2010 Annual Report to the School Community

ST JOSEPH’S PRIMARY SCHOOL TRAFALGAR

Registered School Number: 4015
St Joseph’s Primary School Trafalgar

Contact Details

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Our School Vision

Mission

St. Joseph’s Primary school is called to serve the children of St. John’s Parish and the wider community of Trafalgar. Our faith community embraces the call to God’s mission in the spiritual tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Therefore, with trust in the providence of God, the school endeavors to nurture in students the capacity and desire to respond to the needs of our time with faith and courage.

Vision Statement

At St. Joseph’s school the Catholic faith is central to all we do. Therefore we support the faith journey of each individual member of the community, we build relationships that are mutually respectful, honest and open and we make learning meaningful and engaging.
School Overview

St Joseph’s is a small rural Catholic primary school with a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Students come from the surrounding areas of Trafalgar, Willow Grove, Yarragon and Thorpdale. The School was established in 1932 by the Sisters of St. Joseph and still maintains a strong commitment to nurture in students the capacity and desire to respond to the needs of our time with faith and courage.

Every child is unique. Every child has potential. These two beliefs underpin all that we do at St Joseph’s Primary school in Trafalgar. The school offers a comprehensive and innovative curriculum which is aimed at bringing out the best in every learner. The children are exposed to strong Literacy and Numeracy teaching and learning. We recognise that children have different gifts and talents and have varied learning styles and we endeavour to cater for the individual needs of each child.

Pastoral care is outstanding with every child given the opportunity to grow and develop. Christian values such as self-discipline, respect for one another, responsibility and tolerance are actively taught and promoted so that each learner progressively moves to independent self-management.

The school has a wonderful community spirit that fosters a strong sense of belonging. Dedicated and committed teachers work to build meaningful relationships with the all students. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in the life of the school and there are many opportunities for parents to be involved.

The school has spacious grounds, catering for football, soccer, netball and basketball as well as two large adventure playgrounds. The administration area has recently been refurbished and a new state of the art resource centre encompassing a new library/resource centre and the complete refurbishment of two classrooms was completed in 2010.
Principal's Report

2010 was an exciting and busy year at St Joseph’s with many activities, events and achievements taking place throughout the year.

In 2010, St Joseph’s took the opportunity to become one of a few schools in the Sale diocese to embrace “Performance and Development Culture.” P & D Culture in schools recognises the importance for student learning of a culture of strong leadership and professional learning. It is focused on creating a culture within the school where all are engaged, empowered and encouraged to develop as lifelong learners. Throughout the year, staff engaged in professional learning and collegial collaboration with a focus on improving learning outcomes and creating independent learners.

As a Catholic School in the Diocese of Sale, we continued to actively promote our Catholic identity through ensuring strong prayer life and liturgical celebrations during the year. We are very grateful for the support and guidance of our Parish Priest Fr Bernie Krotwaar and the continued presence of Fr Tom O’Connell in our school and parish.

The year also saw the completion of the library/resource centre, meeting room and two classrooms. These areas are in constant use and students have benefited from the greatly improved facilities which further enhance the learning capabilities across the school.

Lidia Goodwin
Education in Faith

Goals and Intended Outcomes

Goal: To ensure that St Joseph’s maintains its Catholic identity

Focus areas: Prayer life of the school
Public Witness of our faith
Catholic culture – to support the faith journey of all in our school community

Achievements

Throughout 2010 there were many opportunities for the whole school to celebrate Masses, liturgies and prayers. Every Friday, classes take turns to prepare and lead assembly. At this assembly Sunday’s gospel is presented in a variety of ways but most importantly, the message in the Gospel is made relevant to our present time. Class Masses and whole school Masses were for the most part well supported as many parents took up the invitation to join us in our celebrations. This was particularly evident when celebrating special events such as St Joseph’s day, grandparents day, and beginning and end of year Masses.

Early in the year the staff attended a professional development day looking at the results of the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project and what this meant for our school. The staff identified how our Catholic identity is lived and shaped throughout our school and recognised the importance of articulating who we are and what we believe in. Teachers were assisted to develop contemporary education units of work that challenged children to explore what it meant to be Christian in our modern times.

