engagement with the curriculum and to support student access to the global learning community teachers in Years 5 and 6 introduced a BYOT (Bring Your Own Technology) trial. Children in these grades brought internet-capable devices from home to assist in meeting their overall learning objectives.

The school continued to provide access to a second language with its Diocesan-supported Indonesian program.
Student Performance in National Testing Programs

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 51 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 51 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there were 6 achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. In Year 3, students who achieved Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieved at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

At Mary Help of Christians, school and student performance is closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office led information sessions on NAPLAN and SMART Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of Mary Help of Christians School students in each band compared to the State percentage
Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in bands 1 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State School</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in bands 3 to 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tables above show that students at Mary Help of Christians School have performed well in 2012. There have been excellent results in Year 5 Reading and Grammar and Punctuation and Year 3 Reading and Spelling. Both of these are due to the intervention programs set in place. While the percentages of students in the top bands have not been as high as the State percentages, a number of initiatives have been implemented which will impact on student learning. Although there are above State percentages in Numeracy in the middle bands, further analysis of the NAPLAN results will continue to inform and guide the teaching of numeracy especially in relation to the interpretation of the Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry Strand for Year 3 and over-all Number, Patterns and Algebra for Year 5.

Achieving minimum standards and beyond is the direct result of curriculum differentiation, with effective teaching strategies and support programs being introduced to meet the needs of all learners.
Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total number of non-teaching staff employed in the school.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All teachers have been involved in professional development activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole-staff development day professional learning activities in 2012 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Days</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning Communities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>CSO Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary Learning Framework</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>CSO Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish School Faith Formation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>School Delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Curriculum</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>CSO Provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

- THRASS training
- CPR Accreditation
- Pilgrimage “In the Footsteps of St Paul”
- NAPLAN Data Analysis workshops
- Advanced Moodle Workshops
- Professional Learning Communities Conference
- ACEL Conference
- Numicon Workshop
The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $3994 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average teacher attendance figure is 95.83%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

**Student Attendance**

School attendance is always high. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher immediately the child returns to school. The Principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the Principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss their leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2012 was 94.7%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance rates by Year group</th>
<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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School Policies**

School policies are reviewed regularly. In 2012 the following policy was created:

- BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy
Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at Mary Help of Christians requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.

Children who turn five by 30 June are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school’s website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

The school’s Pastoral Care Policy is based on the principles of restorative justice and procedural fairness. It is concerned with the fostering of students’ self-discipline. It aims to develop persons who are responsible and self-directed, and capable of choosing freely in accordance with their conscience. It sets out to help students recognise that their fundamental freedoms and rights are balanced by responsibilities.

Discipline Policy

Mary Help of Christians Behaviour Management Policy incorporates its Discipline procedures. The principles of restorative justice are embedded in the school’s Behaviour Management Policy. These principles include: acknowledging the inevitability of conflict and hurt in relationships, working towards healing by repairing relationships, and learning and growing from experience. The policy is regularly communicated to all members of the school community. Students, staff and parents have a clear understanding of the expectations articulated through this policy and are supportive of the need to provide a safe and caring learning environment. The policy acknowledges teacher and student rights and responsibilities and is based on the Gospel teachings of love for self and others.

Complaints and Grievance Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and care-givers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. The policy is available at the front office or from the school’s website.
School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five-year Strategic Plan. 2012 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school's main goals and priorities were to:

- build on collaborative teaching partnerships;
- consolidate commitment to a whole-school approach to Spelling and Writing;
- continue the focus on student engagement in the delivery of Numeracy programs;
- finalise a school Teaching and Learning Vision statement;
- promote the Diocesan Contemporary Learning Framework;
- continue to build on Parent Partnerships;
- investigate options to increase school security.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways such as through the:

- school rewards system which recognises Safety, Effort, Respect and Self-Responsibility;
- development of a culture which affirms the values of Respect and Responsibility;
- the acknowledgement of a student’s grasp of the qualities of Respect and Responsibility in the bi-annual school reports;
- maintenance of a School Parliament which promotes student leadership qualities which include Respect and Responsibility;
- continuation of the school’s Restorative Justice program;
- visits to local Nursing Homes to listen to, speak with and entertain the residents;
- support for Social Justice issues including student contributions to St Vincent de Paul, sponsorship of disadvantaged students in Malawi, and financial support for local charities and causes.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:

- The school community was asked to evaluate the proposed Teaching and Learning Vision statement and provide feedback, which was then used to further refine the statement leading to publication.
- Parents and community members were invited to provide feedback via a newsletter survey to address issues of congestion in the school car-park. From the responses a plan was developed and implemented to clearly define a pick-up and drop-off zone with new signage and line-marking.

**Financial Information**

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2012 is presented below: