ST PATRICK’S PRIMARY SCHOOL
Gundagai, NSW

2012 School Report to the Community
SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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This report was prepared by:

Mary Quinane

PRINCIPAL
MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Principal’s Message
A very warm welcome to St Patrick’s Primary School! Our school provides a quality Catholic education. We undertake to nurture well rounded children through a focus on the spiritual, social, emotional and academic dimensions. Our vision, ‘Walk Together in Faith and Knowledge’, calls us to nurture and challenge each other within a happy and caring Catholic environment where the love of life and an intrinsic motivation for learning are fostered. We encourage the school community to participate in creating and maintaining a nurturing and energetic learning environment. We assist students to become independent, confident learners and encourage them to be good citizens in all endeavours.

Community Council Message
We have had an interesting 2012 at St Patrick’s Primary School Gundagai. Our School Council is in its infancy, and we are still learning the ropes. We have approved the newly developed Pastoral Care Policy, discussed our current logo, and are very close to achieving our budget for 2012. This month, we are re-inventing our parent body so our parents can come together and share ideas and help to make our school even better. Thank you must go to all the parents at our school who make the effort to help with working bees, tuckshop, uniforms, cooking and fundraising. Without this dedicated team, we would not achieve our goals.

Student Representative’s Message
The S.R.C. is only in its’ infancy this year. Fundraising was essential for projects such as planting a school vegie patch. With money raised our vegie patch now has an array of tomatoes, parsley and lettuces growing. We hope to keep adding to the garden next year. We have also been involved in an environmental project called the Five Mile Travelling Stock Route (TSR) Project. Our school has leased this TSR. We want it to be a real environmental classroom. We want to llok after it and educate others about it's worth. Our job is to revegitate the natural flora and fauna on the site. We think it is a wonderful sign of just how positive learning is for all children at our school.

SCHOOL FEATURES
St Patrick’s Primary School is a Catholic Primary School located in Gundagai. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 124 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 65% male and 35% female students; 1.24% indigenous students; and 2.48% Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 15 staff comprising 10 teachers and 5 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including Learning Support Assistants, Office Administration, Cleaning and Maintenance staff.

St Patrick’s Primary School has a very proud tradition of excellence dating back to 1886 when the Sisters of Mercy commenced Catholic Education in Gundagai. The Sisters of the Divine Saviour
(Salvatorian Sisters) and the Holy Faith Sisters were also involved in educating the students for periods of time during the last century. From 1900 to 1979 St Patrick’s School was known as St. Stanislaus School after Sister Stanislaus who originally led the Mercy Sisters to Gundagai. The school’s name was changed in 1979 back to St Patrick’s. In keeping with its proud Catholic traditions, the school works closely in partnership with the Parish and School community to provide a quality education for all students. An education that guides our young people to become independent and discerning learners. In acknowledging educational trends today, the school has harnessed and utilised 21st century technologies to enrich students learning opportunities. A range of technologies enables students to broaden their knowledge base about the world and ideas. The school’s interactive technologies have furthered inquiry based learning. Using an inquiry based approach to programming allows teachers to use these technologies (e.g. iPads, Flip cameras, Bee Bots, Note pads and Interactive White Boards etc.) to engage students in new, exciting and stimulating ways. At the same time these learning tools promote conceptual understandings and essential critical and lateral thinking skills across many curriculum areas. Learning Support apps are also utilised to aid students with learning disabilities.

Student leadership is an increasingly prominent part of the school community. As part of our Peer Support Program the school continues to mentor the Stage Three students. It assists and guides students towards independence and discernment as they ready for the transition to high school. The Buddy System (Kindergarten and Year 6 students) ensures a nurturing and caring relationship between the younger and older students and continues to draw positive comments from parents and community members.

