Annual School Report
2013 School Year

Yamba
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About This Report

St James Primary School, Yamba is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report to the Parish School Community for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school’s Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office. This Report has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2014 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

The contents of this Report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 0266463266 or by visiting the website at yamp.lism.catholic.edu.au.
Principal’s Message

The primary purpose of St James Catholic Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. St James Primary School, Yamba offers students a Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the faith and spiritual growth of the students as well as opportunities to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school’s mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students’ achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2013. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school notice boards, and in the school office. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at regular school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that St James has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- Forty-nine students completed the Premier’s Reading Challenge.
- In the University of NSW ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) the school demonstrated a high level of achievement with 2 Distinction Certificates and 12 Credit Certificates being awarded.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school’s cultural program and community involvement:

- Participation in the Lower Clarence Eisteddfod saw the Senior Choir achieve a second place and the Junior Choir receive a commendation. Stage One also received a Highly Commended in the Junior Verse Speaking section.
- Indonesian cultural days were held throughout the year including a Music workshop with Angklung instruments, a Language workshop, an Indonesian Cuisine workshop as well as an Indonesian Drumming and Dance day. The culmination of these workshops was a cultural afternoon for parents.
- Students from Stage Three participated in the highly successful Lower Clarence Community Radio Schools Program broadcasting weekly throughout 2013.
- Two St James students competed in the Rotary Club of Yamba Public Speaking competition achieving runner up status.
- In 2013 the school continued with the highly regarded “Dance Fever” program culminating in a “Dance Off “with all Catholic schools from the Clarence Region.

Students performed well at various sporting events during the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights:

- St James’ Tennis team were winners of the Lower Clarence Tennis Association Primary Schools Tennis competition for the third year in succession.
- Stage 3 won the Lower Clarence Touch Football Gala Day with Stage 2 finishing as runners up.
- Student representatives competed at a Zone and Diocesan level in swimming, athletics and cross country with three students achieving Diocesan representation at the Polding carnival in cross country.
- St James’ Basketball team travelled to Sydney to compete in the 2013 Catholic Primary Schools Basketball Challenge.

There were many people who assisted in the school’s quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the Yamba community, St Mary’s Parish, parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St James Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

Murray Macdonald
Principal

A Parent Message

2013 saw the Forum set about seeking ways to change the manner in which the school was supported financially through fund raising activities. In a small school the load is often carried by a particular committee and group of volunteers. It was agreed that 2013 was the year to move beyond these groups and develop a more community focused approach.

This led to the Forum holding several special and very successful events such as a fancy dress trivia night, a movie night and a sports night at the Raymond Laurie Sports Centre; all of which were all open to the public. The feedback from these activities was extremely positive within the wider community and I believe these activities could and should become annual features on the St James school calendar.

It has been extremely encouraging to see so many children take part in the Little J’s Transition to School program with 21 children enrolled. I know that this is something that Principal and Assistant Principal had been nurturing and working hard on for the past couple of years and it has been great to see this begin to bear fruit. The Principal’s goal was always to rebuild numbers of the Kindergarten in-take with the knowledge that this takes time. With the larger numbers being attracted into Kindergarten I have no doubt that the atmosphere of such a friendly school will ensure that the numbers head in the direction we want that the school continue to grow.

Other factors which have been discussed that could make St James stand out as a school parents might wish to send their child to included the possibility of a Catholic School scholarship, an interschool spelling bee or the use of specialist teachers for the teaching of Music and Drama. During 2013 the Parish School Forum also funded several new laptops for the school bringing the parent contribution over the past three years to 21 devices available for student use.

Mr Grant Gilles
Chairperson
St James Parish School Parent Forum
This Catholic School

St James is located in Yamba and is part of the Saint Mary's Maclean Parish which serves the communities of Maclean, Gulmurrad, Palmers Island, Iluka and Yamba. School families are drawn from the towns and communities of Yamba, Angourie, Palmers Island and Woombah.

Last year the school celebrated 17 years of Catholic Education.

The Parish Priest Fr Peter Padsungay is involved in the life of the school.

