

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School Waitara

2007 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

2007 was an extremely demanding year for all the members of the Our Lady of the Rosary community. The community welcomed a new Principal and a new parish priest. In true Waitara fashion we were both made to feel very welcome.

During the course of the year we prepared for and engaged in the Tier 1 and Tier 2 school review processes. The report which was generated through these processes has been used as the foundation for a new strategic plan.

Occupational, health and safety also received a review resulting in a pleasing report which will enable us to ensure that this management area remains well cared for.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

A number of significant achievements were delivered in 2007. To summarise:

Spring Fair

We moved away from the traditional Fete to a Spring Fair that had a focus on high profile/drawcard rides, entertainment, multicultural food stalls and, for the first time, a children's art show with coffee shop. Feedback has been very good that it was successful on all counts - fundraising and for the level of community involvement. What was also outstanding was the active involvement of over 200 volunteers who made this all come together.

Melbourne Cup Raffle

In another first for us, we launched a Melbourne Cup Raffle that fed into the Spring Fair. This was another success with high participation rates and a generous return of funds.

Air conditioning

The success of our fundraising has allowed us to complete our three-year vision to air condition every class room and the library. Now that this is completed it allows us to

refocus on other priorities working jointly with the school.

Other highlights were the ongoing close working relationship with the school and the steady development of a high quality P&F team who will be able to continue to make a difference well beyond 2008.

1.3 Message from the Student Body

2007 has been a very exciting year because there have been many enjoyable events throughout the year.

We have been to carnivals and excursions that have been a lot of fun and have achieved high standards in many different aspects of learning. The school even received lots of certificates of appreciation for helping certain charities. This was exciting for us as these fundraising efforts were organised by us, the students.

We also had fun holding a school talent quest where everyone was able to participate and enjoy themselves. Our school carnivals have been a great success with everyone participating and having fun, and some students reaching very high levels in their particular sporting events.

Overall this year has been quite fun and we have all enjoyed ourselves.





2. School Profile

2.1 Introduction

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School Waitara is a Kindergarten to Year 6 primary school located in the Broken Bay Diocese on Sydney's North Shore.

The school was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1898. In 1991, the school was re-located from the Pacific Highway to the new Parish site in Yardley Avenue. Students are primarily drawn from the parishes of Waitara and Our Lady Queen of Peace, Normanhurst.

The school enjoys a positive profile in the community with a reputation for excellence in learning and teaching and a strong focus on pastoral care.

2007 was an exciting year for our school with new leadership and the school's participation in the School Review Process.

2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2007:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
208	173	175	0	381

*Language background other than English

2.3 Enrolment Policy

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

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

The Diocesan Enrolment Policy has been implemented by the school's enrolment committee, consisting of the Principal, parish priest and parishioners.

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

2.4 Staff Profile

The school's leadership team consists of the Principal, Assistant Principal, the Religious

Education Co-ordinator and Co-ordinators with special responsibility in assessment and reporting, student welfare and information communication and learning technologies.

Five non-teaching staff are employed at the school.

The NSW government requires that this report details the number of teachers who:

- 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
18	0	1	19

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2007 was 94.9%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2006 to 2007 was 100%.



At the beginning of 2007 we welcomed a new principal to OLOR, and during the year we also welcomed a new classroom teacher as one staff member moved into a new career. At the end of the year we farewelled some teachers moving intrastate as well as the REC who moved into another position within the diocese. The Assistant Principal also moved on to a new leadership opportunity within a nearby diocese.

2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers were surveyed as part of the School Review Process early in the year, and were interviewed or completed feedback forms after significant professional learning.

All teachers valued highly the school-based professional learning opportunities offered this year in quality teaching, numeracy and literacy. The highlight for most teachers was the focus on addressing needs identified by last year's BST data. Several teachers expressed a desire for a similar opportunity next year, although they would prefer it to begin early in Term 1.

2.7 Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate at for 2007 was 94.9%. Most absences occurred in Term 3 with several families taking extended leave in addition to the increased sickness rate.

2.8 Student Satisfaction

Children were surveyed as part of the School Review Process and overall children felt safe and happy at school. A high majority of students acknowledged that their teachers knew them well and treated them fairly.

Homework was an area where many students suggested some desire for change. Approximately a quarter of children commented there was too much homework considering the number of their other after-school commitments. Homework is an area staff are keen to explore together in 2008.



3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

The school has a long and rich story of Catholic education, with a strong Mercy tradition emphasising justice, inclusion, care and respect for those in need. Cardinal Moran opened Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School, Waitara on 5th February 1898. The school was established by the Sisters of Mercy and was staffed by them until 1979. This year, as part of the first staff development day the heritage of OLOR was revisited and discussed.