The formation of a Student Representative Council (SRC) was introduced in 2012. This council provides leadership opportunities for students from Year Two to Year Six. This student representative body passes on information and ideas to teachers and school executive members about future directions and initiatives students would like to see happen within the school. This year the SRC has raised money for the introduction of a school kitchen garden. The school, in response to another SRC idea, has leased a Travelling Stock Route (TSR). Over an extended period of time, students, parents and other interested groups will be involved in regenerating native flora and fauna within the TSR (approx. 33 acres). This initiative has already provided students with a real life context in which to use and enhance their problem solving and decisions making skills for the benefit of the environment and the local community.

The formation of a St Patrick’s School Choir in 2012 has provided students with another avenue to excel in another extra-curricular area. The students attended the inaugural Canberra Goulburn Archdiocesan Choir Festival in September. They were rewarded with a second place overall and a sizable trophy to display.

Students are given opportunities to learn a variety of musical instruments. This year students have had opportunities to learn the saxophone, trumpet, violin, keyboard, drums and guitar. Each year the students regularly perform for the school community.

Many St Patrick’s students represent the school at Western Region, Archdiocesan and NSW carnivals in a variety of sporting events including Athletics, Cross Country, Swimming, Football, Aus-
Tag and others sports depending on individual student talent. Representation at a State level has been a highlight this year.

Parent involvement at St Patrick’s is strong. Parents are very involved in Sporting carnivals, tuckshop, uniform shop and fundraising activities through the newly appointed School Community Council. The SCC has replaced the former School Board and Parents and Friends Association model. In its foundation year, the members of the Council continue to establish protocols for this new parent body. The members are to be commended for their ongoing community leadership and in their active support of the school.

St Patrick’s is proud of its involvement in local community events. This year all Year Six students assisted with the selling of Legacy Badges at our October Street Stall on the main street. Many of our students attend Remembrance Day Service at Anzac Grove and lay a wreath in honour of the victims of war annually. This year the children participated in a special way with the unveiling of name plaques to honour all those soldiers who died in World War One from the Gundagai region. It was a very moving ceremony. Our school community marches in the annual Anzac Day March down Sheridan Street. The Kindergarten and Year One classes attend the Biggest Morning Tea in Gundagai to raise funds to assist cancer sufferers and their families within the local community each year. It is very well received by the local community.

The school’s website can be found at www.spg.nsw.edu.au

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

St. Patrick’s Primary School follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old.*

St Patrick’s Parish School values prayer as an integral part each day. The whole school assembles at the beginning of each the day to gather in prayer. Staff begins the week with whole staff prayer on Mondays. Each class has their own classroom prayers before recess, lunch and at the end of the day. Our school celebrates special feast days and in particular the feast day of St Patrick. Masses and liturgies are celebrated each Friday in the Parish Church. We use of our refurbished hall for some liturgical celebrations.

Our school participates in raising money for the missions during Lent, in mission month and in preparing hampers for St Vincent De Paul at our end of year Thanksgiving Mass in December. This mass is celebrated at the regular Saturday night vigil mass as part of the Advent period.

The Sacramental programmes are school based. This year we celebrated Reconciliation in Year Two and First Holy Communion in Year Three. The Sacrament of Confirmation is a biannual celebration. Sacramental classes work very closely with the parish catechist taking the children from the public schools. We also make our school available for these lessons promoting interschool relations.

The school and Parish work hard to maintain a positive relationships. Each month a Children’s Liturgy is included in the Saturday night vigil mass once a month. The school prepares several
Saturday Vigil Masses. The students take an active role in the celebration of these masses. These links ensure that we maintain strong partnerships between school and parish.

