



# St John the Apostle Catholic Primary School Narraweena

## 2010 Annual Report



Principal: Miss Anne Duncan

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## 1. Message from Our School Community

### 1.1 Message from the Principal

St John's School acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we now work and play.

We also acknowledge the people who make up the community of St John's at this time and who give life to our school and parish.

This annual report is written to give an overall summary of the life of St John's school throughout 2010. This has been another highly successful year for our community in many ways – academically we are proud of our achievements; our buildings and facilities have been transformed by a significant building project, and our school and parish have continued to work together effectively in building a faith community.

As my last year at St John's draws to a close after 8 wonderful years, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each teacher, student and parent for being a part of my journey at St John's. This is indeed a special community and one that really nurtures its members. As I leave St John's, I will take many fond memories and rich friendships with me.

School Principal 2010

### 1.2 Message from the Parent Body

#### School Board

The St John's School Board is pleased to endorse the St John's School Annual Report for 2010. The School Board works in partnership with the leadership of the school, by guiding the direction of the school both physically and spiritually through a model of governance known as shared wisdom.

The role in school governance is acknowledged as a privilege and responsibility and we thank those parents and teachers who have served on the School Board this year.

In 2010 the School Board was led by new co-chairs and welcomed a number of new members who replaced those who had vacated their positions.

Early in the year the School Board identified a small number of prioritised goals to focus efforts for the year, based around the themes of Students, School Community and Social Justice / Spirituality.

Our achievements for 2010 against these goals were as follows:

- RTA sponsored supervision of the Alfred St. pedestrian crossing each school day was established in Term 2;
- The Board helped coordinate the school and parish community celebration to recognise the completion of the major building programme at St. John's.
- Awareness of Social Justice in the school was attained with the establishment of a student social justice team that works with the parish community to support chosen charities.
- Greater support for the eco-garden from community and classes, with increased evidence of recycling at school and greater care for the school environment.
- Planning is well underway for the establishment of a spiritual garden in 2011, where a dedicated space is created within the school grounds for members of the Parish & School community for quiet reflection and prayer.



- The tiling in the breezeway outside the children's toilets was completed with bright new tiles and sea creature graphics being added.
- The Board continued to promote the St. John's Board Awards, where peer nominations for students exhibiting one of the core school values of service, justice, hope, celebration, respect and compassion are recognised each term.



The Board's spiritual focus for the year centred on our retreat at St. Mary MacKillop Place, where we were led through a series of meditations and discussions. In addition, the Board also took time to identify and understand each individual's preferred communication style and the value each member brings to the group, through the use of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) workshops.

With our Principal leaving St. John's at the end of this year and our Assistant Principal taking 12 months leave, the Board has recently reaffirmed that it will play a significant role in supporting the new Principal and the acting Assistant Principal in 2011 and beyond.

The Co-Chairs of the School Board, 2010

### Parents and Friends Association

The P&F Association is an important part of the St John's School Community. It exists to promote and strengthen the partnership between families, the school and the parish.

The P&F has a three-fold function: to assist with the social, educational and financial aspects of the school. We would like to thank all the families of St John's for the high level of support that the P&F received for all the social and fundraising activities that were held throughout 2010.



We would also like to thank all the teaching and office staff. We thank the teachers for their help in teaching the children 'bush dance steps' in preparation for the Bush Dance, the Spell-a-thon and the gift-making for both Mothers' and Fathers' Day; and the Office staff for their invaluable help with money and ticket-handling.



This year the P&F, in conjunction with the Class Parents, ran a Chocolate Drive fundraiser and a Disco for all the children. In conjunction with other fundraising efforts in 2010, we raised approximately \$24,000. Part of this has been spent on purchasing laptops that were necessary to drive the Interactive Whiteboards in each classroom and the remainder will go towards the upgrade of the playground.

The P&F would like to once again thank all families and school staff for their ongoing support and involvement in our school and look forward to another successful year in 2011.

*The Co-Presidents of the P&F, 2010*

### Class Parents

A very special thank you is extended to all our Class Parents for 2010.

This year St John's has undergone a significant makeover of its buildings and playground facilities. Our wonderful Class Parents, and all the parents in the school, have enabled this transition to be a smooth one.



As in previous years, parents continued to welcome new families, serve at our school Mass suppers, read with our children in the classrooms, serve in the school canteen, assist with the school eco-garden, and provide assistance to teaching staff at school carnivals and excursions for example. St John's parents have readily assisted with a large variety of functions and activities.

A special thank you must also go to all parents who cooked or donated meals to our 'Casserole Club'. These meals are very much appreciated by families in a time of need and are a great testament to the sense of community that is felt at St John's.

