



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

Annual School Report to the Community 2016



St Thomas the Apostle Primary School Kambah

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Principal

Mr David Thiele

Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

Principal's Message

In 2016 at St Thomas the Apostle we continued to value and promote our School Vision and Mission following Jesus, 'the Way, the Truth and the Life'. Over the year there were many community events such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparent's Day, Harmony day, Election Barbecues and Cake Stalls and our Annual School and Parish Fete just to name a few. St Thomas the Apostle has a special role in the Parish community and our many school events promote inclusion and develop partnerships with parents, families and the wider community. Teaching and learning remain our core business with a focus on using data to inform teaching and improve student outcomes in numeracy and literacy. Through linking our core curriculum areas we aimed at bringing relevance and authenticity in our teaching and learning to assist our students to develop inquiry skills for an enriching, active and purposeful future. As a Catholic primary school we continued to model and teach the story of Jesus and place this in the context of modern life showing respect, compassion and justice to all. We believe that positive relationships develop an atmosphere of trust where every individual is supported and valued.

Parent Body Message

The 2016 School Community Council year was a great success. The governance role was continued undertaking an audit on the canteen, reviewing the Code of Ethics, reviewing the School Viability Policy and being informed on the Constitution for Archdiocesan Catholic School Community Councils.

In capital works, carpet in the after school care building was replaced, tree maintenance conducted and a working bee held. A capital works program was developed which will guide future Councils on priority of works.

Contributing to education, all interactive whiteboards in the school were replaced and a successful review of the 'bring your own device' program commenced. Communication between the school and parents/families was increased and a series of 'parental engagement' articles were published via the school newsletter.

The Council supported two fundraising barbecues and cake stalls at both the ACT and Federal elections.

Opportunities for social interactions for students and families by way of a disco, a movie night and the Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfasts. The school fete extremely successful. Discussions began for the school's 40th anniversary celebrations, occurring in 2017.

Student Body Message

We enjoyed our leadership year and roles in 2016 and we tried our best to contribute lots of things to the school through these. We enjoyed our classes and teachers, peer support, our sporting carnivals, being reading tutors, Tournament of Minds, da Vinci Decathlon, debating, chess, school discos and much more. A big highlight of the year was our performance in Wakakirri. The name of our Performance was "This dream I dream.."and we won the Best Blockbuster story award together with the best use of signature item award for the way we used stars in our performance. But the highlight was becoming a National Nominee for the 2016 Story of the Year. We lead activities that raised money for the Catholic Missions. We continued to enjoy our House BBQs and MATES lunches with our principals. It was Mr Thiele for the first part of the year and Mrs Egan for the second half. Another highlight of the year for us was school camp at Cooba, where we got to do many challenging activities. With the support of our teachers and parents we all worked hard together and had another great year at St Thomas the Apostle.

Section Two: School Features

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Kambah.

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Kambah. St Thomas the Apostle is a Catholic Primary School located in Kambah. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 287 students. Students attending the school in 2016 came from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities which consisted of 143 male and 145 female students; 16 indigenous students; and 31 with English as an additional language (EALD). The school employed 25 staff comprising 19 teachers and 6 non-teaching staff in 2016, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including secretarial, janitorial, learning support and student welfare. We are an inclusive school and we welcome students with a variety of educational needs. Staff, students, parents and the Catholic Education Office work collaboratively ensuring, to the best of our ability, that the needs of all students are met.

Our contemporary learning spaces form a rich environment for learning and innovative and focussed teaching. Through the learning opportunities provided at St Thomas' we help to prepare our students for a future where teamwork, creativity and curiosity are crucial. We offer a broad based curriculum which enables us to provide for student needs including their development as individuals and as members of the wider community. Our academic areas of focus include literacy and numeracy with special emphasis on Inquiry learning. Teachers plan Integrated units of work from K-6 with a focus on incorporating quality teaching and inquiry based learning. Teachers utilise a range of ICT including IWBs, iPads, desktop and notebook computers. We value authentic integration of ICT in our curriculum and it remains a strategic priority.

