

2014 Annual School Report

St Joseph's Primary School, Merriwa



Marquet Street
MERRIWA NSW 2329

<http://www.merriwa.catholic.edu.au/>

About the Annual School Report

St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa is registered by the Board of Studies as a member of the Catholic system in the Dioceses of Maitland- Newcastle.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2014 and gives information about 2014 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the [Schools Assistance Act, 2008](#).

The information in this Report is complemented by the school website where other school publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained from the school.

Messages from Key School Bodies

Principal

It is with great pleasure that I present the 2014 Annual School Report for St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa. The school community of St Joseph's is very proud of the achievements made in 2014 and I commend to you this report as testimony to the wonderful educational institution that it is.

St Joseph's Primary school is a small, rural Catholic school situated in the Upper Hunter town of Merriwa. Its mission is to be a community of Catholic faith where the uniqueness of each child is nurtured and valued; where students are empowered and challenged to become lifelong learners with optimism and hope for the future. The school achieves its mission by working together with students, families, parishioners and members of the wider community to provide a holistic education to all students. Gospel values support all school policies and procedures. We teach students by example to become problem solvers and forward thinkers and to demonstrate an appreciation of our environment and our responsibility for its preservation.

Strong programs in each Key Learning Area are delivered to all students. In 2014 the school was engaged in the State Action Plan to raise the level of student achievement in Literacy and Numeracy. The appointment of a Lead Teacher in the Infants years has enabled the teachers to work collaboratively to collect and analyse student learning data and plan strategically to support all students to achieve a high level of learning. This is imperative to the operation of our school.

Parent Body

2014 has seen the P&F continuing to support St Joseph's, contributing extensively to the school and most importantly to supporting the students. The P&F continues to bring together the school community through initiatives and events, and has continued to maintain the parent voice across the school.

The St Joseph's Camp Draft and fete is our major fundraiser each year. It not only raised a vast sum of money but also continued to raise the profile of the school in the local community in a very positive way. This event as well as the many other fundraising and social activities organised throughout the year provided a service of sorts and continue to build a sense of community within the school and wider community.

I would like to acknowledge the parents who continue to help out around the school - volunteers supporting the school, which are really what we are about. All parents are members of the Parents and Friends Association. There is a tremendous amount of goodwill in the parent body which is one of the contributing factors to making St Joseph's the great school that it is.

Student Body

Throughout 2014, the Year 6 students, as leaders of the school, put in a tremendous amount of effort. The different roles we performed included organising student sport and recreation, health and safety, religion, public relations and communication, student welfare and the environment. Most weeks we met with our school Principal and class teacher to discuss issues in the school and find solutions to make our school better.

We helped the teachers, Principal and students throughout the year. As leaders, we put 110 percent effort in to everything we did, whether it was school work, homework or jobs. 2014 was a great year for Year 6 to shine. Some of these highlights were Mother's Day Breakfast, Mission Day, Grandparents Day, Heathy Harold Day, Asthma PJ Day, Shrove Tuesday, St Joseph's Fete and Camp draft and our Excursion to Coonabarabran. These activities helped to build a sense of community within the school as well as raising funds for various causes.

Our biggest role is making sure that our school community is cared for and is safe. We also have responsibilities to give out weekly awards to the deserving students and teachers.

Who We Are

History of the School

St. Joseph's Primary School is part of the St Anne's Catholic Parish, Merriwa. It was founded in 1883 by the St Anne's Parish and then in 1885 the Sisters of St Joseph took up residence in Merriwa and assumed responsibility for the education of the children at the school. They were the first Foundation formed from Lochinvar, which had come into existence only two years earlier in 1883.

School records go back to 1886. The total enrolment was 77 - 39 girls and 38 boys. On 25th November, 1928, Bishop Dwyer blessed the new school in Marquet Street. On 31st January, 1954, Bishop Toohey blessed the new infants' classroom and on 19th January, 1961, blessed the new school building of three classrooms. Secondary classes operated at St Joseph's Merriwa from the early 1950's to 1968. In 2008 the Honourable Joel Fitzgibbon opened and Fr Des Harrigan blessed the new Kindergarten classroom giving the school a total of four classrooms. For over 130 years, St Joseph's Catholic School has provided quality education to the children of the Merriwa district.