Thank you everyone who volunteered their time and effort, our community would not be the same without you.

Class Parent Co-ordinators, 2010

### **1.3 Message from the Student Body**

As we reflect on 2010, the completion of our building project would have to be one of the major highlights, along with our excursions to Canberra and Bathurst. Taking on the responsibilities of being the leaders of the school is a challenge and a privilege which we have enjoyed. Just a few of our "senior" memories include:

- Helping our buddies in Kindergarten to settle into St John's at the beginning of the year;
- Promoting social justice at St John's through events such as Haemophilia Day, Fair Trade Tea & Coffee Taste Test and, of course, running our Term 4 Talent Quest;
- Sharing the leadership of school parish masses with our Kinder buddies;
- Representing the school at several debating competitions;
- Hosting, as well as performing in, this year's musical – A Night With the Stars;
- Taking responsibility for running assemblies and liturgies;
- Improving our school environment with new recycling initiatives;
- Being actively involved in all the sporting events held at school.

While it has certainly been a rewarding experience to be school leaders, we could not have done it without the encouragement and support of our parents and teachers. We feel the experiences we have had here at St John's have prepared us well for high school next year.

Senior Student Leadership Team, 2010



## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2010:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
177	157	107	2	334

\*Language background other than English

### 2.2 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Enrolment Policy](#)<sup>†</sup> which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

<sup>†</sup>Copies of this policy and other policies in this report may be obtained from the Catholic Schools Office website at: <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/about/index.html> or by contacting the Catholic Schools Office.

### 2.3 Staff Profile

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

- have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications
- do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:
  - to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
  - as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

a	b	c	Total
22	1	0	23

Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school's profile page on the *My School* website.

### 2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2010 was 95%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2009 to 2010 was 100%.

### 2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

During 2010 the teachers were surveyed by an external company. The teachers named the strengths of the school as its ability to nurture the faith of the students; its focus on being student centred, safe and supportive and its emphasis on the wellbeing, learning and growth of all students.



In particular they acknowledged the effectiveness of literacy teaching and integration of Information, Communications and Learning Technologies (ICLT) to support learning. Teachers also recognised St John's as a welcoming community to all families and a school where the achievements of all are acknowledged.

In areas for further development the staff felt that the school profile could be promoted more in the local community and that the understanding of Catholic worldview of all staff could be increased. In curriculum they would like to work further on catering for the diverse needs of all students and providing a more consistent pedagogy in all Key Learning Areas from Kindergarten to Year 6.

## 2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Year	Average student attendance rate (%)
K	95
1	94
2	95
3	96
4	92
5	97
6	97

The average student attendance rate for 2010 was 95%.

Management of non-attendance: **Management of non-attendance:** In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the Principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the school's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.



Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.

The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system's School Review and Development processes.

## **2.7 Student Satisfaction**

In 2010 the students in Years 5 and 6 were surveyed by an external company. The students' responses named the strengths of the school as its new buildings and facilities; the opportunities for the use of technology and the variety of learning activities available to them. They also appreciated the opportunities that students were given to lead the school and the fact that all students were congratulated often on their achievements. The concerns of the students were around the need for students to look after one another consistently and the desire for all learning activities to be interesting and enjoyable.





### 3. Catholic Life and Mission

#### 3.1 Catholic Heritage

St John's was founded in 1962 by the Brigidine Sisters. The patroness of the Brigidine Sisters is St Brigid who was born in Ireland over 1500 years ago. The Brigidine Sisters, who model their lives on that of St Brigid, came to Australia from Ireland to help educate children. The St Brigid's Cross consists of rushes woven together to form a cross. There is a copy of the St Brigid's Cross in the foyer of the school to remind us of the Brigidine Sisters who founded the school. Mother Borgia was the first Principal of St John's. In 1980 the Brigidine Sisters withdrew from the school and it has since been staffed by lay principals and teachers. The Brigidine motto, "Strength and Gentleness", is also used as the school motto. This motto is still very much part of the school life and it serves as a model for all that is done at St John's.

