

**ST. MARY'S HELP OF CHRISTIANS
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
ALTONA**

A CARING CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN EDUCATION



**2008
Annual Report to the
School Community
Registered School Number: 1273**

School Contact Information

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Our School Vision

VISION STATEMENT

St. Mary's Primary School,
Altona
is a welcoming and
supportive
Catholic Community.

We value and celebrate our
faith, diversity,
individuality and promote
life-long learning.

We proclaim the presence of
Jesus Christ in
all people.

School Overview

St. Mary's School and Parish Community is an integral part of the wider community of Altona, having been established as a parish in 1942, when it separated from the Parish of Williamstown. St. Mary's School has been in existence since 1928, when the Josephite Sisters commenced the first Catholic school in the area, although classes were not conducted on the present day site. Construction of the school on the present site began in 1950.

Currently we have an enrolment of 269 children. The many cultural groups which make up our school community come from parts of Europe with a growing representation from the Asia Pacific region.

St. Mary's school offers a comprehensive curriculum incorporating all aspects of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards Framework. A very successful early literacy program is the cornerstone of our strategy to ensure that all students experience success in their learning. A new numeracy initiative will ensure a similar approach to the teaching of mathematics. Intervention programs are additional supports for children who do not make the gains that are expected of them. An Inquiry Learning Approach is fundamental to our Integrated Curriculum. An Instrumental Music Program, specialist music and art teachers ensure that the Arts are a prominent feature in our school. We are committed to improving the physical well-being of all of our students. We have a specialist physical education/sport teacher. St. Mary's is an active participant in the WADSSA Inter-School Sport competition as well as conducting regular fitness sessions.

Student Wellbeing is a major priority at St. Mary's. Caring for children is an integral part of our culture.

The school promotes a strong leadership program involving students and parents in decision and policy making in the school. The student leadership positions include: Junior School Council, House and School Captains, Peer Mediators and Sports Captains.

Parent involvement is also highly valued at St. Mary's. We see the partnership between parents and the school as fundamental to our success. Parents may choose to become involved at many different levels, the School Education Board, which assists the Principal and Parish priest to develop policy initiatives, the Parents and Friends Association, which assists in fundraising and social activities, a Parent Helpers Program for quality support in classrooms, tuckshop duties, school library helpers sports coaching and umpiring, resource making are just a few of the ways in which parents are invited to assist in the life of the school.

In conclusion I would like to acknowledge how very fortunate we are at St. Mary's to have such a professional, caring, child focused staff. They strive meticulously to give each and every child under their care the highest quality education that is humanly possible. Their willingness to be involved in professional development whether it be at Staff Meetings, School Closure Days, after hours or school holidays is testament to their desire for excellence in all that they do. There are many, many demands on our teachers today and these seem to be increasing everyday. Somehow the staff here cope with this and are still able to concentrate on their core role which is delivering quality education to every individual entrusted to their care.

Principal's Report

At St. Mary's we value each child as a unique gift from God, something to cherish, to love and to respect. We hope that each child who enters St. Mary's experiences a unique education, one filled with great adventures in learning, and one where Jesus Christ is the centre of all we do and all we are.

One of our key decisions during 2008 was to become involved in the Contemporary Teaching and Learning of Mathematics Project. This involvement by five key personnel within the school was the precursor to all teaching staff being involved in 2009 and 2010.

Curriculum wise we continued with our professional development on Inquiry Learning as well as a team of teachers being involved in a Personalised Learning Project. The insights and learnings from this were then communicated to all staff through regular staff meetings

Our classroom programs were supported and enriched by a number of excursions and incursions which occur every year e.g. Bully Busters play, Tri-Skills Gymnastics, Camp Quality Puppets, to name a few.

We continued to improve the number and reliability of the computers in the school. There are now four in every classroom with a bank of 5 in both the senior and middle buildings.