Location/Drawing Area

St Joseph's School Merriwa is located in the rural township of Merriwa in the New South Wales Upper Hunter area. It is the most western school in the Maitland-Newcastle diocese. The students travel from within the town limits, as well as from outlying rural properties. Some students travel from Cassilis to the west, as well as Gungahlin to the east.

Characteristics of the Student Body

The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

LBOTE*	SWD*	Indigenous
2	3	5

*Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE); Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Religious Dimension and Culture of School Life

Catholic Identity

The school's Vision and Mission statements clearly articulate the role the school assumes as a community of Catholic faith. This vision underpins all school policies and procedures. The community of St Joseph's School Merriwa believes that Jesus came that we "may have life, life in all its fullness" Jn10:10. We see it as our mission to help this become a reality for the students whom we serve.

Respect for the traditional owners of this land is fostered through regular acknowledgement and the celebration of NAIDOC week and other events as they arise. A copy of the Australian Government's Apology to the Australian Indigenous People is displayed in the MacKillop Room.

The Sisters of St Joseph's had a very long history with the school and as such the school is closely aligned to the teachings of St. Mary MacKillop.

The school celebrates its Catholic identity through a number of visible signs in the school. Each classroom has a dedicated Sacred Space which is the focus of class prayer. The front office has a strong sense of Catholic identity where photos of Pope Francis and Bishop William Wright, St Mary MacKillop, a statue of St Joseph and school cross and candle are located. The front foyer is also home to various religious publications available to parents and visitors alike. In other areas of the school there are many religious symbols such as crucifixes, depictions of the founding Sisters plus links to the Merriwa community, a grotto to Mary, Mother of God, a statue of St Joseph and Jesus in the garden. Each classroom has access to a variety of bibles which best suit the needs of the students.

The school celebrates its Catholic identity through the many important Feast Days throughout the year including: St Joseph's day, Lenten and Easter Liturgies, Pentecost, Grandparents Day - Feast of St Joachim and Anne, Feast of the Sacred Heart.

In the school newsletter each fortnight there is a religious reflection as well as a section which informs parents of religious activities happening in our school - special feast days, liturgical seasons and class news.

The School as part of Parish and Diocesan Life

A positive relationship between the school and Parish continues to be a high priority at St Joseph's school. The school works closely with its Parish Priest and parish community groups, who are always very welcomed members of the school community.

The Sacramental program is supported by the school curriculum and the parish team is in close communication with the class teachers of the students involved. Bishop William presided at the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation.

During Catholic Schools Week students and teachers prepared displays for the main street to highlight the Catholic identity of the school. At the commencement of Catholic Schools Week, Year 6 leaders made a leaders' pledge and staff were commissioned at the Sunday Parish Mass. A Parish/School dinner was celebrated where parents, staff and parish members gathered together to share a meal. This was a wonderful community event and a great night was had by all.

Other efforts to ensure there is a clear link between the parish and the school include:-

The school newsletter placed in the church. Students serve on the altar at weekend Masses and other special Masses. Students work displayed in the Church.

Parish members were actively involved in the school as reading helpers.

The Mother's and Father's Day breakfasts, liturgy and activities were very well attended by parents.

The school supported the annual winter and Christmas appeals for the local St Vincent de Paul Society and encouraged the group to use the school facilities for their meetings each month.

At school working bees, parents and parishioners worked together with general tidying up of the School and Church grounds.

At the conclusion of the Parish Anointing Mass the parishioners had lunch in the school's Mary MacKillop room and were entertained by the students.

Mass was celebrated by the school community on several occasions throughout the year including the Opening School Mass and the end of School Mass, as well as a well-attended Grandparents Mass. On occasion classes attended the regular Friday Mass and other significant feast days. Students and staff representatives attended Masses throughout the year at a Diocesan level, including Catholic Schools Week Mass in Hamilton, Called to Serve Mass and the Diocesan Mission Mass.

The Liturgical and Prayer Life of the School

Each school day begins with an assembly and prayer. At the beginning of lunch and recess each class says grace in the classroom. At the final assembly of the day a prayer is offered before the students are dismissed.

