



2015

Annual Report

Mater Dei Primary School, Wagga Wagga

CONTACT DETAILS:

PRINCIPAL: *Danny Malone*
ADDRESS: *63 Gregadoo Road
Wagga Wagga*
PHONE: *0269262060*
WEBSITE: *web.mdpww.catholic.edu.au*
EMAIL: *mdp-info@ww.catholic.edu.au*



The School

A strong partnership between families, staff and clergy allow us to enhance the holistic growth of students in the Mater Dei community.

Our school population is at virtual capacity with 408 students in our two-stream school. It also means we are continuing to develop resources and facilities. A feature of our year has been the reviewing of classroom practices and learning spaces to ensure they reflect Contemporary Learning principles, a journey which will continue in the years ahead.

It is with pleasure that I present our 2015 Annual Report for Mater Dei Catholic Primary School.

Catholic Identity

“Faith, Community, Inspire and Nurture “ have been the focus of our school community in 2015. These key words from our new Vision and Mission Statement have been embedded in the teaching and learning at Mater Dei Primary. They are the starting point for individuals learning, as we reflect on individual's needs and how to continue to build a strong faith through their teaching and learning experiences.

During 2015, the school supported Fr Bernie in the organisation and celebrations for 50 years of the Parish. The dinner, the family mass and lunch provided an opportunity for the school community to identify and celebrate the heritage of the Parish. Past and present members of our school community were able to reflect on the growth, changes and legacy of our wonderful Sacred Heart Parish.

Faith, Story and Witness has continued to be a key focus for our staff. During 2015, banners were designed and made for our four house groups, Bowyer, MacKillop, Plunkett and Trinity. These house team names are based on the history of Mater Dei Primary. Next year we will have a commissioning ceremony for each house. We will invite Alan Bowyer, Fr Plunkett and school members for Trinity and MacKillop to share each story with the school. This will ensure that we build on the Diocesan initiative for each school to “develop their own story.”

One of the main goals is to provide opportunities for those in our school community to continue their spiritual development. We hosted a Connections evening for past participants to reflect on their faith journey and a spiritual

renewal day that was led by Fr Richard Leonard. It included participation by other Wagga Wagga Catholic schools and members of our Sacred Heart Parish.

Fr Richard inspired us to live out the highest goals in life, to be the most loving, hopeful and faithful person possible. He enlightened to the audience that in our daily lives we can have a positive attitude in our spiritual journey that will benefit those around us.

One of our main goals is to provide opportunities in our school community to continue their faith development. We have worked closely with Father Bernie and the Koorngal Parish in achieving this. Sacramental programs have again been a focus. The students and teachers put a lot of time and effort into preparation for these sacraments and were joined by family and friends to celebrate these special occasions.

A desire to have students develop close links with the Sacred heart Parish has seen the continuation of school-led Parish Masses. This has given the opportunity for families and our school to support the classes leading the Masses.

Class Masses and Liturgies are held regularly in our school and allow individual classes to take on the responsibility for the planning of such occasions which are strongly supported by parents and grandparents. We have continued to plan and celebrate a combined mass between Mater Dei College and our Primary School on the Feast of the Assumption to recognise her patronage of both schools.

A significant prayer service was the Commemorative Service held for Patrick Langfield. A plaque has been placed in the “Mary Garden” to be a constant reminder of the wonderful qualities that Patrick shared with so many of us. The prayer service brought together the Mater Dei Community to grieve and share memories of a person that has inspired many lives.

The Opening of the Doors prayer service for the Year of Mercy outlined to children how we need courage to walk through the door of Mercy to change our ways. We need to forgive and to love without measure. This ceremony has created a starting point for the school community to grow in their faith. The door is a symbol that God always forgives and we need to reflect on our ways to grow in God’s Love. This ceremony was

the beginning of many activities for the Year of Mercy.

The Pastoral component in our community continues to grow through the work of our Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Lisa Simpson. Lisa conducted the Seasons for Growth Program for students in our school that have experienced significant change or loss.

Lisa has continued to work with our REC with Mini Vinnies. They have cleaned and provided second hand shoes to school students in need, knitted blankets for the poor and organised visits for the choir to visit Nursing Homes and Retirement villages.

In developing students global awareness and empathy for those less fortunate, significant amounts of money were raised through their involvement in the Missions fundraising, project compassion and other charitable events throughout the year.

A Message from key School Bodies

School Council Report: Andrew McLeod

Another great year in the Mater Dei community and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Danny and his staff, fellow Council members, the P and F and the broader Mater Dei community for their contribution during the year to make the school a better place and to support our children's journey through primary school.