Our Social Skills Program "You Can Do It" was given a lift with Margaret Milne from You Can Do It Education Unit conducting a professional development day for the whole staff on one of our School Closure Days.

A Student Action Team was created to look into the Health and Fitness of the children at our school and a number of initiatives resulted either directly or indirectly from their research and report e.g. Walk/Ride to School Days, Healthy Picnic Lunch, Running and Fitness Group and involvement in the Premiers Active Families Challenge.

We received a Kids Go For Your Life Award and a Healthy Eating Schools Award for our work in reviewing and updating our Tuckshop menu as well as promoting health and fitness around the school. A lot of insights and suggestions are communicated to parents through our monthly Health & Wellbeing Newsletter.

Our Grounds Beautification program was successfully completed thanks to the financial support of the Parents & Friends Association, Mobil Refinery and Altona Ward Fund. This resulted in a significant upgrade of the front of the school and the creation of a number of new garden beds as well as an upgrade of some of the existing gardens around the school.

In October we instigated an addition to our existing Prep Transition program. We named it "Getting Ready To Go To School" and it involved twice weekly, twenty minute sessions over four weeks introducing some early Reading and Mathematical skills to the children enrolled for 2009. It was also another opportunity for these children to become familiar with our school. There were many positive comments from all involved and it is now an ongoing part of our Transition program.

A highlight of 2008 was the celebration of Fr. Clem Cafarella's Golden Jubilee (50 year) Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood. The school made a special presentation to Fr. Clem as a reflection at the conclusion of our Grandparents Open Day mass as well as joining in the major parish celebration of this wonderful achievement.

Education Board Report

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION BOARD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CHAIRPERSONS REPORT: JULY 2008 - MAY 2009

Serving on the St Mary's School Education Board allows members of the school community to share their skills and talents for the common good of the school.

It provides an insight into the detailed workings and management decisions that confront our Principal, Mr David Kelly, Parish Priest, Father Clem and the staff on a regular basis.

School Education Board participation is extremely rewarding, it provides each member with a direct voice to the school management group allowing members to participate in the day to day and strategic decision making that is required to successfully manage our school.

This year the School Board has operated with a reduced compliment of members however, I am sure each of the current and past members of this board has felt very satisfied in knowing that they are providing valuable assistance and knowledge to the management group.

Whilst it is recognised that we live and operate within a very busy day to day schedule the role of the School Board plays an integral component in the on going management of our school as it provides a high level of management accountability through the independence of its members. With this in mind I would encourage any interested parent to consider this most responsible position in the future.

Having highlighted the School Board's role and the rewards it offers, I table this report to the Annual General Meeting of 2009. It should be noted that the School Board discussed a broad array of topics throughout the reporting period ranging from mathematic strategies through multi age class structures to school attendance fees. In particular the following areas should be noted:

- **Contemporary Teaching and Learning in Mathematics (CTLM).** Involved a significant focus on staff professional development both on and off site. Mrs. Josie Kirby the school board representative and mathematics leader demonstrated a number of math activities that were to be introduced into the classroom.
- **Ground Beautification.** Discussions held ongoing over a number of meetings. The activity covered both the front and rear of the school and incorporated the installation of a further two water tanks. The school now has the capacity to store and reuse 90,000 litres of water.
- **Multi age class structure and curriculum.** Involved a parent information night presented by Ms. Kathy Walker an education consultant.
- **Outdoor education policy.** Involved the amending of current policy to address Year 3 and 4 components.
- **Attendance Fees.** Discussions centered on the collection rate of outstanding fees and set new fee structure for 2009.
- **Vision Statement.** Participate in review and development exercise regarding the

development of the new school vision statement.

- **Class sizes and enrolment programme.** Discussed class compositions and enrolment and transition programme for preps in 2010.
- **Web Site.** Discussions centered on site management and lack of a dedicated content manager. A number of options considered with a new format selected and now adopted.
- **Federal Governments “Building Education Revolution”.** The school has submitted two proposals under:
 - i) National School Pride programme, and
 - ii) Primary Schools for 21st Century.