The school is strongly committed to creating a community in which all members experience a sense of welcome and belonging based on genuine Christian hospitality. The stone walls of both the Church and school buildings are important symbols for both the school and Parish community as 'living stones making a spiritual house' (1 Peter 2: 4-9). The school and the parish continue the tradition of working together with parents to form children as living stones making up the spiritual building which is the community of the Church.

At Our Lady of the Rosary, each member of the community is considered a learner, and a commitment to lifelong learning is fostered within the context of a lived experience of our faith. In particular, the school aims to live out the Gospel values of respect, the dignity of each individual, inclusion and justice, in the relationships between the members of the community.

Highlights of the Year

Whole school masses and class liturgies were held to mark significant liturgical celebrations such as the Holy Week liturgy, the Advent liturgy and the Grandparents' liturgy. Class masses and liturgies were also held to celebrate the children's learning. The school hosted the Year 6 cluster mass in March.

3.2 Liturgical Life

Prayer is a very important and regular part of every day for the children and staff.

Children engage in a variety of prayer experiences and there is dedicated time each week for staff prayer which is always well attended.

Children have opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the year. They participate in whole school celebrations of Eucharist on various feast days and significant days in the life of the school. Teachers work together in Mass Teams, to plan these liturgies which usually occur twice each term.

It is a tradition in the school that primary classes celebrate a yearly class Mass which parents and families attend and at which the parish priest presides. Each year the children in the infant grades celebrate the Liturgy of the Word in their classrooms led by one of the priests of the parish. This year we introduced a Year 6 Parish family mass on a Sunday, and aim to expand this to other grades in 2008.

Children are also involved throughout the year in planning and participating in liturgies to mark important civil events, such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day. This is the role of the Year 6 Civics Team.

Social justice issues which have been a focus of learning and discussion, such as project Compassion, Harmony Day, International Peace Day and Catholic Mission are also celebrated. The Year Six Liturgy and Social Justice teams attend the annual diocesan Mission Mass this year.

The Year 6 Liturgy Leadership Team and the Social Justice Team play a significant role in preparing liturgies under the guidance of the Religious Education Coordinator and social justice co-ordinators.

3.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese

The school is an integral part of the life of the Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary and also serves the Parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Normanhurst. The school values the strong connections it has with both of these parishes. All whole school Masses are Our Lady of the Rosary Parish Masses, and are



advertised in the Parish Bulletin. They provide a significant opportunity for the children to join with members of the wider parish to celebrate the Eucharist.

School facilities, including classrooms, the library and the staffroom, as well as the parish hall, are used regularly throughout the year by the Our Lady of the Rosary parish for a variety of functions, including sacramental preparation, Parish Youth Group meetings and parish social functions. The school is also used every weekend for devotions and meetings of the Korean community and, on occasions, as a venue for meetings held by the Catholic Schools Office.

The school shares resources for the sacramental programs with the parish. Members of the Parish Sacramental Team are able to borrow any resources that are needed to support the programs.

The school's yearly plan for teaching Religious Education has been organised so that units of work focusing on the Sacraments coincide with the Parish Sacramental Programs. A high value is placed upon members of staff attending the liturgies at which children first receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist in both parishes. In 2007, the school continued its tradition of participating in the *Seasons for Growth* program provided by the Parish.

Children from Our Lady of the Rosary participated in a number of Diocesan liturgies and events in 2007, including the Year 6 North Shore Cluster Mass and the annual Diocesan Mission Mass.

3.4 Religious Education Curriculum

2007 saw the continued implementation of the new Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum which was formally launched in 2006.

The curriculum has three components:

- the Foundations section which explores the context of religious education and the call to Catholic discipleship
- the Syllabus
- the Modules, which are resource packages, assisting teachers in the development of units of work.

During 2007, teaching programs were developed, based on the new curriculum. Consistent with other subjects within the curriculum, the program is outcomes-based and seeks to ensure a breadth and depth of coverage of content over the thirteen years of schooling. Classroom displays, class liturgies and CEnet class pages reflected the units of work that were the focus in each classroom.

In 2007, staff members were released from class to work with an Education Officer-Mission Services from the Catholic Schools Office. Religious Education teaching and learning also began to be guided by the Quality Teaching Framework.

The use of CEnet class pages to display work and as a resource for both teachers and children was developed. A CEnet RE Resource Page was established by the Religious Education Coordinator to support teachers.

3.5 Catholic Worldview

Education is about a search for meaning and purpose in life, and Catholic educators in a Catholic school have an all-embracing worldview. As disciples of Jesus, our Catholic worldview permeates all aspects of school life and learning including all key learning areas. It is in the context of this Catholic worldview that we teach our children. Our school's Mission Statement states: 'At Our Lady of the Rosary, our Catholic worldview informs the way that we live, learn and teach. We believe that God's love for each of us is central to our relationships'.