VALUE ADDED

A major highlight in the year was the canonization of Mary MacKillop. This was of special significance to our school as we were founded by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. A learning sequence which incorporated inquiry based learning was written by class teachers. The sequence culminated in a special assembly where each grade presented an aspect of Mary Mackillop’s life story. As part of this process a new verse for our school song “Follow Me” was written. This verse acknowledges the work of Mary MacKillop and the impact of her vision on our school. Teachers and staff have a real understanding of how our Catholic identity is expressed in work and practice throughout the school. Making sure rituals, prayers and traditions are maintained and publically shown is an important part of school life. The great support of parents at our different celebrations and the enthusiasm of the children to be involved in assemblies, plays and readings contribute greatly to the Catholic identity of our school.
Learning and Teaching

**Goals and Intended Outcomes.**

**Goal:** To plan and implement personalised learning for all children
To ensure learning is meaningful

**Focus areas:** Personalised learning – differentiating the curriculum
Tracking student performance
Planning and working in teams
Multiple sources of feedback on teacher effectiveness

**Achievements**

Once again 2010 brought about many new and exciting opportunities to add value to the student learning at St. Joseph’s. In 2010 the school began the process of implementing a performance and development culture. (P &D culture) As part of this process teachers identified the need to take students from dependence to independence and to embrace teaching practices that allowed for decision making and collaborative learning. Inquiry based learning (IBL) and learning sequences used tools and strategies to empower students to take responsibility for their learning. The focus shifted from content, fact and topics to the learning process and importance of having a language to talk and think about learning.

Teachers spent time planning together to ensure the needs of all students were being met. Professional Learning Team meetings focussed on promoting reflective conversations on teaching practises and analysing data. During 2010 a data base that included all assessment results for literacy and numeracy was established. This allows teachers to track a student’s progress from P – 6. This information is used to help inform teachers to recognise and respond more effectively to diverse student needs.

During the year teachers were heavily involved in working with advisors and staff from the Catholic Education Office. They led the teachers through a journey of becoming critical self evaluators so as to improve the quality of teaching. Building teaching skills that are more innovative and creative produces improved student outcomes. Through working collaboratively in teams and through sustained reflection and inquiry, teachers gained new knowledge and discovered original ways to resolve instructional issues. In this process they developed a shared vision and strengthened their ability to achieve better outcomes for the students in their care.

Thus professional development consisted mainly of workplace internal workshops with staff sharing experiences and expertise with the assistance of Catholic Education Personnel. Professional learning became more customized to meet individual teacher needs with every teacher developing an action plan that focused on an area that they felt they needed to work on. Learning leaders attended workshops on developing coaching techniques and then used these techniques with teachers to support them in achieving the goals they had set in their action plans.

This sustained focus on improving teacher learning and effectiveness has meant that the children at St Josephs access a curriculum that is personalized, engaging and challenging.
ANALYSIS OF NAPLAN DATA

Naplan data shows a spread of minor variations for the most part over the last three years. Minor variations in results from year to year occur if children are absent during testing or when children with special learning needs participate in testing. Intervention programs such as EMU (Extending Mathematical Understanding), Reading Recovery, Speech Therapy and Bridges provide important support for students experiencing difficulty in their learning. These programs have helped to keep student numbers not meeting national benchmarks to a minimum with the percentage figures showing only one or two children who need more assistance. To further help meet targets in literacy the school has made writing a major focus area for 2011 while strong teaching in numeracy continues to be emphasised. Overall the trend shows that our students are performing consistently well. However, all at the school continue to work hard to raise standards even higher.
School Community and Student Wellbeing

Goals and Intended Outcomes

Goal: To increase consistence in using appropriate social skills and manners across the school

To promote activities, event and achievements to the school, parish and wider community.

Focus Area: Social skill development
- Building relationships that are mutually respectful
- Respect for the environment
- Building a profile in the school wider community

Achievements
St Joseph’s is very proud of the warm, safe and friendly atmosphere of the school. We believe that children learn best when they feel safe and are happy to be at school. Every child is valued and staff work hard to build respectful relationships with the students and parents. Consistent expectations about courtesy and how interactions with each other need to be respectful and show consideration of others was highlighted throughout the year. To this end a “Following Jesus Award” was introduced which asked the children to nominate others who had shown care, respect or thoughtfulness towards their peers. The response was excellent as every week there were students nominated by their peers acknowledging thoughtful and kind actions and words.