As this is my last year on the Council, I would like to personally thank Danny for his leadership and my fellow Council members for their work.

2015 has been another big year with a number of projects being completed including- Installation of the solar panels, installation of the led lighting, electronic notice board to name a few.

Other work has continued on General maintenance - school grounds, employment of a maintenance person, insurance and camera work, as well as general maintenance updates Canteen - improved services, financial reports and capital improvements

I'm proud to say that the school is in a strong financial and cultural position. We have also done a lot of work over the past years to make sure the school and its facilities have longevity.

P&F report: Tim Cooper

I am delighted to present the Mater Dei Primary School Parents & Friends President's report for the 2015 school year.

2015 was another big, positive year for the Mater Dei community, full of celebrations and achievements, social events, families joining our community for the first time and families leaving after many years of contributing into our community.

2015 brought a lot of change and challenge to what has always been done at the school, with many of the changes being shared through the P&F. The opening of classrooms to increase the learning areas and the evaluation of the homework policy are examples of some major change that the school has explored and shared via the P&F.

Possibly the greatest change in 2015 that was tabled at the P&F was the relaxation of the uniform policy to allow coloured runners. A popular decision among students and parents!!!!

As a parent I am glad to see the school challenge what has always been done and the transparency and inclusion in these processes that are afforded to the P&F by the school staff.

The 2015 parent forums focused on the changed math syllabus and an overview of Mathematics, as well as the investigation of research into homework and the benefits. These nights provide an opportunity for connections into the classroom for parents and are always appreciated by those who attend. I thank the staff for their contributions and preparation in hosting these parent forums in 2015.

Fundraising is one of the ways in which the P&F support the school and the school community. 2015 fundraisers included the Walkathon and the Art Show. Both of these events were huge successes for the community, with one taking less effort than the other.

The committee and volunteers who combined to work on the Art show were

an amazing example of the depth of talent, commitment and dedication that we have within our community. The opening night function and the art show were huge successes, with an amazing injection of funds that could be put towards the classroom technology being raised. I thank everyone who assisted with these fundraising events

The P&F used the funds raised by supporting the School Council in specific projects, including a \$5,000 contribution towards the electronic notice board and sign at the front of the school and \$3,000 towards the upgrade of the PA system throughout the school. The P&F also joined with the Council in purchasing an industrial fridge for the hall which has already been used at two P&F functions, and will be again at the fete in 2016.

Working bees were also completed by community members to complete landscaping around the school.

2015 also saw a number of P&F specific focuses, included the purchase of a defibrillator and training for staff. The P&F also made the upgrade of classroom technology with funds raised in 2015 a priority, with the proceeds of the Art Show being entrusted to the school to combine with 2016 budgets to upgrade the interactive technology in each classroom.

The P&F also supported a number of community events, including cost contributions towards Bloke Breakfast, Melbourne Cup Luncheon, and State of Origin night were positive events for the parents and carers in our community. A family movie night was also hosted by the P&F at the start of the year. This was a family event offered to all the community at no cost to families.

2015 also saw the retirement of Fr Bernie, the Pastoral and Spiritual leader of our parish and parish school. The P&F thanked Fr Bernie on behalf of all families at the end of year school mass, providing a

gift intended to help Fr Bernie establish his home in retirement.

We welcome Fr John the Baptist in 2016 and look forward to welcoming him into our school and parish community. The P&F would like to thank every community member for their contributions to our school.

I am continually amazed at the support that the school receives from parents and friends each and every day. The willingness for people to assist in the classrooms and office, to volunteer time and effort for specific tasks and to work together for large events like the Art Show reminds me that we have a generous community of capacity, working towards the benefit of the students.

A big thank you to Carmen Coates for her continued work in the P&F run uniform shop. The purpose of this is to provide a service to the school community and Carmen does this with a smile.

I would like to thank the departing members of the School Council for their stewardship to the school over many years. The School Council is continually reviewing priority areas and the P&F appreciates their hard work.

I thank my colleagues on the P&F, Melissa Molloy, Angela Cook, James Baker and Scott Boyle for their support in 2015.

After a number of years of service to the P&F executive, some of them are seeking a change. I thank you for the many hours of dedication over the years you have contributed to the P&F and hope you have found it a rewarding experience. I also thank your families for allowing the time you have dedicated to this role. On behalf of the school community, thank you.

I would also like to thank Lisa Simpson, the school pastoral care coordinator, for the work that she did in supporting the

P&F and implementing many P&F supported initiatives.