Throughout the year there are many opportunities for students to be part of liturgical celebrations. The focus each week at our Monday liturgy is the Sunday gospel where each teacher and Stage 3 students prepare and deliver the message from the gospel. This is concluded with a song/hymn which supports the gospel message.

Students have opportunities to receive the Eucharist at all Masses attended during school time. Students who have not received the sacrament of the Eucharist are encouraged to receive a blessing from the Parish Priest.

Wherever possible the school community attended significant parish liturgical celebrations, for example: Ash Wednesday Mass.

Teaching of Religion

Religion lessons at St Joseph's follow the curriculum set by the Maitland–Newcastle Diocese. All class teachers are responsible for the teaching of Religious Education in their respective classes and are formally accredited to teach Religious Education or are in the process of satisfying the academic requirements needed for accreditation. Each class has a structured lesson that develops the knowledge and understandings of Catholic faith. Class and school liturgical, sacramental and prayer celebrations form an important aspect of the Religious Education curriculum. Currently Stage 3 is using new units of work, written by the diocese. Other Stages will implement the new units as soon as they are available.

Retreats and Faith Development Programs

Prayer and reflection opportunities begin all meetings and gatherings. Each year, one professional development day is set aside for the teachers to join together in learning more about their spirituality or the teaching of Religious Education. This year staff joined with other members of the diocese working with Dr Brendan Hyde on Children's Spirituality and Religious Education.

A Lenten program was conducted by staff, for staff and community members from the Parish as well as other community members. This was an optional experience which many staff and parish members attended.

The newsletter each fortnight has a reflection/prayer.

Service to the wider community is an important aspect of our faith development. As such, Mission Day is a major event on the yearly calendar, as well our winter and Christmas Vinnies appeals. Visits to the Gummun Place Hostel for the Aged and the Merriwa Hospital are also included as well as carolling at the town Christmas Party.

At the end of each year, Year 6 participate in a retreat. During this retreat the Year 6 students take time to reflect on their years at school and what direction they see themselves and their friends going. As many of our students go to different high schools it is a wonderful day where they reflect on their gifts - the gift they are to people, the gift people are to them and how they can use their gifts to help spread the Gospel values.

Values and initiatives to promote respect and responsibility

Our school motto 'Actions Not Words' captures the spirit of our school and is a constant reminder of the importance to continue to witness the values of Jesus Christ in all interactions with each other and to provide a learning environment where learning is permeated by Gospel values. These values include Respect, Responsibility, Service, Compassion, Honesty, Justice, Integrity, Resilience and Achievement. In word and action, our goal is to live out the great law of 'Love One Another.'

Environmental stewardship programs continue to be an important aspect of the school. This highlights respect for creation and the responsibility to care for it. These programs include the vegie patch, chooks, composting, solar energy, worm farm and gardens. This environmental stewardship is also evident in the great attendance at working bees at the beginning of each term, where families come together to look after the school and church grounds.

Compassion and service are displayed in the service projects the students have participated in with the elderly and sick in the wider community. This service includes visits to the aged care facility and the hospital, as well as fundraising for the poorer members of the local and wider community. Being a responsible citizen is encouraged through participation in ANZAC ceremonies, Remembrance Day services, Australia Day events, Senior Citizen events, Richard Cootes visit- from Mission Australia, singing for the sick in the parish after the anointing Mass, NAIDOC activities, Clean up Australia Day and National Tree Day.

Policies

Enrolment Policy

St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa, follows the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office *Enrolment Policy 2013*. This Enrolment Policy has been devised in order to accommodate the needs of families seeking a Catholic education. It aims to set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices and assist the system of Catholic schools to provide schooling, where possible, for all Catholic children who seek enrolment, cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources and to encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Copies of the Policy are available from the school, or from the Catholic Schools Office website. Parents concerned about school fees should ensure they make contact with the school. Diocesan provisions (including standard discounts for those with a Health Card) exist to help in this area, and the Principal can also exercise discretion where genuine need exists.

The enrolment period commences in Catholic Schools Week each year and enrolment forms are available from the school office at any time throughout the year. An extensive transition program is conducted for children wishing to enrol at St Joseph's, in the second semester of the year prior to enrolment.