Given the breadth and complexity of the areas addressed above one must acknowledge that the school does not manage itself. Management of this school is undertaken by a group of dedicated and enthusiastic professionals ably led by our Principal Mr. David Kelly. With this in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to formally recognize the efforts of David, Father Clem and both the teaching and administration staff for their contributions throughout the year.

In closing, I would like to thank all current board members for their time and contribution throughout this reporting period and look forward to the challenges of 2009/2010.

School Education Board Chairperson

19 May 2009

Education in Faith

In an attempt to respond appropriately to the 'Value Added' and "Parent, student and teacher satisfaction" sections of the Australian Government Compliance requirements I will give some anecdotal evidence as well as some factual evidence as to our achievements. The quoted percentages and statements are from our 2007 School Review Report which was produced in October 2007 at the conclusion of our School Review. It would be my belief and understanding that the situation has not changed significantly in the past twelve months. The surveys quoted are the Insight SRC surveys. These surveys were completed by 17/25 staff members, 50 Year 5/6 students and 46/60 randomly selected parents.

On Page 9 of our School Review document it states, "It was strongly evident in the review and across the surveys of students, staff and parents that the school has created an environment in which Christian values are very clearly reflected and demonstrated in day-to-day activities. 76% of students surveyed believe that attending St. Mary's is important to them, 80% feel that participating in prayer at school is important, 80% believe that reflecting on God is important, and 88% feel that celebrating the sacraments is important to them. Parents surveyed are confident that the school helps their child learn about Christian values such as human dignity, forgiveness, acceptance, respect, and justice. They agree that the school has a strong Catholic identity, is successful in developing knowledge of God and the Catholic tradition, and provides the opportunity for each child to reflect on their faith."

During 2008 we worked through an extensive process of consultation to create our new Vision Statement. This involved the staff allocating one of their school closure days to beginning the process. This was then followed up by a number of staff meetings where further discussion, consultation and reflection took place. Running parallel with this process the School Education Board had also been reflecting on the school's Vision Statement as well as the Junior School Council representatives from the school. Amazingly the new Vision Statement emerged from this process and was presented to our whole school community at our opening of the school year mass in 2009. The large banner displaying our Vision Statement now hangs proudly in our entrance foyer.

Our Sacramental Programs are fundamental to our existence as a Catholic School. The parent workshops, shared meal and information sessions are an integral part of the preparation and celebration of these wonderful occasions.

The children from the parish who attend other primary schools are prepared for the Sacraments by the parish. However they do join with the children from St. Mary's School at these workshops, shared meal and information sessions as well as at the actual celebrating of the Sacraments.

We celebrated the feast of St. Joachim & St. Anne as our Grandparents Open Day. This is where the children invite their grandparents/special friends to spend some time with them in the classrooms, to then join our whole school and parish community in the church to celebrate mass together. Everyone is then invited to the school hall to share a delicious morning tea.

Learning and Teaching

Below is a table showing Australian Government Compliance – Item 6

Proportion of students meeting national benchmarks at Yr 3 & 5 in 2008

Year 3 Reading	-	95%
Year 3 Writing	-	95.1%
Year 3 Spelling	-	100%
Year 3 Numeracy	-	97.5%
Year 5 Reading	-	93.8%
Year 5 Writing	-	90.3%
Year 5 Spelling	-	90.6%
Year 5 Numeracy	-	100%

Below is a table showing Australian Government Compliance – Item 7

Changes in the national benchmark from the previous year:

Year 3 Reading	-	0.6%
Year 3 Writing	-	- 4.9%
Year 3 Spelling	-	100%
Year 3 Numeracy	-	- 2.5%
Year 5 Reading	-	7.1%
Year 5 Writing	-	- 9.7%
Year 5 Spelling	-	90.6%
Year 5 Numeracy	-	3.4%