#### 3.2 Religious Life of the School

The religious life of St John's is reflected in the developing sense of prayer and liturgical life of our school:

- Every day each class has a special and highly valued prayer circle. Teachers and students spend time in reflection, sharing scripture, thanking God for his many gifts and praying for the needs of their families and of the world.
- On Monday mornings, students, teachers and parents begin the week with a whole school experience of Prayer Assembly. Each week a different class leads the rest of the school in prayer usually highlighting a part of their learning in Religious Education, or celebrating a feast of the church.
- At daily assembly, the school prays together the School Prayer:

*We pray that you will give us your guidance, as we work and play at St John's School today. Help us to care for others, and be responsible for all we say and do. Give us strength, Heavenly Father, to always show our love for you. Amen.*

- Special liturgies and Masses are held to celebrate significant occasions throughout the school and church year such as beginning and end of year, special feast days, Easter, Christmas and Year 6 graduation.
- At the weekly Friday assembly, Merit Awards are given to children displaying outstanding work, behaviour or effort. Special awards are given to students showing 'Strength and Gentleness' - our school motto. Year 6 students are encouraged in their leadership roles by leading this assembly and presenting the awards.
- Students in Year 3 attend the parish Mass on Wednesdays in preparation for their reception of their first Reconciliation and Eucharist. Their understanding of and reverence towards these sacraments has been improved significantly through this regular practice. Senior students also attend the parish Mass regularly throughout the year and again this practice has had a significant effect on their appreciation of this basic core of our faith tradition.

#### 3.3 Catholic Worldview

In 2010 the students of St John's were invited to enter a photo competition between all the Catholic primary systemic schools in the peninsula cluster. It was called 'Catholic Worldview through the lens of a child' and every child was invited to submit a digital photo showing their view of God, or of being Catholic or their view of the world as God's creation - anything that demonstrated the love of God to them. There were four categories: places, animals, nature and people, and all entries were displayed at Maria Regina Catholic School, Avalon.





### 3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a policy on the [Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

Professional learning refers to the development of teachers' professional expertise. In the area of Catholic Life and Mission this occurs in a variety of ways. Under the guidance of the Leadership Team, particularly the Religious Education Co-ordinator (REC), the staff of St John's has worked collegially in stage teams to develop the teaching programs derived from the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum. They have been assisted in this work by an Education Officer from the CSO who has worked to help the teams develop their teaching units and resources.

The teachers at St John's are committed to their own professional learning in Catholic Life and Mission. Three of our teachers attended the second *Ministry For Teachers* Course facilitated in part by our Bishop.

As a whole staff, meeting time has been allocated to prayer, learning about liturgy planning and accessing RE resources through CASTnet sites. The staff also participated in a series of Spirituality sessions led by our Religious Education Coordinator. The sessions were based around exploring several prayer forms, identifying the components of effective liturgy; and training as Eucharistic Ministers.



## **4. Pastoral Care**

### **4.1 Diocesan Policies**

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Student Discipline](#) Policies which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the CSO.

### **4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy**

In 2010 the staff of St John's continued to embed the Positive Behaviour Support Program which requires that clear rules and expectations for all children are provided; praise and rewards to be used wherever possible to encourage positive behaviour and teamwork by staff is needed to ensure consistency across classes, teachers and environments. The Behaviour Management Education Officer from CSO worked closely with several of our staff to provide assistance with students presenting challenging behaviours and to ensure consistency of practice. The staff also continued to implement the principles of restorative justice which requires respectful challenging and appropriate consequences for those students who do not follow the rules or expectations.

Derived from the Diocesan policies, St John's has a Pastoral Care and a draft Anti-Bullying policy. Within the Pastoral Care policy, major disciplinary sanctions such as suspensions are outlined.

### **4.3 Pastoral Care of Families**

Many support structures exist for families within the St John's school community.

During 2010 St John's was again allocated funding for a Family Liaison Officer. This role is to assist in networking and supporting families in need and to assist in parent education. The role is also designed to work across parish and school boundaries. The 'Casserole Club' continued to support families in need and information about relevant health and welfare agencies was disseminated to the community. Individual families were assisted as needed. The class teachers, special needs team, Assistant Principal and the Principal all work closely with parents during the year to provide whatever support is required in relation to issues concerning their child. Where necessary, families were referred to local health and counselling agencies for professional support.

As part of their leadership role, the senior students, together with the Kindergarten students, participated in the Kindy Buddy Program. The Year 5 and 6 students were paired up with the Kindergarten students and this program allows the senior students to act as mentors for the Kindergarten children throughout the year.

The school counsellor assists teachers in providing appropriate environments for children with social and emotional needs. Class Parents also have a clearly defined role to assist the liaison between home and school. In 2010 the Class Parent group were always at the ready to provide support to families by coordinating a strong network which provided assistance to families in times of need through sickness or loss; a warm welcome to families who were new to the community; and to share the joys of new babies and other times of special celebrations.

