ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Young, NSW

2014 School Report to the Community

YOUNG

To Love Is To Serve

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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Louise Grant

PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

St Mary's Primary School is a welcoming Catholic School community in the rural town of Young situated in the beautiful Hilltops region of NSW.

Our mission is to be a Christ centred community, nurturing the uniqueness and gifts of each child though our commitment to quality, contemporary teaching and learning experiences and a caring pastoral and welfare program. In partnership with St Mary's Parish, we walk in faith with our students, promoting Catholic values in our relationships and in our actions.

Early adopters of the Australian Curriculum, our staff promote active and investigative learning across the curriculum. In a caring and supportive environment, we are committed to supporting each child to achieve their full potential through dynamic and engaging learning experiences.

School Council Message

St Mary's provides an education for the 21st century, with technology embedded throughout our school from K-6, with extensive computer facilities and interactive whiteboard technologies in each classroom.

Our dedicated, highly experienced and enthusiastic staff welcome the close partnership nurtured with parents, families and the Parish, as we work together to create our vibrant, connected and Christ centred learning community.

Student Representative's Message

2014 was the year for St. Mary's. To kick it off we welcomed an amazing new principal, Mrs Grant. The leadership team was lucky enough to receive their badges of honour early in in the year. Then two weeks later, the whole school got their trunks on to have a dip at the swimming carnival, including Mr Obi and that got started a year of action packed events and experiences. Thank you to all the teachers for giving us such a great year! St. Mary's schoooool, is the place, for us to beeeeee!

SCHOOL FEATURES

St Mary's is a Catholic Primary School located in Young, NSW. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 370 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 187 male and 183 female students; 7 indigenous students; and 10 with a Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 32 staff comprising 23 teachers and 9 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including administration staff, learning support assistants and cleaning/maintenance staff.   No staff identify as Indigenous.

The school's website can be found at http://www.stmarysyoung.nsw.edu.au/

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Mary's Primary School, Young follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old.*
St Mary's implements the "Making Jesus Real" approach to support the children's spiritual and personal development. Character Education has a strong emphasis at St Mary's.

The St Mary's school community enjoys a rich faith life both through school events and with the 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

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	419	402	412	426	402
School	426	433	434	456	426

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	501	468	498	504	487
School	524	495	497	526	501

Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	94%	94%	93%	94%	95%
School	96%	98%	100%	96%	100%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	93%	90%	93%	93%	93%
School	96%	98%	94%	96%	100%

Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 6	23%	15%	28%	40%	15%
Band 5	34%	49%	23%	21%	38%
Band 4	21%	25%	30%	23%	25%
Band 3	9%	4%	6%	14%	17%
Band 2	9%	6%	13%	6%	6%
Band 1	4%	2%	0%	4%	0%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 8	24%	10%	14%	26%	14%
Band 7	16%	16%	24%	22%	18%
Band 6	29%	33%	22%	31%	37%
Band 5	22%	39%	24%	6%	18%
Band 4	6%	0%	12%	12%	10%
Band 3	4%	2%	6%	4%	4%

The above tables show a definite positive trend around in all areas in both Year 3 and 5.
Year 3
• Well above state mean in writing, grammar and punctuation and numeracy
• Above state mean in reading and spelling
Year 5
• Well above state mean in reading and writing
• Around state mean in spelling, grammar and Punctuation and numeracy

The rate of improvement for the Year 5 students since they completed the assessment in Year 3 was particularly pleasing. The State average rate of growth was 78 points and the St Mary's rate of growth was 96 points.

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

As Principal, it is my pleasure to personally welcome all prospective families to St Mary's. I invite you to come and visit the school and experience for yourself the warmth of the St Mary's community. We have strong K - 12 pathways with Hennessy Catholic College , and regular opportunities are embraced to integrate with the College to enrich learning across a variety of Key Learning Areas. An information package is available at the School Office.

Attendance Policy

In monitoring student attendance we are directed by the Archdiocesan Attendance at School (NSW) Policy which can be found on the Catholic Education Office website.

At St Mary's, parents are asked to notify the school whenever a student is absent. A written explanation stating the cause of the absence is required from the parent or guardian. Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds without the written permission of parents or legal guardian. For unexplained absences, a pro-forma is sent to the parents requesting a written explanation. An email from parents explaining an absence is accepted.