As disciples of Jesus there is an affective, relational and action-oriented dimension that underpins the holistic and integrated nature of Catholic education and which both



challenges and invites a personal action response by each person.

Student Action

Students in the Year 6 Social Justice Team and on the Student Representative Council, organised and facilitated a number of initiatives under the guidance of the school's Social Justice Co-ordinator. These included whole school liturgies and raising awareness of the issues underlining events such as International Peace Day and Harmony Day.

Students held a Peruvian craft stall to raise money for the women and children of Candela in Peru after a visit by the spokesperson for this organisation. This Candela venture is close to the heart of the Our Lady of the Rosary community as it is an initiative of the Monte Mercy Sisters, the Our Lady of the Rosary School founders.

3.6 Parent Participation in Catholic Life and Mission

In 2007, the school's goal was to continue to provide opportunities for parents to be fully aware of what their children were learning in Religious Education. Each grade sent out a curriculum newsletter each term outlining the topics that would be covered and the outcomes that would be addressed in Religious Education. The parent page on CEnet is also a valuable source of information for parents. Parents took the opportunity in 2007 to prepare parish liturgies including the Year 6 mass.

3.7 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.

Most teachers are accredited to teach Religious Education and those who are not have applied for accreditation. The school's Religious Education Coordinator has accepted a scholarship from the Broken Bay Institute and is undertaking a Masters Degree in Theological Studies.

A staff spirituality day was held and addressed one of the modules planned by the diocese. The module was the Church.

The Religious Education Coordinator attended all cluster and Religious Education days including the Religious Education Conference.

All staff worked for a half day with an Education Officer from the Mission Services team to plan a unit using the diocesan modules as a resource and the Quality Teaching Framework as a guide.

Two teachers were also involved with the diocesan Social Justice Network, which met several times throughout the year.

Four staff members including the Principal participated in the diocesan Ministry for Teachers course and two teachers were involved in the Ministry for Teachers II course. These week-long courses are offered by the Diocese to support the formation of teachers and are highly valued by staff.





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 Catholic Schools Office.

4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

Our Lady of the Rosary's whole school approach to pastoral care and discipline is set within the context of its Christian vision. This vision has as its focus the life of Jesus Christ, and is therefore concerned with the dignity and integral growth of each person. Families and teachers at Our Lady of the Rosary work together to provide a supportive environment characterized by trust, co-operation and respect. The school's Pastoral Care Policy takes its place within the total framework for quality teaching and learning at Our Lady of the Rosary.

The responsibility for developing a whole school approach to pastoral care and discipline is shared with members of the community. The Pastoral Care Team critically reviewed and developed a new Pastoral Care Policy, which was shared with the staff at the beginning of this year. The parent community also had the opportunity to evaluate and give feedback on the policy. The Pastoral Care Team received tremendous praise for the quality of the policy from both the parent body and the Diocesan Review Panel.

The school is committed to providing high quality and ongoing professional learning opportunities to teachers to support the implementation of the policy. In 2007 three more staff members attended the Basic Intensive Training Week in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Both formal and informal support structures exist for families within the Our Lady of the Rosary community. The counsellor for the

North Shore cluster of schools in the diocese is available to support children and families.

The Class Parent Network provides practical support for families in circumstances such as bereavement or the birth of a new baby. For example, the Class Parent Network co-ordinates a 'support pantry' which provides meals for families who need this support from time to time. Class teachers, the Assistant Principal and the Principal all work closely with parents during the year to provide whatever support is required in relation to the children of these families. Where necessary, parents are referred to other outside agencies such as Centacare.

4.4 2007 Initiatives

The launch of the Pastoral Care Policy has allowed the staff to review and reflect on current practices and improvements in this area. Our Lady of the Rosary now has:

- agreed responsibilities for staff, parents and students regarding bullying
- a common language through our 'Cooperates' acronym:
 - Care and Compassion
 - Openness
 - Optimism
 - Participation with eyes, ears and hearts
 - Encouragement of others
 - Respect for self and others
 - Appreciation of others
 - Trust and Teamwork
 - Excellence
 - Safety.

These principles have been made into posters, which can be seen in classrooms and around the school. The Pastoral Care Team has also developed a rubric related to these principles, which will be explicitly taught to the children next year.

- a Safe School (Anti-Bullying) Policy and a Safe School Action Policy



KidSpace was a new lunchtime initiative introduced in 2007, where students in a pastoral care leadership team modeled specific social skills and cooperative play strategies to other children in a classroom during lunchtimes.

Also during the year our Visual Arts teacher began working with a small group of students who teachers thought would benefit from some extra attention in a type of art therapy. This special session was run once each week, and proved very valuable for these students.