We encourage creativity promoting a curriculum which includes music and music tuition, Indonesian, creative arts, performing arts and opportunities to experience artistic performances in many fields. Curiosity and thinking skills are fostered and developed through chess and involvement in co-curricular activities such as Tournament of the Minds, Rostrum, debating and participation in community competitions. Team work and cooperative learning is highlighted in all areas of our curriculum particularly in our Physical Education program, with explicit programs in dance, gymnastics, swimming and tennis. We encourage each child to participate, enjoy and develop a life-long commitment to health and physical wellbeing. The school's website can be found at www.sttap.act.edu.au

Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

Our school follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

Religious Life & Religious Education

In 2016 our over-arching school theme was 'Live Mercy', throughout the year we focused on linking this theme to all school and parish events. We continued to focus on building effective and productive partnerships by completing Component 3 training for KidsMatter. The MATES team reviewed our Positive behaviours for Learning Program and shared recommendations for 2017 with staff. Our close proximity to the Parish Church of St Thomas the Apostle Kambah provided our school with many frequent opportunities to grow together as a Christ-centered faith community involving parents, families, parishioners and the wider Tuggeranong community. Our weekly Monday Prayer in the Church was closely linked with scripture and values which were explained to the children in a way that recognised their age and development.

In 2016, the school Religious Education Coordinator and the Parish Coordinator worked together to implement new resources and provide opportunities for parent feedback for the Parish and School Sacramental Programs. The Catholic Identity of St Thomas the Apostle in 2016 continued to remain visible and explicit. The prayer life of the school community was highly valued and the school prayer was recited daily. Staff continued to deliver a Religious Education Program that was scripture-based, authentic and relevant to student needs. St Thomas the Apostle continues to promote positive relationships and to recognise the dignity of every individual.

Section Four: Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2016:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
145	143	31	288

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn has established an *Enrolment Policy for Catholic Schools*. The Catholic Education Office monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements.

Information about enrolling in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn may be accessed at the Catholic Education Office website.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2016 was 92.67%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	92%
Year 1	94%
Year 2	93%
Year 3	93%
Year 4	94%
Year 5	91%
Year 6	91%

Managing Student Non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;

- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- the Catholic Education Office designated School Services Officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

Section Five: Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2016:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
19	6	25

* This number includes 15 full-time teachers and 4 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	0%
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Professional Learning

In 2016, staff worked in Professional Learning Teams to implement recommendations from the 2015 professional learning teams process, to determine new literacy targets based on previously collected data. Linking with the COSA inquiry, staff conducted interviews, surveys and questionnaires across the school community related to student engagement, higher order thinking, questioning skills, the inquiry process and the innovative use of ICT. Staff completed a day of First Aid training and various PD related to individual learning goals including attending PD, staff meetings and module meetings.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers are qualified as required by the relevant authorities.

Section Six: Academic Profile

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	52%	49%	10%	11%
	Writing	62%	49%	2%	6%
	Spelling	48%	46%	22%	12%
	Grammar and Punctuation	55%	52%	2%	10%
	Numeracy	48%	36%	5%	14%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2016		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	45%	35%	7%	15%
	Writing	10%	17%	21%	18%
	Spelling	38%	30%	7%	18%
	Grammar and Punctuation	34%	36%	7%	15%
	Numeracy	24%	29%	17%	17%

Section Seven: School Review and Improvement

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the School's Strategic Plan and informed by the Internal School Review process. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Regional Consultant.

Key Improvements Achieved in 2016

The School Improvement Plan for 2016 had a number of focus areas. Our major focus, supported by CE Collaborating on Student Achievement (COSA) funding and the use of an outside consultant, was to use our Professional Learning Teams to implement research based pedagogical practices in literacy that engage our 21st century students. Student engagement in their learning was seen as a key attribute to improving student outcomes. The establishment of a Bring Your Own Device (iPad) program in Years 5 and 6 also fitted neatly into this focus. Another literacy focus was to continue to implement and evaluate the changes to literacy teaching that were trialled in 2015. This was viewed as a way of helping to imbed these successful changes into our school's practices and to fine tune our use of these pedagogies. Our numeracy focus in 2016 was to develop our knowledge and use of the proficiency strands, understanding, fluency, problem-solving and reasoning, as a means to explore the content of Mathematics. The health and well-being of our community remained high on our agenda with the continued implementation of the KidsMatter training.

Priority Key Improvements for 2017

In late 2016, the leadership team identified whole-school wellbeing as a focus for 2017. The team applied for a well-being grant to promote and foster wellbeing for teachers, students and families. Along with this focus on Wellbeing, the school will undertake whole school training as a TRUST school. This will focus on training ALL staff, on what it means to be a trauma sensitive school and how to work with and support, students who have experienced trauma in their lives.

Developing curriculum based on an Inquiry Model across curriculum areas was also identified as a priority for 2017. The decision was made to trial 'Mappen', an online program for delivering quality integrated units based on conceptual understandings using an inquiry approach.