'Seasons for Growth' is an in-school program for children who have experienced grief or significant loss through death, separation or divorce. Children of similar ages meet to participate in a series of activities with an adult companion over a number of weeks which help them to explore and understand their feelings. Special thanks to the leaders of these groups.

#### **Triple P Parenting Courses**

In 2010 we once again worked with Centacare to provide a parenting program at our school. It proved to be very popular - almost 50 people attended for the three weeks.



The series was aimed at parents of children aged up to 12 years old to help increase their awareness of how to change unwanted behaviour and to encourage desirable behaviour.

#### **4.4 Resolving Issues**

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a [Complaints Handling Policy](#) which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

#### **4.5 Occupational Health and Safety**

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for OHS and complies with the Australian Standard for OHS Management Systems. The OHSMS adopted by the CSO for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a 'safe and supportive' environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant CSO personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with OHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office's Annual OHS Plan. External OHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.



## **5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning**

### **5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning**

As always, learning at St John's in 2010 was of prime importance and many elements came together to ensure that every child's learning needs were identified and addressed as far as possible. A number of excursions were planned to support classroom teaching such as – outdoor camp for senior students, and visits to Stony Range Flora Reserve, the Zoo, Narrabeen Environmental Centre, etc were undertaken throughout 2010. Some visits took place within the school such as the arrival of a hatch of eggs in an incubator for Kindergarten who delighted in the hatching and growth of baby chickens over several weeks. Children in Stage 2 participated in the cluster based 'Zoomatics' program which involved a visit from the Zoo and related work about the growth and behaviour of frogs.

#### **Numeracy**

One of the priority Key Learning Areas for 2010 was Mathematics. The role of the Coordinator 2 was to work with an external consultant and the staff in order to work towards the implementation of 'effective means of assessment that inform teaching and learning in mathematics' and to 'develop teacher knowledge and understanding of the centrality of number in students' numeracy development' (School Improvement Plan).

Staff Development Days, staff meetings, planning sessions and twilight sessions were used to enable staff to develop their professional learning in mathematics.

Our staff learnt about Interactive Interviews; the theory behind them and how to implement them. They then had to assess 20% of their students (in each class K-6); and used this data to develop consistent understandings. As a result of the analysis of this data, it was decided that each class K-6 would devote Term 3 to the Number Strand in mathematics, particularly the sub-strand of Whole Number. Finally, staff began to investigate the Growth Point System. This is an area for continued focus during 2011.

New resources were purchased to support the development of Numeracy K-6.

#### **Literacy**

The Diocesan initiative – 'Literacy and Numeracy School Improvement Initiative' – which began in 2007, continued in 2010. Allocation of funds from the project financed time for the Assistant Principal to work with an external consultant. The role of the Assistant Principal was to work with the consultant, staff and parents in order to 'strengthen teachers' knowledge and use of high level questioning to enhance student's comprehension skills in reading and mathematics'. (School Improvement Plan)

Taking into consideration the school's School Improvement Plan and the implications of need reflected in the NAPLAN data, executive release time was dedicated to literacy support across the school.

Teachers and parents were introduced to high level questioning through shared and guided reading and developed a bank of questions that furthered the children's use of different reading strategies and higher order thinking.

Mentoring support for the Assistant Principal, input ESL in-services, planning time, staff meetings and parent sessions were used to enable the Assistant Principal, staff and parents to develop their professional learning in literacy.



## 5.2 Student Achievement

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. Analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3**, students placed in Band 1 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are performing at a standard deemed to be above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 and 6 are “at proficiency”.
- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are performing above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 7 and 8 are “at proficiency”.
- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions.
- State data for band distributions is sourced from the School Measurement and Reporting Toolkit (SMART), developed by NSW Department of Education and Training. All national data and state figures for the percentage at or above national minimum are sourced from the NAPLAN summary report published by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA). All school data is sourced from SMART.
- In the 2010 cohort, there were 48 students in Year 3 and 47 students in Year 5.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are shown separately for Years 3 and 5. Additional information can also be accessed from the *My School* website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>).