The annual welcome evening for kinder and new parents hosted by the P&F is a wonderful example of this, with the workload shared between many in our community, but organised and coordinated by Lisa. Lisa was also instrumental in the bloke's breakfast which was a resounding success for a first time event.

A special thank you to the staff of Mater Dei Primary for allowing the P&F to work so closely with the school. The attendance of many staff members to the P&F meetings and parent forums always brings important perspective when discussing issues.

A thank you to the families that left Mater Dei Primary at the end of 2015. Many of the families have had long associations with the school, and as such the P&F. The collective hours that have been invested in the school would be too great to count, but your contributions to the school have provided the facilities and community that new families can now enjoy and build on.

In 2016, I am looking forward to the P&F continuing the support of the school and the School Council, with funds raised being targeted towards the continued upgrade of classroom technology.

The P&F will continue to provide a forum for discussion around any issue raised by parents, friends or the school, and work towards the common goal of assisting the education and growth of our children and maintaining our strong community.

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

We were delighted with the student's results in the NAPLAN testing conducted for Year 3 and Year 5 students. Our student cohort achieved outcomes above the state average in every

component. Given the focus on "Writing" in our school, we were particularly pleased with the growth in the % of students achieving expected growth between Years 3 and 5. Whilst these results are most satisfying, we will carefully analyse feedback to assist with future learning and teaching.

Parents can refer to the "Myschool" website for greater detail.

Professional Learning

Improving writing in our school continued to be a priority with our "Writing" team providing direction and appropriate PD. Jennifer Asha from the PETTA led a Professional Development day with our staff and other invitees on "Quality Literature" and E books and how we can utilise these in our reading & writing processes."

The Literacy continuum continued to be used to plot children to give us an indication as to where the students in our class were at on the continuum but also provided a focus as to what we had to do with them to move them forward. After being introduced last year, 2015 was a year of consolidation with the continuum. Our writing team led several other sessions at teachers meetings in supporting teachers in becoming more effective with the teaching of writing.

Inquiry learning continues to be the focus of what we do in our school. This basis for on-going learning follows a cycle around effective learning & continual reflection on our teaching & the needs of our students.

Our school was part of a Diocesan trial on a revised format for Improvement in Schools process which gave us some clear direction in coming years.

Towards the end of the year, History became a focus with the implementation of the new History syllabus in 2015. Deanery days were held for all teachers looking at new components of the curriculum.

During the year, we also set up a partnership with Holy Trinity School in providing appropriate Professional Development for teachers in the effective implementation of technology in the classroom. This was conducted in separate Infants & Primary sessions to better target the needs of teachers & students.

Teaching Staff

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

A) have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution within Australia

B) have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution within Australia but no formal teacher education qualifications

C) have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications.

A	B	C	TOTAL
25	0	0	25

Workforce Composition

Our school staff consists of a Principal, assistant Principal, twelve permanent full-time teachers, ten part-time teachers, two teacher assistants and six support staff. All of these personnel have the appropriate qualifications and clearance screening required to fulfil their duties in our school.

Student Attendance

Student attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school.

Year	Attendance %
Kinder	95%
Year 1	95%
Year 2	95%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	96%
Year 5	95%
Year 6	95%

Student Non-Attendance

Teachers are provided with absentee slips. If no explanation of an absence has been provided to the teacher after a two week period, an "explanation of absence" form is distributed to the parent.

Should there be more than five unexplained absences, contact is then made by the Principal with the family.

Should there be regular absences by students, contact is made with parents to discuss that situation.

Should students be going to be absent beyond ten school days, parents are now to apply for Principal exemption by completing appropriate forms.

Enrolment Policy

Mater Dei School has developed its enrolment policy in alignment with the Diocesan Enrolment Guidelines. It is clearly outlined in our school prospectus, enrolment brochure and website. In short, our school has a commitment in the first instance to siblings of existing students who meet readiness & age requirements, then Catholic families who reside in our zone and are active parishioners of Sacred Heart Koorngal. Active, non-zoned parishioners are then considered. Catholic families residing in our zone where children are of appropriate age and readiness are the next to be offered enrolment. Should vacancies allow, offering of places can then be made to Catholic families in our Parish and then other Parishes, where necessary. Non-Catholic families are most welcome to apply but need to understand that Catholic families will have first priority in placement.

Diocesan Enrolment policy can be accessed through the following link:

<http://cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm>

Characteristics of the Student Body

Boys	Girls	Indig'	LOTE*	TOTAL
207	200	5	0	407

**Language background Other Than English*

Structure of Classes

Classes are divided into the seven different grades, with Kindergarten to Year 6 all being double-streamed. The maximum class size at the school is 30 students.