As part of our Diocesan Review Process this year the staff, children and parents were asked to review and reflect upon the strategies we use in providing a safe and supportive environment, through a variety of surveying strategies. The data collated from these surveys will guide the school community in future planning and implementing regarding pastoral care.

4.5 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.



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Curriculum Overview

The curriculum for Primary school is mandated and there are six Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Human Society in its Environment
- Science and Technology
- Creative and Practical Arts and
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

As a Catholic primary school, Our Lady of the Rosary also includes Religious Education as an additional Key Learning Area.

In 2007, all children in Years K to 6 also experienced:

- a weekly forty-five minute specialist Physical Education lesson
- a fortnightly one hour Visual Arts lesson
- a fortnightly Music lesson for thirty minutes with specialist teachers.

The learning support team, which in 2007 consisted of a learning support teacher and two teacher assistants, supported children with specific learning difficulties and special needs to be integrated into their classes. The school takes a team approach to supporting these children, and so the learning support team worked closely with classroom teachers to provide in-class support to the children wherever possible. Individual student needs were determined by ongoing assessment and monitoring of progress, and through consultation with parents. At least twice during the year, the parents of children with special needs were invited to attend a meeting with the classroom teacher and the learning support teacher. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the needs of their children and to set goals for the future which form the basis of the individual education plan for that student.

In 2007 reading recovery was again part of Our Lady of the Rosary's whole school literacy strategy. The program provides an opportunity for additional support for children in Year 1 who require assistance in literacy. The reading recovery teacher this year worked with three children per day for the first six months. She taught each child on a one-to-one basis for 30 minutes each day and worked in close consultation with the teachers of those Year 1 students.

5.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning

Helping all children become better readers, better writers, better mathematicians and smarter thinkers is an ongoing goal for the teachers at Our Lady of the Rosary. The Catholic worldview is the basis of this learning. Making a positive difference in the lives of others is an important part of Catholic discipleship. The school aims to support the process of personal transformation through learning which is engaging, relevant and focused on meeting the individual needs of students. The school combines modern and creative approaches to teaching with traditional values such as respect, responsibility and co-operation to educate students for the demands of living in a community in the 21st Century. Our Lady of the Rosary's whole school approach to learning and teaching is marked by explicit teaching of:

- the social skills necessary for successful teamwork and co-operation
- the use of technologies to enrich learning
- the application to teaching of insights from research on how the brain works.

Quality teaching and learning continues to be our focus at Our Lady of the Rosary. During 2007, staff had the opportunity to work closely with a visiting educator from the University of Newcastle to better understand the Quality Teaching Framework. After an initial introduction to the framework, staff met in stage teams to plan units and assessment tasks with the support of the university expert.



In 2007, Our Lady of the Rosary also utilised the diocesan online reporting system. To help with consistency of teacher judgement, all classroom teachers met in grade, stage and across stage teams to analyse work samples in line with the new A-E reporting requirements, as well as attending diocesan support sessions after school.

5.3 Significant Initiatives

In 2007 Our Lady of the Rosary was successful in gaining a grant for a diocesan language project. This meant we were fortunate to be able to have the support of two speech pathologists who worked closely with the school in a special language project.

These speech pathologists worked with children in small groups on specific needs-based activities. They also communicated regularly with the teachers of these children. A parent session was also held toward the end of the year for all interested parents about language acquisition of young children in particular. This session was well attended.

Also in 2007, we were able to increase our support for children for whom English is a second language. Two teachers were subsequently able to work alongside teachers in classroom to help ESL students further develop and refine their oral language skills in particular.

Focus on Grammar

Staff continued their focus on improving students' skills in writing by spending several staff meeting times working with a consultant on current best practice in the teaching of grammar. In addition to this, four staff attended a series of four diocesan grammar workshops after school.

Throughout 2007, all classroom teachers had the opportunity to work with an external numeracy consultant. The consultant's focus was on using the results from Basic Skills Tests to analyse strengths and areas for development for groups of children and for individual students at risk. Students met with the consultant regularly throughout the

year and together planned for how best to meet the identified needs of the learners.

5.4 Student Achievement

The 2007 Basic Skills Test results continue to show the trend of decreasing the number of children in Bands 1 and 2 (the lowest bands) and conversely the trend of increasing the number of children in the highest bands. This trend was particularly evident for our Year 5 students.

This year there was a distinct improvement in the learning gains of our students from Year 3 to Year 5. This reflects the school's continued focus on improving learning outcomes for all our students.

Literacy

Literacy, embracing critical and information literacy, continues to be a major focus at Our Lady of the Rosary with a daily two hour literacy block across the grades.

In **Year 3**, 2007 there were 58 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 3 who achieved each band at the school and also in the state.

	School	State
Band 5	43	19
Band 4	36	28
Band 3	14	26
Band 2	5	15
Band 1	2	11

69% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 47% across the state (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 3 student performance in literacy (reading and language) to statewide performance. Since 2002, the average scaled score for Our Lady of the Rosary has remained consistently above the state scaled score.