### Band Distributions (%) – Year 3

		<b>Band 1</b>	<b>Band 2</b>	<b>Band 3</b>	<b>Band 4</b>	<b>Band 5</b>	<b>Band 6 (+)</b>	<b>% at or above national minimum</b>
<b>Reading</b>	State	4	10	15	24	20	28	95
	National	4	10	17	23	22	22	94
	School	2	0	8	27	8	54	98
<b>Writing</b>	State	2	4	11	27	31	25	97
	National	2	5	13	30	30	17	96
	School	0	4	6	23	27	40	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	4	9	18	24	25	21	94
	National	7	10	18	24	22	16	91
	School	2	0	13	27	27	31	98
<b>Gr. &amp; Punct.</b>	State	6	9	13	19	25	29	94
	National	6	9	15	21	22	25	92
	School	0	2	8	27	17	46	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	3	12	24	22	23	15	95
	National	4	11	23	28	20	12	94
	School	0	4	17	25	31	23	100



In Year 3, 2010, the distribution of NAPLAN results indicates that the teaching and learning programs at St John's are highly effective in literacy and numeracy from Kindergarten to Year 3. The 2010 distribution across the five bands suggest that although the results are very positive overall, our results in reading and writing are better than our results in spelling and numeracy. In reading 62% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 48% of students in the State and 44% nationally. In writing 67% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 56% of students in the State and 47% nationally. In Spelling 58% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 46% of students in the State and 38% nationally. In Grammar and Punctuation 63% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 54% of students in the State and 47% nationally. Finally, in Numeracy 54% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 38% of students in the State and 32% nationally.

These results suggest that the professional learning that the school has undertaken in literacy and numeracy is effective and needs to be continued to maintain and improve the high standards being achieved. The results also suggest that spelling and numeracy need to remain as areas for continued focus of the School Improvement Plan for 2011.

#### Band Distributions (%) – Year 5

		<b>Band 3 (-)</b>	<b>Band 4</b>	<b>Band 5</b>	<b>Band 6</b>	<b>Band 7</b>	<b>Band 8 (+)</b>	<b>% at or above national minimum</b>
<b>Reading</b>	State	7	13	24	22	16	17	93
	National	7	14	23	25	18	10	91
	School	2	9	26	23	26	15	98
<b>Writing</b>	State	4	9	21	38	17	10	95
	National	5	11	27	31	17	7	93
	School	0	4	15	55	21	4	100
<b>Spelling</b>	State	5	11	22	27	24	12	94
	National	6	12	24	28	19	8	92
	School	0	9	32	17	36	6	100
<b>Gr. &amp; Punct.</b>	State	6	11	20	18	28	17	94
	National	6	11	20	26	21	14	92
	School	4	6	15	23	36	15	96
<b>Numeracy</b>	State	4	12	27	25	18	14	95
	National	5	13	26	28	17	9	94
	School	0	9	24	37	26	4	100

In Year 5, 2010, the distribution of NAPLAN results indicates that the teaching and learning programs at St John's are highly effective in literacy and numeracy from Kindergarten to Year 6. The 2010 distribution across the five bands suggest that although the results are very positive overall, our results in reading and grammar and punctuation are better than our results in writing and numeracy. In reading 41% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 33% of students in the State and 28% nationally. In writing 25% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 27% of students in the State and 24% nationally. In Spelling 42% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 36% of students in the State and 27% nationally. In Grammar and Punctuation 51% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 45% of students in the State and 35% nationally. Finally, in Numeracy 30% of our students achieved in the top two bands compared with 32% of students in the State and 26% nationally.

These results suggest that the professional learning that the school has undertaken in literacy and numeracy is effective and needs to be continued to maintain and improve the high standards being achieved. The results also suggest that writing and numeracy need to remain as areas for continued focus of the School Improvement Plan for 2011.



### **5.3 Extra Curricula Activities**

St John's is committed to offering a variety of opportunities to cater for children's needs and interests. During 2010 the following are some of the extra curricular activities offered to students:

#### **Chess**

Chess for beginners and intermediate students continued this year as did the participation in local competitions. All of the chess teams are well prepared and play in earnest. They all represented St John's well and gained good results.

#### **Basketball**

Basketball continued to feature as an area of talent and enjoyment for a number of St John's students who play in local after-school competitions.

#### **Music and Vocal Lessons**

In 2010 our school participated again in the cluster based 'Marana Music Festival' based at Mater Maria College. This involved our school band and choir rehearsing at school for several months beforehand and then attending a rehearsal day on a weekend to hone their skills before performing in the combined festival.

Keyboard lessons were also popular with students again this year and they enjoyed performing for the whole school at assemblies and at the Talent Quest.

#### **Public Speaking and Debating**

The St John's school Public Speaking Competition this year focused on a speech made by every child in front of their own class. Finalists were then chosen to present their speech in front of the whole school. The confidence and skills of the students is increasing each year through this experience.

Two of the senior students represented the school in the Cluster Public Speaking Competition.

The debating team continued their outstanding efforts in the weekly tournament of the interschool debating competition.

#### **Writing**

The annual Father Vogt Writing Competition held at St John's again attracted entries of a very high quality. Several pieces of writing were commended with one outstanding piece being awarded the Father Vogt trophy for writing.