School Policies

Discipline

Our school is committed to the development of the whole person: body, spirit, heart and mind. In accordance with our Welfare Policy we aim to establish a community of care through:

- welcoming and including students and their families
- respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each student
- providing a safe, secure & stimulating environment conducive to learning
- ensuring fairness & justice within appropriate discipline structures
- promoting self-esteem and critical thinking in students
- processes that allow parents to express their concerns or grievances

As per Diocesan Guidelines, this policy reflects a clear understanding that corporal punishment is not permitted in our school. Our Welfare policy can be found on our school website.

An initiative we now have in our school are Welfare meetings. Our School Counsellor, Pastoral Care worker, Learning Support teacher & Principal meet fortnightly to discuss students, staff or families who may require support and monitor their well-being.

Corporal Punishment will not be used at Mater Dei Primary School.

Changes to School Policies

Most policies are current. All school policies were reviewed and updated in 2014 as part of our preparation for School Registration. A review of our Homework policy in 2015 will see a significant change in this policy going forward. Changes were also made to our Uniform Policy. We will continue to revise & update policies as required.

All of the policies can be accessed via the Teacher's Drive on our school network. A copy of relevant policies can also be found on our website.

Improvement Targets

The value in teachers planning in Grade teams meant that a number of structural changes were made in our school to provide greater opportunity for this. Professional Planning Time for teachers is now structured so that both Grade teachers are released at the same time. Three Grade planning meetings have been set aside in teachers meeting time each term to encourage the opportunity to co-plan and have conversations around learning & teaching. Such meetings also align nicely with our on-going

strategy to develop a Professional Learning Community. The opportunity to collaborate closely with our colleagues in learning, planning and sharing are key elements of this.

A common focus across our school is to improve the capacity of students in writing. A number of strategies have been incorporated to achieve this, particularly quality PD for teachers.

Readiness for implementation of the new History syllabus has seen a number of PD opportunities for staff.

The building of IT support, particularly in the Stage 3 classrooms has seen 30 chrome books being used in Year 6 with further purchases for Year 5 to take place in 2016. Some preliminary research was also done into a strategy & costing of replacing ageing SmartBoards with Interactive TVs. It is expected we will begin this replacement cycle in 2016.

The School Council has had a focus on developing an on-going maintenance program within the school. A focus on becoming more sustainable energy wise saw a big increase in solar panels in our school as well as the installation of LED lighting across the school. We are already witnessing significant savings because of this. The installation of an electronic sign for communication purposes and further landscaping work certainly added to the aesthetic component of our school surrounds.

The increasing need for maintenance in our school saw the appointment of a Maintenance worker in our school in July encompassing 15 hours a week.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Reaching out to others both within and outside our school community continues to be a focus. A number of initiatives including fundraisers for third world countries (including our sponsored child Sala) and worthy charities, providing outgrown shoes for disadvantaged schools in our region and continued development of our links with retirement villages, have borne witness to our focus.

The role of the Pastoral Care co-ordinator continues to show the benefits such a role will bring. Aside of supporting families in need in our school community, student initiatives in supporting the wider community continue to be a

focus. One such initiative has been our Mini Vinnies group within the school. The purpose of this group is outreach to the wider community and included visits to Retirement Villages and Nursing Homes.

The school has continued the “One in Spirit” award which, each fortnight, recognises a student who is demonstrating the values promoted by the School. We distribute each week one merit award and one “You Can Do It” award to each class for students who show strong academic effort, social or environmental awareness or the qualities sought through the “You Can Do It” program.

The Seasons for Growth program was introduced into our school this year. This program is specifically targeted towards students who may have experienced serious loss or separation in their families. The positive response meant that two sessions were run, with all in agreement of the significant benefit it provided for student’s well-being. It is our intention to continue to offer this program.

A “Blokes Breakfast” was held to get Dads involved at the school level and proved most successful. Breakfast was followed by an opportunity for students and Dads (or significant others) to play some games or view the great work being undertaken by students. Similarly a “Mum’s & Cupcakes” session was strongly supported as part of our Book Week activities.

Our Student Council continues to give our student body a voice in matters concerning our school. Representatives from classes meet regularly with the Principal to discuss pertinent matters.

Community Satisfaction

The following information has been provided to the school. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction the community has with our school.

Parents

My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at Mater Dei.

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
70%	25%	5%	%

Students

I am usually happy at Mater Dei.