Year	School	State
2001	56.7	50.6
2002	55.0	50.6
2003	57.1	50.6
2004	54.8	50.5
2005	55.7	50.8
2006	55.8	50.7
2007	55.9	51.2

In **Year 5**, 2007 there were 39 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 5 who achieved each band at both the school and also in the state.

	School	State
Band 6	46	27
Band 5	31	26
Band 4	23	26
Band 3	0	14
Band 2	0	5
Band 1	0	1

77% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 53% across the state (Bands 5 and 6).

The following table compares Year 5 student performance in writing, reading, language and literacy, to statewide performance. Since 2002, the average scaled score for Our Lady of the Rosary has remained consistently above the state scaled score.

Year	School	State
2001	59.4	57.1
2002	61.1	57.8
2003	63.1	57.5
2004	60.2	57.4
2005	60.6	57.0
2006	59.6	57.3
2007	62.3	57.5

Writing

In **Year 3**, 2007 there were 58 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table

below shows the percentage of students in Year 3 who achieved each band at the school and also in the state.

	School	State
Band 5	22	16
Band 4	41	32
Band 3	21	32
Band 2	14	12
Band 1	2	8

63% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 48% across the state (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 3 student performance in writing to statewide performance. Since 2002 the average scaled score for Our Lady of the Rosary has remained consistently above the state scaled score.

Year	School	State
2001	51.6	49.0
2002	56.1	51.5
2003	55.2	51.1
2004	54.1	51.2
2005	53.5	50.1
2006	56.1	50.2
2007	53.1	50.8

In **Year 5**, 2007 there were 39 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 5 who achieved each band at both the school and also in the state.

	School	State
Band 6	38	23
Band 5	33	32
Band 4	26	28
Band 3	0	12
Band 2	3	2
Band 1	0	0



71% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 53% across the state (Bands 5 and 6).

The following table compares Year 5 student performance in writing to statewide performance. Since 2002, the average scaled score for Our Lady of the Rosary was well above state average.

Year	School	State
2001	58.1	56.3
2002	61.3	57.1
2003	60.0	56.4
2004	60.0	56.6
2005	59.3	56.2
2006	59.6	56.7
2007	60.8	57.2

Numeracy

The school believes that numeracy is the integrated use of mathematics across the curriculum and embraces the skills of analysis, thinking and the ability to communicate ideas by posing, formulating, solving and evaluating problems.

In **Year 3**, 2007 there were 58 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 3 who achieved each band at the school and also in the state.

	School	State
Band 5	22	19
Band 4	40	27
Band 3	21	26
Band 2	16	20
Band 1	2	9

62% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 46% across the state (Bands 4 and 5).

The following table compares Year 3 student performance in literacy (reading and language) to statewide performance. Since 2002, the average scaled score for Our Lady

of the Rosary has increased relative to the statewide score since 2004.

Year	School	State
2001	57.4	52.4
2002	56.4	53.0
2003	61.3	52.8
2004	55.2	52.3
2005	58.2	53.6
2006	60.3	53.3
2007	56.0	53.1

In **Year 5**, 2007 there were 39 students who sat for the Basic Skills test (BST). The table below shows the percentage of students in Year 5 who achieved each band at both the school and also in the state.

	School	State
Band 6	33	33
Band 5	38	22
Band 4	23	24
Band 3	5	15
Band 2	0	6
Band 1	0	1

71% of our students achieved the top two bands compared to 54% across the state (Bands 5 and 6).

The following table compares Year 5 student performance in numeracy to statewide performance. Since 2002, the average scaled score for Our Lady of the Rosary has remained above the statewide average.

Year	School	State
2001	62.1	60.3
2002	63.0	60.2
2003	64.6	60.0
2004	62.7	60.7
2005	63.7	60.4
2006	64.8	61.5
2007	64.5	61.9



Reporting Value-Added (Learning Gain)

The scores in the table below indicate the **average growth** achieved by students who sat for the BST in 2005 as Year 3 students and again in 2007 as Year 5 students, in literacy (reading and language), writing and numeracy at Our Lady of the Rosary and for the same cohort of students in the state. The expected growth in BST scores is between 6-7 points.

The following table indicates that this cohort of students demonstrated the expected growth in all areas.

Average Growth achieved by students who sat for the BST in 2005 as Year 3 students and again in 2007 as Year 5 students.

2007	School	State
Literacy (Reading and Language)	8.0	6.81
Writing	7.7	7.17
Numeracy	7.6	8.45

The Commonwealth Government has developed national benchmarks that describe the minimum acceptable standards for Year 3 and 5 students for reading, writing and numeracy.