St James is a parish school with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through such activities such as:

- involvement in and preparation of students for the Parish Sacramental program;
- community engagement and fund raising by a group of ten students in Mini Vinnie’s;
- planning, preparation and celebration of Parish Masses four times per term;
- participation in the Parish Saturday Vigil Mass throughout the year.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text “To Know, Worship & Love”. Catholic life and culture permeate school life with 2.5 hours of Religious Education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school’s prayer life. The aims and direction of St James Primary School is guided by Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate the essence of this statement into all aspects of parish school life. Religious Education is always given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.
St James caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>TOTAL 2013</th>
<th>TOTAL 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE (Language background other than English)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School Curriculum**

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

The 2013 curriculum focus drew upon the resources from the Contemporary Learning Framework to create a climate where 21st Century pedagogical approaches underpinned every learning environment. The use of accurate and current data to plan a curriculum that was challenging and rigorous sought to achieve high levels of engagement in all Key Learning Areas.

The Professional Learning Community structures were established by the school to support the curriculum focus, meeting weekly to maintain the engagement of staff and students.
Student Performance in National Testing Programs

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 5 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 11 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. In Year 3, students who achieve Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieve at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

At St James, school and student performance is closely monitored. School based assessments are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and SMART 2 Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St James students in each band compared to the State percentage.
### Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAND</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number, Patterns and Algebra</strong></td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</strong></td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Year 5 NAPLAN results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAND</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trend Data for the cohorts in Years Three and Five support the whole school focus on setting higher expectations and using data to differentiate the learning for the students who are at or above National Minimum Standards. The targeted intervention Programs QuickSmart and STAR Reading have supported these learners to achieve above State results in all areas. The Year Three Literacy results also reflect the high expectations being set with Learning Intentions and Student Goal Setting being articulated and implemented in all class groups.
Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total number of non-teaching staff employed in the school.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All teachers have been involved in professional development activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole-staff development day professional learning activities in 2013 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Days</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Presenters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Curriculum in NSW Syllabus: English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jacki Moore CSO Lismore, Dale Layland, Christine Jeffrey Felicity Wilde and Bernadette Gilholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lismore Proclaim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chris Lowney, Bishop Jeffrey Jarrett, Jude Hennessey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Curriculum NSW Syllabus: Science and Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dale Layland, Christine Jeffrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Spirituality Day</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Executive staff from St James Yamba &amp; St Joseph’s Maclean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

- Australian Curriculum - Diocesan training days
- Diocesan Teacher Placement in the Diocese of Brisbane schools
- NAPLAN Data Analysis
- Best Start Assessment training
- Early Learning Plan training
- STAR Reading Program for Stage One learners
- Science (including Technology) for Working scientifically and technologically

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $7,585 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average teacher attendance figure is 94.95%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

**Student Attendance**

School attendance is always high. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher immediately the child returns to school. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the principal to discuss their leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2013 was 90.1%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance rates by Year group</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>93.8</td>
<td>91.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Policies

School policies are reviewed regularly. In 2013 the following policy was reviewed and updated:

- Information and Communication Policy

Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at St James requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.

Children who turn five by 30 June are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school’s website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

St James Primary's Pastoral Care including Behavioural Education Policy is concerned with the fostering of students’ resilience and self-discipline. It aims to develop persons who are responsible and inner-directed, and capable of choosing freely in accordance with their conscience. The policy ensures individual circumstances are accounted for and acknowledged. It sets out to help students recognise that their fundamental freedoms and rights are balanced by responsibilities.

Discipline Policy

Discipline at St James is seen as an element of the Student Welfare Policy which promotes self-regulation leading to the safe and secure learning environment at St James School.

Complaints and Grievance Policy

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. The policy is available at the front office or from the school's website.
School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five-year Strategic Plan. 2013 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school's main goals and priorities were to:

- develop, promote and support a collaborative professional learning culture with staff;
- promote Quality Teaching & Learning to improve student outcomes;
- promote St James School as an excellent Catholic primary school.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- During 2013 students were involved in outreach activities, including visits to the local aged-care residence - Caroona.
- Students and staff contributed generously to social justice appeals including Caritas and St Vincent de Paul.
- Making Jesus Real Awards were presented at our fortnightly assemblies.
- Outstanding citizenship was recognised at our Annual Presentation Assembly with awards from the Rotary Club of Yamba, the Country Women’s Association and Yamba View Club.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:

- A survey was offered to determine the continuation of the School Chaplaincy Program.
- Year 6 children were invited to reflect on their time at St James. These reflections were read to parents. The overwhelming response was that children were extremely positive about their years at St James with many complimenting the school on the pastoral care as well as the education they had received.
Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2013 is presented below:

2013 INCOME - St James Primary School - YAMBA

2013 EXPENSE - St James Primary School - YAMBA