#### **Talent Quest**

The Annual Talent Quest held in Term 4 raises money for charity but also provides weeks of entertainment and excitement as the finals approach. The dancing, singing, instrumental expertise amongst the students at St John's is of a high quality and is well showcased during this memorable event.

#### **Creative Arts**

One of the highlights of 2010 was the performance of a whole school musical involving every child from Kindergarten to Year 6. The quality of the production was outstanding and 'A Night with the Stars' destined to be a fond memory for the participants.





## **5.4 Professional Learning**

Highlights of the Professional Learning in 2010 centred on the work done by staff in the area of numeracy. An external consultant worked with the staff again in 2010 through a series of Staff Development Days, twilight meetings and staff meeting to strengthen their pedagogical knowledge in mathematics, and to develop their understanding and expertise in administering and interpreting the interactive interview in mathematics.

In Literacy the professional learning centred on developing teachers' knowledge and use of high level questioning to enhance student's comprehension skills in reading and mathematics.

During 2010 the teachers worked regularly with external experts and as a staff group to develop their use of the recently installed Interactive Whiteboards. Teachers took turns in sharing their developing knowledge and skills with other teachers and there was a significant increase in teachers' use and confidence in the use of this tool for teaching.

The school leadership team participated in school; cluster and diocesan based professional learning in leadership and most particularly in the leadership of learning. This direction in professional learning will be consolidated and further enhanced during 2011.



## 6. Strategic Initiatives

### 6.1 2010 Priorities and Achievements

During 2010 a Diocesan initiative introduced the use of a **School Improvement Plan (SIP)** which replaced the Annual Goals that were publicised in the 2009 Annual Report as the 2010 Priorities. The SIP has a significant less number of goals than the 2010 Priorities and through the implementation of the 2010 SIP, some of the proposed goals for 2010 were not pursued and, where relevant, this is recorded below.

#### **Faith and Community Development**

**Target 1:** Review our shared understanding of Catholic Worldview and ensure this is reflected in our documentation (SP 1.2.1)

*This target will underpin work into the future*

**Target 2:** Continue to develop and enhance a deeper understanding and commitment to global and social justice issues

*Efforts were made through school assemblies, newsletters and social justice activities to raise awareness of social justice needs and effective actions in the school, parish and wider community*

**Target 3:** Articulate the behaviours associated with major values and reward the demonstration of them (SP 1.3.2)

*The 'Building Positive Relationships' brochure, outlining the core values of our school, was re-issued and promoted throughout the school community. It was used for School Board prayer and discussion.*

**Target 4:** Develop procedures to respond effectively to needs and crises in the community (SP 1.6.1)

*The Family Liaison Officer was supported in role of clarifying needs of community and seeking ways to address them*

**Target 5:** Strengthen school, parish and community links (SP 1.6.2)

*Planning is underway to set up a Spiritual Garden of Reflection where people will be able to reflect, pray, and have a garden of beauty to visit with meaningful icons and statements for both school and parish members*

*An unofficial celebration of the new school buildings of St John's was held to make the completion of the building project and to allow members of the school and wider community to visit and inspect the changes to our school. The official blessing and opening will be held in 2011.*

#### **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

**Target 6:** Develop a shared understanding of the place of assessment in the teaching/learning cycle (SP 2.1.3)

*The teachers worked collaboratively at developing a shared understanding of diagnostic interviews in numeracy and these were implemented throughout 2010.*

**Target 7:** Develop a curriculum that strives to meet the needs of all learners (SP 2.2.1)

*The scope and sequences for punctuation, grammar and spelling were reviewed and teachers encouraged to implement them K-6.*

*The Literacy Team did not continue their focus on Key Writing Strategies. Based on further analysis of NAPLAN results, teachers and parents were introduced to high level questioning through shared and guided reading and developed a bank of questions that furthered the children's use of different reading strategies and higher order thinking.*



**Target 8:** Embed ICLT into classroom practice to enhance student's learning (SP 2.2.2)

*Interactive Whiteboards (IWBs) were installed into every classroom and on-going professional learning was provided for staff in using IWBs. The use of IWBs was introduced to the parent community at a P&F meeting.*

**Target 9:** Strengthen the implementation of numeracy across the curriculum (SP 2.2.3)

*The teachers participated in regular professional learning throughout the year to further improve consistency and good practice to raise the standards in numeracy K – 6. There is still the need to explore Diocesan numeracy statement with the staff, review and improve resources for mathematics and to review the numeracy plan and mathematics policy.*