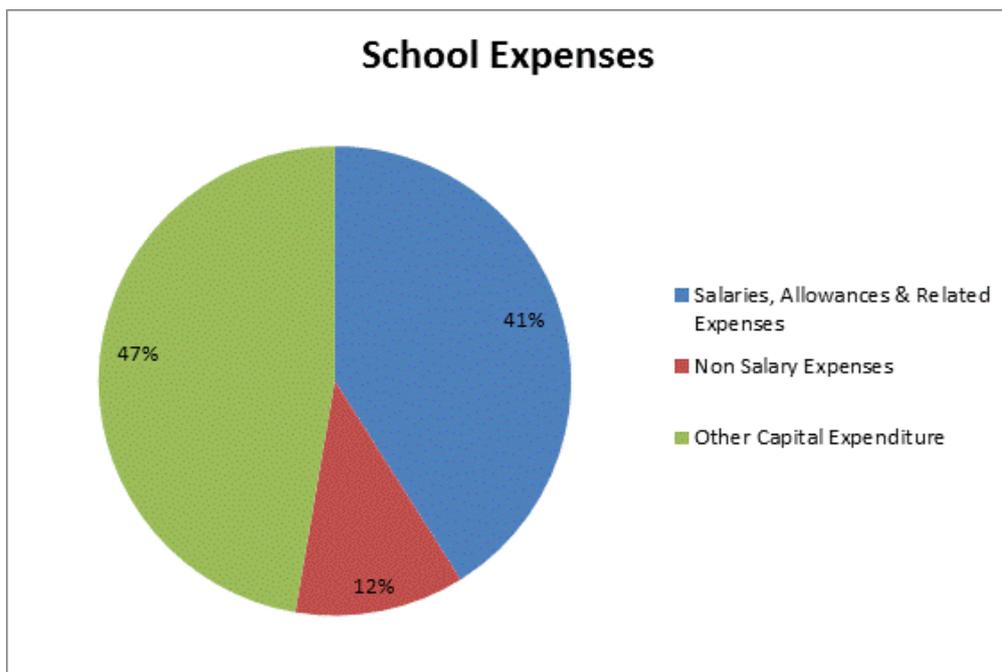
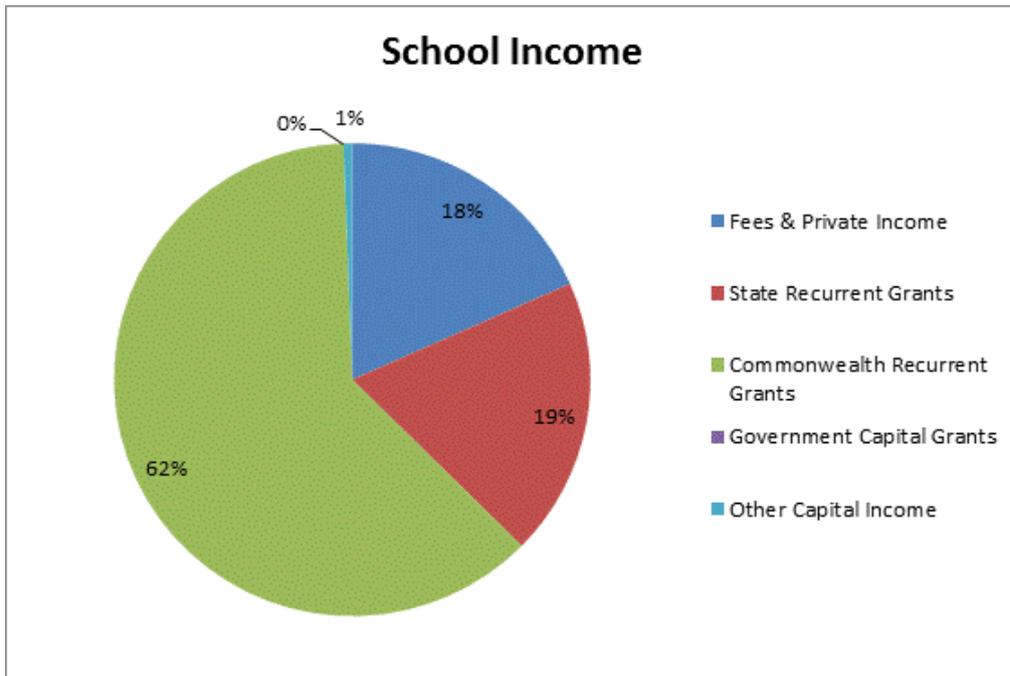
<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
65%	25%	10%	%

Staff

I am usually happy at Mater Dei.

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
75%	25%	%	%

Financial Statement Summary



About This Report

This report has been compiled by the Principal with the assistance of appropriate school and Diocesan personnel and encompasses educational and associated activities of our school community in 2015.