With an ever evolving understanding of what good pedagogy is, it was decided that working towards an authentic understanding and implementation of what "student centred learning" is and how it works in the classroom setting, would be beneficial.

Section Eight: School Policies

Student Welfare Policy

Our Student Welfare and Management Policy (SWAMP) in keeping with our school mission and vision, aims to create an environment in which teachers can exercise their rights to teach and children can exercise their right to learn. We assist children to make responsible behaviour choices and implement consistent practices to ensure children and parents understand and accept the consequences for these choices. We value restorative practices in a positive and respectful environment where children can be assisted to solve issues in a manner which enhances self esteem and promotes positive growth. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by nonschool persons to enforce discipline at our school.

The full text of the School's Student Welfare Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the Administration office.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn Catholic Education Office has established a *Complaints Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Archdiocese. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the *Complaints Policy* may be accessed on the Catholic Education website at <https://cg.catholic.edu.au>.

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

The CE *Complaints Policy* may be accessed at <https://cg.catholic.edu.au>.

Section Nine: Community Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

All parent/carer respondents felt that teachers at St Thomas the Apostle Primary School are enthusiastic in their approach to teaching and show genuine care and concern for the students. They felt that St Thomas the Apostle Primary School has high standards of student behaviour and that the student management policy is fair. The majority of respondents commended the school's approach to fostering the faith life of the children and the ways in which community is developed. The parents feel that their concerns are listened to and that teachers are open and approachable. Some parents indicated they felt the school should provide more variety in sport. It was clearly reported that St Thomas the Apostle Primary School has a safe environment and that parents were very satisfied with the education of their children at St Thomas the Apostle Primary School.

Student Satisfaction

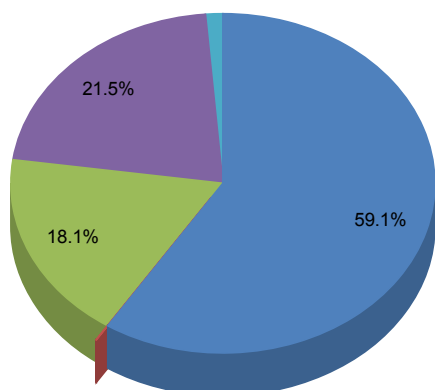
The survey results from a sample of Year 4, 5 and 6 students were overall extremely positive. The majority of students strongly agree that their teacher cares about them and have high expectations of their efforts and achievements. Students feel the school has clear rules and expectations, that behaviour management expectations are fair and that they are expected to act responsibly. They felt that there was room for improvement with how behaviour issues are managed. There was a strong voice for feeling that homework is an ineffective activity. Students overall feel very safe at school, that there are appropriate ways to report issues. Students feel a sense of belonging and enjoy being a part of this school community.

Teacher Satisfaction

The school staff were surveyed in a number of areas including work and life balance, the professional culture of the school and opportunities for leadership development. Overwhelming was the sense of strong community at the school. Staff responded they feel their colleagues are very supportive, that they are committed to the school's vision and feel like they are treated as professionals in the workplace. They also feel that the Leadership Team plan and execute change well and that the school encourages a climate conducive to learning. An identified area for growth is further involvement of staff in the knowledge and understanding of the School Improvement Plan. Overall, staff agree that the St Thomas the Apostle Primary School is a positive and welcoming community.

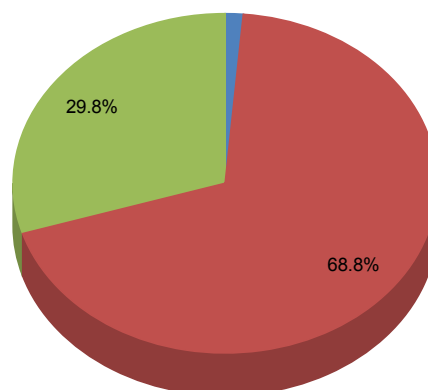
Section Ten: Financial Statement

Income



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (59.1%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (18.1%)
- Fees and Private Income (21.5%)
- Other Capital Income (1.3%)

Expenditure



- Capital Expenditure (1.4%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (68.8%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (29.8%)

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,258,793
Government Capital Grants ²	\$874
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$689,852
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$820,253
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$50,005
Total Income	\$3,819,777

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$50,879
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,559,253
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,107,651
Total Expenditure	\$3,717,783

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.

4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.