At St. Mary's we offer a number of curricular activities which 'add value' to the achievement and well being of our students:

STUDENT FOCUS:

- *Small teaching groups with individualized focus on students strengths and challenges.
- *Teacher aide support for students 'at risk'
- *Integration aide support for students with special needs.
- *Additional small group reading programs for students in Year 3 to Year 6 e.g. Corrective Reading and STARS Comprehension Program.
- *Enhancing Reading Intervention for Students at Risk Students – Year 2
- *Reading Recovery Program – Year 1
- *Phonological and Language Groups – Year Prep / Year 1
- *Reading Peer Tutoring programs Year 5/6 students with Prep and Year 1 students.
- *Math Support Groups – Year 3 to Year 6
- *Extension program for Year 3 and Year 4
- *Pre –School Program – Getting A Good Start Program. Parents and Students attend.
- *Acknowledgement of student achievements e.g. Principal Awards for:
 - academic and social progress and success.
 - community involvement.
- *Elective Instrumental Music Programs for Guitar, Piano and Keyboard – Year One to Year 6
- *Staffing Allocation of:
 - Learning and Teaching Leader
 - Literacy Leader.
 - Numeracy Leader.
 - Special Education Co-ordinator
 - Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator
 - Information and Communication Co-ordinator.

PARENT FOCUS:

We provide a number of Professional Development inservices for parents to assist their child with their learning:

- *Pre-Reading and Oral Language Skills for Pre School parents.
- *Getting A Good Start Program.
- *Helping Your Child with Reading at Home
- *Teaching Handwriting and Spelling Strategies (THRASS)
- *Academic, Social and Emotional Development of Children – Kathy Walker
- *Parent Support Group Meetings. (PSG)

Further evidence can be found in the Insight SRC surveys described in the Education in Faith section of this document.

“Parent response to the teaching and curriculum on offer at St. Mary’s is positive. Parents are confident that the staff has worked hard to raise academic standards, particularly in the areas of English and Maths. Parent response to the curriculum and the ability of staff to make a constructive difference is very encouraging.” Page 13

“The student survey reflects that the students feel good about attending St. Mary’s (88%), are highly motivated to learn (90%), are confident to achieve (84%), feel safe at school (72%) and feel their teachers listen and understand their needs (84%).” Page 16

“Insight SRC teacher opinion reflects 73% of the staff believing curriculum co-ordination is well planned and effective. High levels of satisfaction are apparent in the areas of job satisfaction (70%), effective discipline (80%) and goal congruence (76%). Page 19

“Parents consistently express satisfaction with their children’s education, the approachability of the teaching staff, and the positive school morale. There is a strong level of general satisfaction in the performance of this school. The parents are confident that the staff has maintained a high level of professionalism and contributed to improved learning outcomes.” Page 21

Below is a number of tables followed by a brief analysis of results from statewide tests for the current year and for the previous two years in response to Item 7 on the Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Compliance requirements.

LITERACY**YEAR ONE RESULTS**

Year One students Reading Text Level Results for 2006 to 2008

YEAR	% of Students at or above Minimum Standard		% of Students at or above Target Standard	
	Our School	Like School	Our School	Like School
2006	97.14%	85.19%	77.14%	71.05%
2007	90.48%	87.04%	69.05%	73.12%
2008	94.12%	84.58%	82.35%	71.34%

Our Year One Reading Text Level Trend results indicate that over the past three years we were well above the results for ‘Like Schools’ at the Minimum Standard and were in two of the three years better than ‘Like Schools’ for the Target Standard.

YEAR 3 AIM / NAPLAN RESULTS**READING**

2006	74.2% were at or above the expected level.
2007	72.2% were at or above the expected level.
2008	60.0% were at or above the expected level.

WRITING

2006	80.6% were at or above the expected level.
2007	100% were at or above the expected level.
2008	56.1% were at or above the expected level.