**Target 10:** Ensure all areas of the curriculum are reviewed and improved regularly (SP 2.2.4)

*The new combined Scope and Sequence was successfully implemented and during 2010 broadened to include more Key Learning Areas (KLAs). The teachers were led through an initial exploration of the draft Australian Curriculum and its impact and implementation were discussed.*

## **Stewardship**

**Target 11:** Engage the community in each stage of the strategic planning and review process (SP 3.2.1)

*With the appointment of a new Principal for 2011 onwards, preparations for Strategic planning process and for primary school review process were postponed until 2011*

**Target 12:** Improve the aesthetics, safety and functionality of the environment in a sustainable way (SP 3.3)

*The second phase of the refurbishment of the new children's toilet block was completed. All students were invited and encouraged to contribute to the artistic feature panels in the breezeway.*

*The federally funded project, the 'Building the Education Revolution' (BER) was completed and resulted in a significant improvement to the facilities of St John's.*

**Target 13:** Develop procedures and practices for the safe arrival and departure of all school community members (SP 3.3.3)

*RTA sponsored supervision of the Alfred St. pedestrian crossing each school day was established in Term 2.*

**Target 14:** Develop individuals' appreciation of the need to care for the environment

*Through the newsletter and assemblies efforts were made to raise awareness of environmentally friendly practices at school and at home*

*Increased support for Eco-garden from community and classes was achieved through newsletter communication and by including eco-garden responsibilities in the Scope and Sequence.*

*There is still a need to consolidate the increased care for school environment (ie less rubbish/litter, less damage to school property and to improve evidence of recycling all possible items at school.*



## **6.2 2011 Priorities and Challenges (Goals from the 2011 School Improvement Plan)**

### **Mission**

1. To establish a St John's Social Justice (SJSJ) team that involves members of the wider community
2. To enhance a deeper understanding of, and commitment to, global and social justice issues

### **Teaching and Learning**

3. To implement effective means of assessment that inform teaching and learning in mathematics
4. To develop teacher knowledge and understanding of the centrality of number in students' mathematic development
5. To establish needs in regards to the teaching and learning of spelling
6. To strengthen teachers' knowledge and use of high level questioning to enhance student's comprehension skills in reading and mathematics

### **Leadership**

7. To align leadership roles and responsibilities with the School Improvement Plan



## **7 Parent Participation**

### **7.1 Introduction**

At St John's parents are acknowledged as the first educators of their children. The weekly newsletter is used as a vehicle by both the Principal and the Religious Education Co-ordinator (REC) to communicate with parents about various aspects of Catholic life and mission within the school.

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's faith development and are supported in this role. Religious Education homework sheets are sent home which provide parents with some information about the topic and also invite families to share their learning and their faith. A number of parents offered in 2010 to lead sacramental programs and to take up ministry in the parish.

The School Board provides a strong vehicle for faith and leadership formation for parents. Through the spirituality of the School Board and its model of Shared Wisdom decision making, many parents are invited to use their gifts in further building our community.

The P & F works tirelessly to support the Principal and staff, and the School Board by initiating and supporting functions throughout the year which encourage community building and provide a means of raising funds to support the purchase of equipment and resources for the students.

Throughout 2010 parents very generously gave of their time, not only to support school functions and initiatives, but also to assist teachers in a variety of ways, eg readers' theatre; gross motor programs; sporting events and excursions.

Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day are very special days at St Johns'. We celebrate the wonderful gift of parents with a breakfast on each of these days.

Additional information can be found on our website: <http://www.sjandbb.catholic.edu.au>