Parents too were involved in the life of the school in many different ways. The Parents & Friends Association plays an important role in ensuring there is a real community spirit at the school. The P & F was involved in providing many social occasions that were inclusive and fun as well as fundraisers. The trivia night was a great success and once again wonderful support was shown for grandparent’s day which continues to be very popular and continues to grow in numbers.

Teachers believe there is a positive environment at St Joseph’s and are fully supportive of the school’s goals. In well being, the main focus was on developing independence in students which included helping children take responsibility for their actions. In this context of creating responsible and independent learners, teachers actively taught social skills, such as negotiation, conflict resolution and expectations in using manners. The well being coordinator also worked with small targeted groups to further develop these skills as the need arose.
VALUE ADDED
Respect for each other and the environment were also continually promoted. The establishment of the vegetable garden saw a keen group of gardeners take responsibility for looking after the veggie patch. Also, for the first time, grade six students visited Andrew’s House on a regular basis. The children enjoyed building friendships with different residents at the elderly citizen centre while at the same time learning to appreciate and respect the contributions and history of those who come from a different generation. Another new initiative was to form a school choir who then performed at Twilight Christmas Carols in the township. This was well attended and many parents enjoyed the evening as much as the children did.

St Joseph’s school was more involved in community events in 2010. This enhanced the school’s profile in the wider community. Promotion of school events appeared on a regular basis in the Traf News and in our own school newsletter. Catholic Education Week was promoted with special events taking place throughout the week culminating in an assembly promoting the specialness of our Catholic School and all that we offer.

STUDENT SATISFACTION
Students were generally very positive about their schooling. They were enthusiastic in participating in different curriculum activities and each grade eagerly looked forward to taking their turn running assembly. Events such as the walkathon, athletics and swimming carnival, incursions and excursions were all eagerly anticipated and had full participation rates. Students showed high levels of motivation and enthusiasm in Inquiry Based Learning as they worked in teams to plan activities and then presented them to other grades or parents. The school attendance rate was very good at 95.1% showing a strong connectedness to the school and peers.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE 95.1 %

PARENT SATISFACTION
At St Joseph’s parents always respond generously to helping out at the school and supporting different activities. Parental support at events such as the Athletics and Swimming carnivals, Blessing and Opening of our new buildings, Grandparents day and excursions was very good. Parents contribute to the friendly atmosphere of the school and their support is very much valued by the staff.
Leadership and Stewardship

Goals and Intended Outcomes

Goal: Through a whole school approach, the skills and attributes of leadership, are planned for and taught so as to enhance the capabilities of staff and students.

To complete the building project

Focus: Identification of what is needed for both Student Leadership and Staff Leadership

Enhancing the attractiveness of the school

Achievements

In 2010, St Joseph’s looked at enhancing both student and staff leadership across the whole school. From the student perspective, opportunities to develop and nurture leadership continued with all children in grade 6 being part of the leadership team. Grade 6 students helped with organisational activities, such as arranging Blue Earth activities and helping out at the swimming carnival as well as speaking at assembly. Leadership skills were also evident when students participated in IBL (Inquiry Based Learning) as students in each group had to take responsibility for different aspects of their presentation.

Another initiative introduced in 2010 to enhance leadership across the school saw each grade take turns to run assembly at least once every term. This meant that students planned and implemented the items to be presented. To do this they needed to show independence and responsibility, initiative, collaboration, planning and organisational skills. This proved very successful with many students showing confidence in front of an audience and effective communication skills.

To strengthen the leadership capacity of staff, teachers with leadership positions were responsible for running staff meetings in their field of expertise. Lead teachers worked closely with staff from the Catholic Education Office and had regular coaching opportunities and guidance on how to further develop their roles. This proved very effective with Lead Teachers supporting classroom teachers to improve learning and to ensure that our targets and goals were being met.