SPELLING

2006	77.4% were at or above the expected level.
2007	100% were at or above the expected level.
2008	73.2% were at or above the expected level.

MATHEMATICS

2006	64.5% were at or above the expected level.
2007	83.3% were at or above the expected level.
2008	30.0% were at or above the expected level.

The trend data for Year 3 results indicates that in most years we have exceeded the Target expectation of having students at or above 65%.

YEAR 5 AIM / NAPLAN RESULTS

READING

2006	48.0% were at or above the expected level.
2007	63.3% were at or above the expected level.
2008	50.0% were at or above the expected level.

WRITING

2006	34.6% were at or above the expected level.
2007	56.7% were at or above the expected level.
2008	64.5% were at or above the expected level.

SPELLING

2006	56.0% were at or above the expected level.
2007	53.3% were at or above the expected level.
2008	75.5% were at or above the expected level.

MATHEMATICS

2006	40.7% were at or above the expected level.
2007	44.8% were at or above the expected level.
2008	37.5% were at or above the expected level.

We acknowledge that our results for students in Year 5 are not all at standard hence our involvement in the Contemporary Teaching and Learning in Mathematics Project instigated by Catholic Education Office Melbourne and Australian catholic University. Mathematics is also a major focus of our Annual Action Plan.

Student Wellbeing

The Australian Government Compliance - Item 5 is Student attendance:
Our average Student Attendance Rate for 2008 was 94.03%.

At St. Mary's the promotion of wellbeing is at the heart of our school culture. In providing a supportive and nurturing environment, we contribute to the development of our students sense of self worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future. Our programs address the physical, social, emotional and spiritual development of our students and families. We believe that creating trusting relationships among our students, staff and families is of the utmost importance.

At St. Mary's to promote the Health & Wellbeing of our whole school community we offer a number of programs and extra curricular activities which 'add value' to their wellbeing:

- Seasons (Grief & Loss)
- Positively Me (Self-esteem Program)
- Circle Time
- Prep / Year 6 Buddy Program
- Peer Mediation
- Program Achieve – You Can Do It Education
- Restorative Practices
- Ban Bullying Program
- Principal / Class Awards
- Aussie of the Month
- Doing It Right
- Camp / Outdoor Education Program
- Junior School Council
- Student Leadership Program
- Morning Fitness – for school children
- Before School Fitness Group – for children and parents
- Before School Sport Training
- Little tacker tennis
- School Choir
- Healthy Eating Schools program
- Kids – Go for Your Life
- Student Action team

You can read more about our programs and initiatives in our monthly Health & Wellbeing Newsletter which can be accessed on our school website under News.

Further evidence of the success of our Student Wellbeing programs are the following quotes from our Insight SRC surveys which were described in our Education in Faith section.

“87% of parents surveyed feel that their child is developing good social skills, 89% believe their child feels accepted by other students at school, 80% are comfortable with the way student behaviour is managed, and 83 % believe that their child has been supported in their transitions at school”. P.16

“The student survey reflects that the students feel good about attending St. Mary's (88%), are highly motivated to learn (90%), are confident to achieve (84%), feel safe at school (72%) and feel their teachers listen and understand their needs (84%).” Page 16.

Leadership and Management

The Australian Government Compliance Items relevant to this section are:

Item 1: Staff Attendance – Our average attendance rate per staff member was 93.1%

Item 2: Staff Retention – Our proportion of teaching staff retained from 2007 - 2008 was 100%

Item 3: Teacher Qualifications – 75% of staff have at least attained a Bachelor Degree with an additional 25% also having a Post Graduate Diploma.

Item 4: Expenditure & teacher participation in Professional Learning – We had 16 teachers Eligible for Professional Learning in 2008.

Our average expenditure per teacher was \$ 625.00.