The following two tables outline the percentage of students in Year 3 and Year 5 who have surpassed the national benchmarks since the school has had access to this data.

Percentage of Students in Year 3 who have surpassed the National Benchmarks since the school has had access to this data.

	Reading %	Writing %	Numeracy %
2004	95	n/a	98
2005	100	96	100
2006	98	100	98
2007	100	98	98

Percentage of Students in Year 5 who have surpassed the National Benchmarks since the school has had access to this data.

	Reading %	Writing %	Numeracy %
2004	98	n/a	98
2005	98	98	100
2006	93	98	97
2007	100	97	100

Reporting on Targets for 2007

Our achievements as identified in the Basic Skills Data are as follows:

In numeracy:

- We appreciably increased the percentage of students who made significant learning gains between Year 3 and Year 5 as measured by the BST in numeracy.
- We appreciably increased the percentage of students achieving in the two highest bands in Year 3 numeracy.

In literacy:

- A focus on grammar, both professionally for staff, and in the classroom for children, resulted in more children exhibiting greater language skills in both Year 3 and Year 5.
- In Year 5, a greater proportion of our students scored in the top two bands for spelling in the writing component of the BST.
- We appreciably increased the percentage of students who made significant learning gains between Year 3 and Year 5 as measured by the BST in literacy and writing.
- We appreciably increased the percentage of students achieving in the two highest bands in Year 5 literacy.
- We saw continued improvement in student achievement in the spelling component of the BST in literacy.
- We saw improvement in student achievement in the reading and punctuation component of the BST in literacy.

External Competitions

In 2007, students in Years 3 to 6 were offered the opportunity to participate in the University of New South Wales English, Mathematics, Computers, Writing, Spelling and Science Competitions.

In English, 65 students participated and 3 students achieved high distinctions, 9 achieved distinctions and 15 achieved credits.



In Mathematics, 75 students participated and 1 student achieved a high distinction, 6 achieved distinctions and 19 achieved credits.

In Computers, 37 students participated and 2 students achieved a high distinction (1 receiving the State Medal), 6 achieved distinctions and 9 achieved credits.

In Writing, 35 students participated and 3 students achieved high distinctions, 11 achieved distinctions and 11 achieved credits.

In Spelling, 54 students participated and 1 student achieved a high distinction, 4 achieved distinctions and 12 achieved credits.

In Science, 39 students participated and 1 student achieved a high distinction, 3 achieved distinctions and 6 achieved credits.

5.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

In line with the school technology plan, in 2007 the school purchased another laptop trolley with ten new laptops for the infants classes. We were also successful in winning another two laptops and other technology equipment in the *Westfield Shop For Your School Campaign*.

All classes utilised the wireless internet throughout the school.

In 2007 OLOR was a pilot school for the new diocesan infrastructure, which was rolled out to the school late in the year. This new system provides a greater bandwidth and remote access for staff to documents and applications held on the school server. This rollout necessitated the purchase of six new machines to replace PCs which were too old to meet the new requirements, and a re-imaging of all machines to ensure they all run the same versions of software.

The ICLT facilitator attended the Navcon2k7 conference held on the Central Coast which included internationally renowned speakers and a variety of presentations highlighting the possibilities of different technologies in the classroom.

Two other teachers also attended a Saturday workshop on podcasting technologies which they took back to school, and began implementing the ideas with students in Years 4, 5 and 6.

The Year 6 Technology Team continued producing DVDs of grade assemblies for parents, which has made it possible to capture and share these special occasions with family members. On average, about 40 families in each grade asked for copies of these DVDs.

At Our Lady of the Rosary, students use CEnet to communicate and access their learning both at school and at home. Teachers continued to use CEnet as a means of improving communication within the school and between home and school, and have been working on the goal of updating each grade's class page at least once a week. The school also uses CEnet to disseminate information to parents. The Parent Page on CEnet continued to grow with contributions from the P&F. Feedback from parents show that this page is more regularly accessed, especially to read the weekly Our Lady of the Rosary Newsletter. Due to the great efforts of the Physical Education Specialist teacher, parents also regularly accessed the sports page, which listed details and photos of representative teams as well as the criteria from which teams were selected.

5.6 Professional Learning

Active engagement in a wide variety of professional learning activities was again a feature of the professional life of Our Lady of the Rosary staff. All members of staff are committed to continuously improving their teaching and do this by attending regular staff meetings, meeting to reflect together, and attending professional development courses or conferences outside of the school that will benefit the whole community. These often take place during school holidays, on weekends or after school and are well attended by staff.

In 2007, two staff members attended the Pedagogy in Practice Conference in January



organised by the University of Newcastle focusing on quality teaching. This learning was shared with staff early in the year, and continued when a university representative came and worked with staff at school. The Quality Teaching Framework has helped staff to develop a shared language with which they can discuss quality teaching and learning, and use when planning inquiry units and assessment tasks.