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN**

Students in Years 3 and 5 sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

**School and National Mean Scale Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>433.1</td>
<td>458.3</td>
<td>442.0</td>
<td>431.4</td>
<td>419.5</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>500.2</td>
<td>483.6</td>
<td>497.4</td>
<td>481.0</td>
<td>499.8</td>
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**Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>94%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 5</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proportion of students in each Achievement Band**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 6</td>
<td>22.%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 5</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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</table>
The above tables show that 100% of the Year 3 and Year Five student cohorts are at or above the National Minimum Standard in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. A number of initiatives have impacted on this result. A range of specific reading and writing strategies, the introduction of Literacy and Numeracy block sessions and implementation whole school agreed practices denoting the key components of literacy and numeracy blocks (including explicit teaching focuses each day) has contributed to this improvement. Annual Strategic and Management Plans give a clear direction for areas needing further development. Results in some aspects of Literacy and Numeracy indicate that we need to set priority targets for further development in 2013 and in particular Grammar and Punctuation. Emphasis on developing students' thinking skills and problem solving skills will continue to be a strong feature of teaching and learning and teacher professional development in 2013 too.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Enrolment Policy
In enrolling students we are directed by the Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy which can be found on the Annual Report page of the school's website or on the Catholic Education Office website at http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx.

Behaviour
Our updated Pastoral Care Policy (including behaviour management) provides opportunities for all students to grow in a safe and nurturing environment. Students are rewarded for their achievements and efforts. Our student rewards system includes 'Gotcha' tokens, 'Wild Cat' Awards, Individual 'Learning and Effort' Awards and 'Whole Class' Rewards. These awards and rewards help students understand how making good choices can make a positive difference within the school and...
in turn make a difference to their own self worth and personal growth. Encouraging students to be good active citizens enhances school wide positive behaviour. This policy was updated in 2012 to meet school community needs.

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons to enforce discipline at our school.

The full text of the school’s Pastoral Care Policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

**Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy**

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. A full text of the school policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

**PRIORITIES AND TARGETS**

Targets and Priorities in 2012 included: further development in the teaching and learning environment. This is a continuing area of need within the school environment. Further development of whole school agreed practices and use of best pedagogies across all learning areas is an ongoing priority for the school for 2013.

**Literacy and Numeracy**

2011 NAPLAN trends suggested that our students in the primary classes are not performing as well as they should in some aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. As a result the 2012 the school’s Strategic and Management Plan gave a clear direction for areas needing further development. To this end, staff engaged in regular professional learning sessions to continue to implement reading and writing strategies and practices from the First Steps resource. Teachers (K-6) are using a consistent common weekly programming proforma to plan and cater for all student's learning needs. This proforma is based on the 'Pearson & Gallagher Learning' model (1996) for planning and programming in these core areas of the curriculum. Depending on changing student needs (K-6) the school utilises the Learning Support teacher, Learning Support Assistants and the Principal daily. This team targets specific student reading groups each term during Literacy blocks. This has proved a very effective strategy to meet specific student reading needs.

**Assessment**

In 2012 the school received an AGQTP Grant to assist in the review of assessment. Teacher professional development has been a focus. The 'Understanding By Design' curriculum planning model (McTighe and Wiggins 2002) has aided teachers to plan programs. This inquiry based planning model has been used to plan Human Society and Its Environment units of work. Specific assessment tools (e.g. rubrics) have been utilised to guide teachers in program planning phases. The Rubric assessment tool has added value to multi-levelled, open-ended tasks by providing explicit clear criteria for students to set learning goals and targets.

In 2013 our priorities include:
# A continued focus on assessment, with a particular emphasis on the development and implementation of rubrics in all key learning areas. Teachers will continue investigating, designing and writing rubrics. The open-ended task design (GRASP tasks) will encourage more inquiry based teaching and learning opportunities across the school.

# A continuing focus on teaching and learning in Mathematics. This will include interrogating those whole school agreed practices that have been implemented during 2012. Further emphasis will be placed on teacher professional development in problem solving and reasoning.

# The continued implementation of the application of the LIFE program to teaching and learning, to assist in developing students thinking and communication skills through increased student engagement. This way of contemporary learning encourages greater emphasis on student ownership and responsibility for their learning.

# A review of teaching and learning practices in Grammar and Punctuation across all grades. This focus will include more teacher professional development and more professional conversations to ensure this area has a more prominent focus in all curriculum areas.