Here is a description of the Professional Learning Activities attended:

ENGLISH:

Literacy Network Meetings, Reading Recovery Network Meetings, Reading Recovery Twilight meeting, THRASS training, Oral Language and Literacy Development, Highlighting Writing, Literacy Leaders.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Religious Education Network Meetings, Christian Meditation, Building a Shared Vision.

MATHEMATICS:

Mathematics Regional Cluster Meeting, SINE Network Meeting, 1st Annual Primary Teachers Mathematics Conference, Box Car Maths - Decimals / Fractions, School Improvement Maths Program.

ADMINISTRATION:

Deputy Principal Network, Leadership Today in the Context of Faith and Culture, Strategic Leadership – Realising Educational Leadership.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY:

ICT Module, ICT Network Meeting.

LEARNING AND TEACHING:

Curriculum Design to Grow Deep Learning,, Personalised Learning for Students in the 21st Century, Humanities – Units of Work for the Integrated Curriculum, Water Lili – Environment / Sustainability Conference.

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Assisting students with Hearing Loss, Special Education Co-ordinators Meeting, Educational Support for Students with Low Vision, Giftedness – Melbourne University, What is Autism, Making It Different – Gifted Learners.

STUDENT WELLBEING:

Student Wellbeing Network Meeting, Restorative Practice for New teachers, Awkward Conversations with Kids – Solving Jigsaws, Conflict with the School Community, Restorative Meetings and Meditation, Exploring Feelings and Emotions in the Classroom, Student Action Teams – Values Education and Service Learning.

VISUAL ARTS:

Music and Language.

OTHER:

First Aid - CPR and Anaphylaxis, Teacher Aid Network Meeting.

I will again refer to the insight SRC surveys as supporting evidence of the level of teacher satisfaction.

“Teacher opinion reflects 73% of the staff believing curriculum coordination is well planned and effective. 65% feel encouraged to pursue professional learning. High levels of satisfaction are apparent in the areas of job satisfaction (70%), effective discipline (80%)

and goal congruence (76%).” Page 19

The school is aware of a minority of staff who feel that appraisal and recognition, teamwork and supportive leadership are lacking. In response, the leadership team is looking at gaining a better understanding of teachers' expectations and, in line with school priorities, present new opportunities and challenges.

The development of a revised Annual Review Meeting format was received positively by staff. The initial meeting early in the year was to set some specific personal goals arising out of consultative discussions at the meeting. The goals (two maybe three) were then recorded alongside what procedures were needed to be accessed and or created for the goals to be achieved and finally what evidence would there be that the goal had been achieved.

Another meeting was scheduled half way through the year for ongoing reflection and evaluation and where progress and comments were also recorded and changes and adjustments made if necessary.

Teachers found this process much more supportive and relevant to their ongoing professional development. They were accountable in conjunction with the school leadership for achieving their stated and agreed upon goals.

Financial Performance

Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2008

Reporting Framework	Modified Cash	\$
Recurrent income	Tuition	
School fees		108,082
Other fee income		76,570
Private income		54,373
State government recurrent grants		352,448
Australian government recurrent grants		1,329,198
Total recurrent income		1,920,671
Recurrent expenditure	Tuition	
Salaries, allowances and related expenses		1,468,605
Non salary expenses		238,981
Total recurrent expenditure		1,707,586
Capital income and expenditure	Tuition	
Government capital grants		69,821
Capital fees and levies		36,010
Other capital income		44,564
Total capital income		150,395
Total capital expenditure		62,960
Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans)	Tuition	
Total opening balance		103,744
Total closing balance		70,242

Note that the information provided above does not include the following items:

System levies charged to individual schools, intra-systemic transfers and diocesan supplementary capital fund (SCF) supported borrowings for primary schools. The information provided is not comparable with other educational sectors. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) is in the process of reviewing the Financial Questionnaire (FQ) during 2009 that may ultimately change the method of reporting these exclusions.