Parents/guardians must complete an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School form for all absences when the absence is known in advance (eg holidays). If the request for absence is less than 101 days it can be approved by the Principal. If the request is for 101 or more days it must be forwarded to the Catholic Education Office. It will then be sent through the NSW Catholic Education Commission to the Minister of Education or his delegate, for his approval. Unforseen absences, for example, absences due to sickness, funerals or situations of pressing domestic necessity do not require an application for exemption.

If an Application for Exemption from Attendance at School is approved by the Principal/Minister the school will complete a Certificate of Exemption. This is kept on the student file and a copy is supplied to parents. This must be produced upon request by the Police or other authorised attendance officer. When departing the country the certificate can be requested by customs/passport officials. The Application for Exemption from Attendance at School form is available on our school website and can also be collected from our school office.

Students arriving late for school are expected to collect a late slip from the front office which is then presented to the classroom teacher. In this instance, a part absence will be recorded in the roll.

In the case of a student exceeding the 15 day limit of unexplained absences or in the event that a student continually presents late to school (ie. after the start of the school day) it is the expectation that classroom teachers track and monitor this situation and make and document contact with the parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to notify the Principal when a pattern of absenteeism is evident and the number of days reaches 10-12 days. The Principal will then notify the Regional Attendance Coordinator in consultation with the Catholic Education Office.

Behaviour Guidelines

Through our Making Jesus Real (MJR) approach supported by the Positive Schools Framework and the Virtues Project, we encourage positive self- esteem, resilience and respect. We believe that a happy child is an effective learner, so our students experience an ongoing social and emotional learning program designed to build character.

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.

At St Mary's we value the dignity and individuality of each child, and the development of positive relationships between all members of our community is paramount. Our Behaviour Management Policy is based on a proactive approach, which is achieved through positive reinforcement and an awareness of the needs of each individual. We believe that as a staff, we are committed to modelling responsible behaviour to the students in our care and working closely with parents to ensure positive outcomes are achieved. Parents are fully informed of incidents as they occur at school. We value the support of parents in ensuring clear expectations are articulated from both home and school so a strong partnership is reinforced for students. The principles of Restorative Justice are embedded in the school's Behaviour Management Policy

The full text of our Behaviour Management Policy is available on the school website or from the 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

At St Mary's our mission is to help each child to fulfil their potential and to support them in developing the skills to lead a positive life by building their self-confidence, resilience and ability to interact positively with others.

One of our important focus areas this year has been to build the school community and we have enjoyed strong parental support. Parents are recognised as partners with the school in supporting the children's learning and as a school we are committed to giving parents opportunities to be engaged and fully informed.

Professional Learning has also been a focus and the teaching team has enjoyed many opportunities for professional development which has been transforming in terms of curriculum design and delivery.

St Mary's has been an early adopter of 21st century learning and we continue to be a 'beacon school' for the region in terms of IT practices.

During 2015, we plan to continue to examine, review and embed vision and mission statements in to all aspects of the life of the school by enhancing parish links –through integration of school with weekend Masses / Sacramental Programs. High priority is given to spiritual and faith formation of students and staff through retreats and faith formation opportunities for Staff and a wide range of opportunities for students, e.g. Mini Vinnies, Legion of Mary.

The student leadership team will continue to be activated into increased involvement in generating support for Mission Initiatives and Caritas programmes.

St Mary's Young is committed to working in partnership with parents and in 2015 we intend to establish a programme for teaching parent partners how to support literacy and numeracy at home and at school. Another community aim in conjunction with the school canteen includes the establishment of a school garden.

The school will continue the K-12 links with Hennessy College and Western Region schools.

Key elements for improvement in Literacy and Numeracy at St Mary's for 2015 in light of NAPLAN data and our understanding of best practice for 21st Century learning have been identified. Year level teams will continue to be given regular time to collaborate to design dynamic, creative and engaging English units based on quality children's literature, We aim to Increase levels of engagement in Reading by shifting focus to quality literature. Each class will be implementing a consistent Literacy Block and teachers will commence using the Australian Curriculum Literacy Continuum.

In Numeracy, St Mary's will focus on further embedding the Five Principles of Learning; the effective use of school and System based assessments to inform teaching, student engagement, effective conversations and the use of meta language, making the learning intention clear and processes for the provision of effective feedback to students. An enrichment program in numeracy across Years 3 to 6 catering for students who require enrichment in Numeracy will be established.