Student Welfare

Student welfare at St Joseph's Merriwa is based on the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy. The School's Vision Statement underlies all policies and practices within the school:

*St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa:
A community of Catholic faith
where the uniqueness of each child
will be nurtured and valued.
Where students will be
empowered and challenged to become
lifelong learners with optimism and
hope for the future.*

Student wellbeing is an agenda item at every staff meeting. Student welfare is supported by St Joseph's' Anti-Bullying policy as well as its Behavioural Support and Special Needs Policies. These policies outline the rights and responsibilities of students as well as procedures followed for inappropriate behaviour. Counselling services were obtained through the CSO school counsellor who visited the school on a fortnightly basis. This policy was amended in 2014 to incorporate the following:

- ❖ Behavioural support Policy
- ❖ Positive Behaviours Framework
- ❖ Anti- Bullying Policy
- ❖ Procedural Fairness Policy

Copies of these policies are available from the school office upon request and on the school website.

Discipline

Discipline at St Joseph's is supported by the Behavioural Support Policy which is aligned to the Restorative Justice philosophy. This policy provides a framework for building relationships and managing behaviour. The policy aims to promote Gospel values, develop self-esteem, encourage responsibility, protect rights and model respectful behaviour.

The school uses the Positive Behaviour Framework across all grades in the school. This framework is designed to enable children to engage with their learning more effectively by being taught the skills to be ready to learn. School wide systems are in place to ensure consistency of expectations and consequences for not meeting the expectations. The School's Behavioural Support Policy was rewritten in 2014 and is now under the umbrella of the School Pastoral Care Policy along with the following documents:

- ❖ Anti- Bullying Policy
- ❖ Procedural Fairness Policy
- ❖ Positive Behaviours Framework

Copies of these policies are available on the school website and from the school office upon request.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers. St Joseph's Primary School, Merriwa's *Anti-Bullying Policy* is reviewed regularly and is available on the school website and from the school office upon request. This policy was reviewed and amended in 2014 as part of the overall Pastoral Care policy.

Complaints and Grievances

The school has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy (2013), developed to provide a consistent approach for all Diocesan schools. This policy aims to address the concerns of Parents / Carers and the wider community. These concerns may include children's learning, behaviour and welfare, School organisation and management, student health and safety issues.

A copy of this policy and the informative parent brochure is available from the school office, school website or is available on the Catholic Schools Office website. The policy has not changed in 2014.

Student Achievements

Academic Achievements

Students at St Joseph's school are encouraged to become lifelong learners; we offer our students a vast range of learning opportunities. The teachers, with the assistance of the Learning Support teacher and Learning Support assistant, encourage all students in this pursuit.

Students were encouraged to participate in a range of competitions such as the Newcastle Permanent Maths Competition, Poetry competitions as well as writing competitions and Science competitions.

The senior class participated in the Upper Hunter Science Discovery Day. This was a challenging competition and students enjoyed the collaborative problem solving experience that it provided. Stage Three students also competed in the Newcastle Herald competition. This was again a learning highlight as the children honed their writing skills in a relevant and realistic way. The newspaper was awarded highly commended overall newspaper and two of the 10 students who participated received highly commended awards.

Public Speaking was a major focus across the grades as each child participated in a whole school public speaking competition. The winners at school level went on to compete against all the other Catholic schools' winners in a regional competition. The skills of St Joseph's children were again strengthened by this experience.

The senior class put their public speaking skills to great use in the Diocesan Debating Competition and performed very well at school and Regional level.

A similar competition was instituted this year to help develop the students' spelling skills. The Spelling competition was run at a school and regional level.

School Academic Priorities

Priority	Steps taken to achieve the priority
Proactive approach to raising levels of achievement in Literacy and Numeracy of all students.	This is an ongoing priority. Effective implementation of National Education Agenda - Implementation of State Action Plan. Employment of Lead Teacher to assist in design of quality teaching practices. Collection and analysis of student learning data Use of data to inform teaching Teachers collaboratively planning for student learning improvement Teachers set learning targets for achievement of improved student learning
Successful implementation of the new English, Mathematics and Science Syllabus	Professional development in Teaching the new English, Mathematics and Science Syllabi. Formation of collaborative planning teams across the region of Catholic schools to plan units of work from the new syllabus documents. Participation of all teachers in "Skill Snacks" covering the teaching of the new syllabi.