School Community

St. Mary's has a strong tradition of a welcoming and supportive sense of community which I believe we have fostered and built on over a number of years through things like: Grandparents Day, our Transition Program for new Prep families, our Prep and Year Six Buddy Family Night, our Opening of the School Year Mass & BBQ, our Mothers and Fathers Day Masses, Mary Help of Christians Feast Day and Shared Lunch, our Arts Spectacular, our Footy Fun Day, Book Week Activities, our weekly Playgroup Sessions and our Parents & Friends Morning Teas.

Our school Motto "***Caring Catholic Community in Education***" reflects our commitment to building our catholic community at St. Mary's and building links to the broader community in Altona through our programs and extra curricular activities.

At St. Mary's we are very fortunate to have a vibrant, hard-working and supportive Parents & Friends Association who have again completed a very successful year both on a financial level and on a social and community building level.

For the first time a Market Night sub-committee was formed and they successfully co-ordinated our inaugural Market Night which was a huge success. Our major fundraiser for the past few years has been our Trivia & Auction Night. This year it was an amazing success raising \$15 400. Again a most enjoyable night on a number of levels.

In 2008 the Parents and Friends Association handed over \$30 000 to the school. This exceeded all of our expectations and enabled us to proudly complete the final stage of the Grounds Beautification program as well as continuing our upgrading of Information & Communication Technology equipment throughout the school.

The two other highlights of the year were our Opening of the School Year Mass & BBQ where over five hundred parents, children and friends joined the staff for a very, very enjoyable evening. The other highlight is at the end of the year where we have an Arts Spectacular which involves a magnificent display of the children's art work as well as a concert item from each class. Again the Parents and Friends put on a free BBQ. It was an outstanding coming together of our school community with the parish community and even the wider community.

Another highlight this year was when Kathy Walker, a renowned Melbourne based Educational Consultant presented an interesting and informative parent information evening on the academic, social and emotional development of children in Multi-age groupings.

Future Directions

Our major focus as outlined in our Annual Action Plan for 2009 is our involvement in the Contemporary Teaching and Learning in Mathematics project which is being jointly run by the Catholic Education Office and Australian Catholic University.

In 2009, all classroom teachers, deputy principal and principal will each receive six days of professional development. The focus will be to develop shared beliefs and understandings about the contemporary learning of Mathematics and to improve the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge of Mathematics.

This will be supported at the school level by:

- Fortnightly Professional Learning Team meetings
- Catholic Education Office and Australian Catholic University staff attending planning meetings and observing and demonstrating best practice in classrooms
- team teaching and peer mentoring sessions
- Family Maths nights and an increased flow of information to parents through the school newsletter and website

It is envisaged that all this will have a positive impact upon our students outcomes in Mathematics and encourage and nurture a school culture of independent, mathematical thinkers.

Our other major priorities are:

Education in Faith

To assess and report to parents at the end of 2009 in Religious Education.

Learning and Teaching

In addition to the Mathematics outlined above continue our focus on Personalised Learning – Goal setting with teachers and children alike.

Continue to work with staff to plan and develop units of work through broad concepts to cover relevant domains of VELs and to cater for the needs of all children.

Continue to develop Inquiry Learning so that students are engaged in meaningful tasks that challenge their thinking and encourage independence within the Inquiry process.

Continue to develop staff and students understanding of the three dimensions of Thinking processes. What are we doing and what needs to be done to deepen students thinking about their learning?

Student Wellbeing

Stabilise our Restorative Practice & You can Do It programs and approaches.

Focus on becoming a Healthy Eating School through meeting all the expectations including adjusting our Tuckshop menu.

Leadership and Management

To continue to revise the ARM process to improve its effectiveness and relevance.

To clarify staff roles, expectations and responsibilities.

School Community

To improve communication with school community via a new school website.

It is with much anticipation, enthusiasm and excitement that I look forward to 2009 and beyond as together with the staff, parents and children we continue on this journey of discovery.