Staff attendance at 94.75% is a very good result as this figure includes extended periods of Long Service Leave taken by two staff members. Staff members at St Joseph’s are very committed and dedicated to the students in their care taking minimal leave throughout the year. St Joseph’s has a strong history of continuity of staff. All full time teachers were retained from the previous year, one part time teacher retired and another part time teacher finished at the end of the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE</th>
<th>94.75%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAFF RETENTION RATE</td>
<td>90 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2010:

Most of the professional development in 2010 came from CEO staff or from expertise within the school community with the main focus being upon building team within staff and sharing staff learning and expertise. This meant that we did not spend as much as previous years but the overall learning was very successful in developing teacher effectiveness and best practise pedagogy. Teachers attended network and cluster meetings for their specific learning areas and the school had closure days for RE (prayer and spirituality) and whole school planning. Teachers also attend a two day workshop during the holidays for Thrass - teaching handwriting, reading and spelling.

| NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL * | 10 |
| AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL | $458 |

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Teachers were very enthusiastic and committed to establishing “a performance and development culture” throughout all of last year. Teachers commented on how they now had a common language and shared vision which added to the collegiality of the whole staff. They felt that they could support each other more effectively and that the shared collegial experiences and professional dialogue enhanced learning throughout the school. They felt very positive in regard to the learning priorities of the school and their role within these.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRADUATE</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE BACHELOR</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIPLOMA ADVANCED</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Financial Performance

### Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Framework</th>
<th>Modified Cash</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recurrent income</strong></td>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fee income</td>
<td></td>
<td>18,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private income</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State government recurrent grants</td>
<td></td>
<td>177,628</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian government recurrent grants</td>
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<td>757,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total recurrent income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>955,505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Recurrent expenditure** | Tuition       |   |
| Salaries, allowances and related expenses |       | 674,924 |
| Non salary expenses |               | 101,717 |
| **Total recurrent expenditure** |          | 777,641 |

| **Capital income and expenditure** | Tuition       |   |
| Government capital grants |          | 481,455 |
| Capital fees and levies |               | 37,358 |
| Other capital income |               | 92,611 |
| **Total capital income** |          | 611,424 |
| **Total capital expenditure** |          | 688,574 |

| Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans) | Tuition       |   |
| **Total opening balance** |          | 76,648 |
| **Total closing balance** |          | 66,640 |

| **Non DEEWR FQ reported items** | Tuition       |   |
| System levies (payments) |          | 168,330 |
| Intra systemic transfer receipts (payments) |       | 2,216 |
| Diocesan capital fund (SCF) receipts (payments) |      | 584 |

Please note that all school fees to be used offset capital expenditure and are therefore reported in the capital fees and levies.

Note that the information provided is not comparable with other educational sectors. This VRQA template is not comparable to the ACARA school-level income reporting requirements which are to be reported on the MySchool website later this year. ACARA school level reporting requirements will require system level income from Government grants and some private income to be allocated by school. This will be a small adjustment in relation to the total level of school resources. At this stage, recurrent income from Government sources, school generated income and capital expenditure are to be reported by schools. Additionally when assessing the private income of the school include both recurrent and capital school fees.
Future Directions

At St Joseph’s we continue to plan for the future so as to provide our students with the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to be able to participate effectively in our society. We aspire to provide a holistic education, where the children will experience an environment that promotes healthy lifestyles and strong social and emotional development, where their learning is maximised and they are given the opportunity to develop their own spirituality so as to help them reach their full potential in all areas of life.

We value the community spirit and connectedness of students and families to the school and will continue to provide an environment that is welcoming, friendly and safe, and where children are cared for and nurtured. We have a strong commitment to pastoral care and well being of students and staff and this will continue in the future.

In the area of student learning, we will continue to adopt contemporary pedagogy that empowers personalised learning to improve student performance. We will continue to support and nurture our students to be independent learners and deep thinkers as we further explore how to implement P & D culture in our school. Our aim is to engage, empower and encourage all at our school to be lifelong learners.

We will also continue to build leadership capacity, both for staff and students. Establishing leadership structures, exploring leadership roles and providing coaching and feedback will enhance leadership capabilities across the school.

The school has a master plan in place and we will continue to apply for grants to enable the refurbishment of the three classrooms in the top area and the old library. We will continue to strive to provide facilities and infrastructure in order to meet the needs of future learning needs in a technological world.

We look forward to 2011 with enthusiasm as we continue to build a culture of high expectations for all learners in our school community.