### **7.2 Parent Satisfaction**

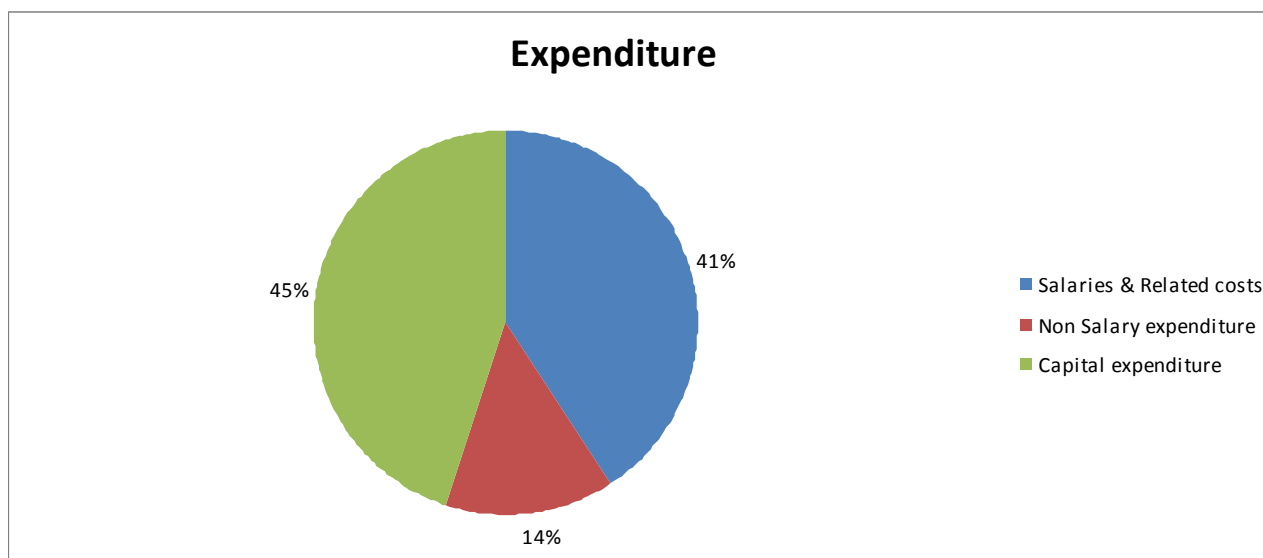
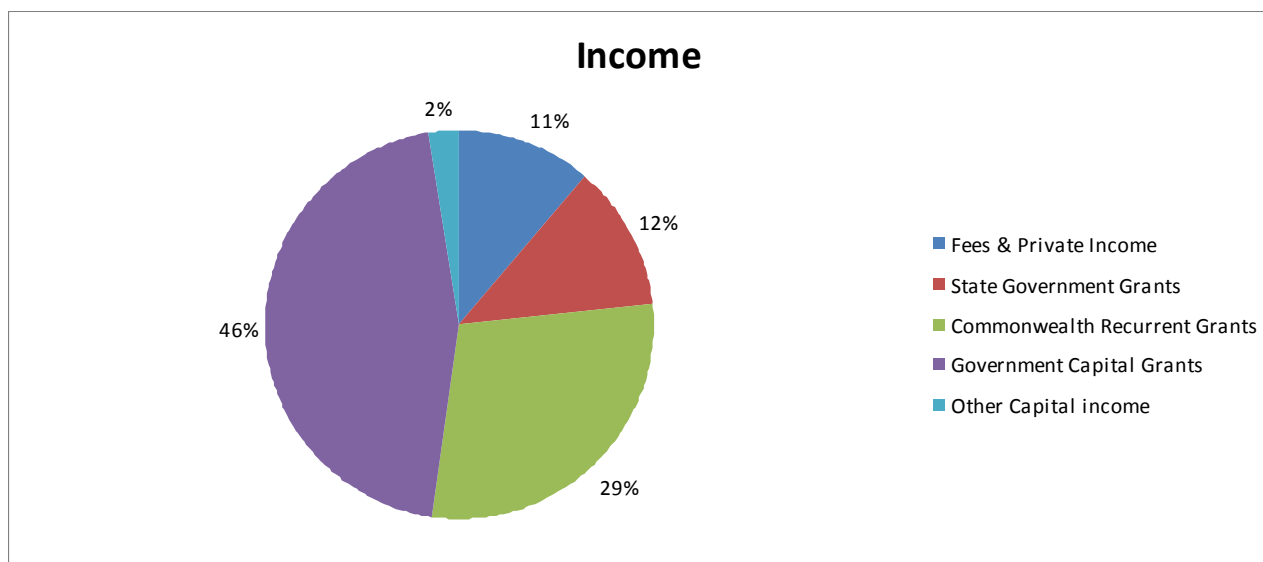
In 2010 the parents of St John's were surveyed by an external company. The parents named the religious life of the school as a particular strength at St John's. This included areas such as its religious leadership; the teachers as Catholic role models; the quality of evangelising and welcoming and the school's strong link to parish. They also commented on the strength of the pastoral care and the way that the achievements of all are celebrated. Literacy was acknowledged as a strength in curriculum, teaching and learning.

In areas for further development, parents suggested continued effort in increasing the profile of the school in the local community and increasing the breadth of the creative arts curriculum eg dance, drama and music. Parents supported the school's emphasis on building positive relationships between all students. The school was encouraged to maintain its focus on numeracy and on identifying and addressing the diverse needs of all students.



## 8. Financial Report

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below. More detailed financial data is available on the "myschool" website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au>. Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report at <http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/resources/annrep.html>



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School's consultant, Anne Duncan.