Three staff members attended either one or two days at the Kagan Co-operative Learning conference in Sydney during the Easter holidays. One staff member attended the Critical Capital Conference of the Australian Literacy Educators' Association in Canberra during the July holidays. At this time the Principal also attended the Principals' Conference in Hobart. Both the Principal and the Assistant Principal also attended the Australian Council for Educational Leaders' Conference at Darling Harbour in the October holidays.

Three staff members attended the four-day basic week in Choice Theory and Reality Therapy and Lead Management.

Four staff members attended the weeklong Ministry for Teachers I course, and two others attended the Ministry for Teachers II course with the Bishop. These teachers were very positive about their experiences.

The REC is in the process of completing her Masters in Theological Studies, whilst two other staff members are undertaking courses with the Broken Bay Institute.

All classroom teachers attended after school reporting inservices offered by the diocese to ensure consistency of A-E grading across schools.

Two staff members attended a day's inservice on Boys' Education, following up with specific strategies with their own classes.

This year two members of staff have been trained as literacy and numeracy facilitators. This has involved attendance at a number of professional learning days run by the diocese, and working in the school to best

support teachers with emerging numeracy and literacy needs.

In addition six teachers attended after school literacy inservices at various locations around Sydney aimed at better meeting the needs of students in their care.

The average expenditure on professional learning per teacher in 2007 was \$2,320.



6. Extracurricular Program

Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School is committed to offering a variety of opportunities to cater for children's needs and interests.

Sport

Spirit-filled sporting carnivals were enjoyed by the school in 2007. These carnivals allowed for children to be selected for the North Shore Schools' Cluster level carnivals. 60 students attended the North Shore Cluster Cross Country Carnival and for the third year in a row, Our Lady of the Rosary won the carnival. The school had a representative team of 26 students who went on to participate at diocesan level.

Sport is a significant part of life at Our Lady of the Rosary, and children had the opportunity to be involved in a variety of opportunities such as the gala days in basketball and soccer, as well as the League Tag Gala Day and several cricketing competitions. For the third consecutive time, Our Lady of the Rosary won the North Shore Cluster Athletics Carnival. Our Lady of the Rosary was well represented at Diocesan and Polding (inter-Diocesan) level this year in swimming, athletics, and cross country carnivals as well as individual sports.

Creative Arts

This year a highlight of the school year was the OLOR Art Show. This was officially opened on the Friday evening before our Spring Fair and continued throughout the weekend. It was a wonderful opportunity for parents and friends to celebrate the artistic talents of our students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Parents were able to purchase their own children's artwork as well as bid on the grade artworks.

The children's special grade assemblies have been another opportunity for them to showcase their talents in drama, music and dance and have been of a very high standard.

Music Groups

2007 saw the school band and choir performing at various community and school

functions and liturgies. This year, the school choir also attended the Northern Beaches Eisteddfod, where they performed admirably. The school band performed at significant occasions on our school calendar, such as the Father's Day Breakfast, Healing Mass luncheon and our Open Day. Their performances were always very well received by the community.

Private Music Lessons

A significant number of students once again took the opportunity in 2007 to work with music tutors at Our Lady of the Rosary, who provide private lessons in violin and lessons in the various band instruments as part of the school band programme.

Extracurricular Activities

Children at Our Lady of the Rosary had the opportunity to participate in many extracurricular events and activities including:

- the Year 6 Diocesan Public Speaking Competition
- an inter-school chess competition
- the Maths Olympiad
- *Rock and Water* program
- *Active After School* program
- taekwondo
- yoga which a significant number of girls took up the option of learning in the second half of the year, with a private tutor who teaches the children once per week in the school hall.





7. Strategic Initiatives

7.1 2007 Priorities and Achievements

The newly written Pastoral Care Policy was launched to the whole school community early in 2007. Feedback from parents at this launch was very positive.

In Term 3, 2007, the staff of Our Lady of the Rosary participated in Tier 2 of the School Review process. Preparing for the two day event engaged all staff, students and the parent body in reflection on the past and planning for the future.

During 2007 a continued emphasis was placed on embedding information, communication and learning technologies (ICLT) as a tool for powerful learning. Our focus was on skilling teachers in the use of appropriate software to facilitate the students' development of 'podcasts'. Year 6 was able to produce a number of highly effective products.

Focused development of teaching and assessing Mathematics occurred throughout 2007, with the support of an external consultant. The professional development undertaken in spelling during 2006 was continued as a whole school approach to the teaching of spelling in 2007.

In 2007, staff worked together to learn more about best practice in learning and teaching grammar, as this was an identified area of need from Basic Skills Test results.

OLOR continued its focus in 2007 on Healthy Communities by running three separate *Active After School* programs for students. Three members of staff and a trained parent representative organised and ran this program three days each week.

One teacher also facilitated two separate *Rock and Water* programs for boys this year, extending the opportunity to some of our younger Year 2 students. These were very well attended by the boys with the aim of developing self-control, self-confidence, self-awareness and self-reflection. The program received very positive feedback from the students, with significant growth in pre- and post-program survey data for all students.

7.2 2008 Priorities and Challenges

In line with recommendations from the School Review Process, 2008 will see the first year of OLOR's new Strategic Plan. Some major priorities will be working toward achieving consistency of practice across K-6 in literacy and numeracy.

Engaging learners is critical for quality learning. In particular, in 2008 Our Lady of the Rosary will focus on developing strategies and implementing initiatives designed to deepen the level of engagement of all students in learning experiences, particularly boys. Some professional development was undertaken in the Quality Teaching Framework with all staff in 2007. This will be extended in 2008 with significant shared learning experiences.

In the area of ICLT our focus will be on skilling all teachers in the use of appropriate software to facilitate the students' development of 'podcasts' and movies.



8. Parent Participation

8.1 Introduction

Parents are actively involved in the life of Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School in many ways, including helping in the classroom and on excursions, coaching and supporting sport teams, helping in the canteen and on the various P&F committees.

Building community is a major focus of the P&F. Functions organised by the Social Committee included the two children's discos which were well supported by both the children and by the parent supervisors, and the annual Mother's Day Morning Tea and Father's Day Breakfast which once again were successful and significant events on the whole school calendar.

The major fundraising and social event was the Our Lady of the Rosary Spring Fair combined with the Melbourne Cup Trifecta Raffle, the funds from which went to continuing the P&F's commitment to supporting the air conditioning of classrooms. Through the generous support of P&F fundraising initiatives, the only rooms that remain to be air conditioned are the Years 3 and 4 classrooms.

One of the major goals of our previous Strategic Plan was to increase the opportunities for dads, and other significant men in the lives of the students, to participate more fully in the life of the school. This year the Men at School program, co-ordinated by a team of parents, has again been very successful in doing that. As part of the Men at School program, the Men in the Morning initiative provided the students with opportunities to be involved in a wide range of activities with dads and sometimes granddads before school twice per term. The Blokes and Buddies Barbecue at the beginning of the year for Year 5 children, their Kindergarten buddies and their dads, was a great success and also welcomed new dads and granddads to the school community. A number of dads was also able to stay after the annual Father's Day Breakfast to visit their children's classes to read or tell stories to the children. It

provided the children with a valuable opportunity to see that dads value reading, which is so important to all children, but especially our boys. Also popular was the Year 3 and Dads overnight camp at Challenge Ranch in Somersby.

Educational get-togethers for parents were well attended in 2007. Our Early Literacy course was well attended with about 30 regular attendees, including some of our dads. The evening for parents on personal development for children in Years 4, 5 and 6 was also reasonably well attended. A number of parents also took up the opportunity to come along to listen to a speech therapist talk about early language acquisition.

8.2 Parent Satisfaction

Parents were surveyed as part of the School Review Process. In addition, parents were invited to attend forums with panel members.

Notable comments were the appreciation by the parent body for the dedicated staff at OLOR, and the follow up with any issues brought to staff attention. Most parents agreed that communication was a positive feature of the school, although parents requested earlier notification of events so they could plan to attend. School liturgies were also noted as a highlight for many parents.





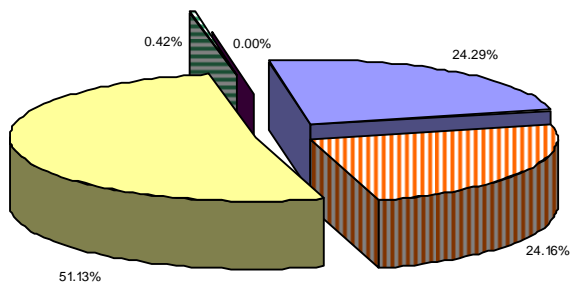
9. Financial Report

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report.

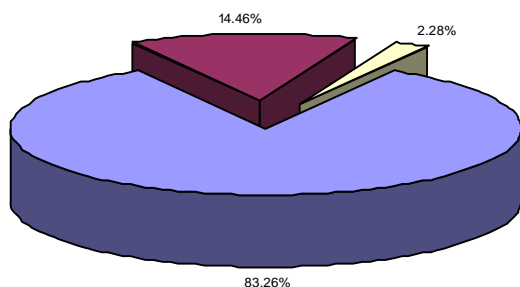
Income

- Fees and Other Private Income
- State Government Funds
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants
- Government Capital Grants
- Other Capital Income



Expenditure

- Salaries, Allowances and Related Costs
- Non salary Expenses
- Capital Expenditure



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