Contemporary and high quality teaching and learning in Creative Arts	Engage a drama teacher to assist in the teaching of drama and singing. Upskill teachers to teach drama and music more effectively. Providing opportunities for students to view live productions and later analyse these in terms of the concepts being taught. Provision of opportunity for students to present their learning by performing for a live audience.
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Performance in National Testing

National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 2014

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs. The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The school results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

The trend data over the past 4 years indicates steady school growth in all areas of Literacy and Numeracy. Individual student growth from Year 3 to 5 was very impressive with the school growth data indicating that almost 80% of students achieved greater than expected growth in all areas except spelling. Spelling growth of this degree was experienced by 25% of the students. For our students who moved onto Year 7 all growth was greater than the state average. Spelling remains an area in need of greatest remediation in Year 3 yet our growth in Year 5 was very pleasing, closing the gap between state and school considerably. The focus of SAP intervention will continue to target spelling as well as reading and numeracy. Increased teacher assistance time to target students at risk of not meeting expected growth will continue in 2015. PD for teachers has been delivered and will continue to ensure quality teaching is high. Parent involvement in Literacy learning is also a focus for this school to increase the value placed on literacy for life.

NAPLAN Program 2014 - Year 3 Percentage in Skill Band						
		Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Writing	Numeracy
Band 6 and Above	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	10.0%	10.0%	30.0%	0.0%	10.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	24.5%	21.1%	27.4%	11.4%	14.6%
Band 5	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	30.0%	20.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	21.7%	22.6%	22.5%	27.7%	21.6%
Band 4	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	0.0%	10.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	22.5%	23.2%	21.6%	29.8%	27.2%
Band 3	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	40.0%	30.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	16.2%	16.2%	14.6%	17.9%	21.2%
Band 2	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	40.0%	40.0%	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	8.6%	9.5%	7.5%	7.0%	10.0%
Band 1	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<i>National Performance</i>	4.5%	5.3%	4.4%	4.2%	3.4%

NAPLAN Program 2014 - Year 5 Percentage in Skill Band						
		Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Writing	Numeracy
Band 8 and Above	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	9.1%
	<i>National Performance</i>	14.6%	12.0%	16.4%	3.6%	8.8%
Band 7	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	27.3%	27.3%	27.3%	0.0%	9.1%
	<i>National Performance</i>	19.9%	21.6%	20.2%	11.9%	17.1%
Band 6	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	18.2%	54.5%	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%
	<i>National Performance</i>	26.0%	27.2%	25.1%	30.0%	27.7%
Band 5	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	27.3%	0.0%	27.3%	45.5%	27.3%
	<i>National Performance</i>	21.3%	20.8%	20.1%	31.1%	26.4%
Band 4	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	18.2%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%
	<i>National Performance</i>	11.2%	11.1%	10.9%	13.7%	13.5%
Band 3	St Josephs Primary School Merriwa	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	18.2%
	<i>National Performance</i>	5.1%	5.3%	5.2%	7.7%	4.6%

Cultural Achievements

Creative Art was a major focus at the school in 2014. The students were engaged in the process of preparing their own drama performance which included acting and singing. The students and teachers learned a great many creative art skills from the professional actor / singer who facilitated this process. The School performance of "World of Stories" was a great success with all students from grades K – 6 taking an acting/singing role. The school community was engaged in a creative arts exercise to create a sheep float for the Festival of Fleeces parade. The children proudly paraded "Josie" the sheep along the main street of Merriwa and were awarded Best Float for 2014 and are to lead the parade in 2015 celebrating the 25th anniversary of the festival.

Many students continued to take the opportunity to learn an instrument at school, through the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music. These students also attended St Joseph's High School Aberdeen to participate in an enrichment music workshop. There was also the opportunity for all students to participate in the annual Kia-Ora Music camp which provided 3 days of intensive workshops in singing, dance and band playing. All students participated in community singing opportunities in the local community – Christmas carols, aged care and the Australia Day anthem.

The local community "Little Sprouts Day" was a great opportunity for the students to celebrate literacy at a community level. Grandparents Day and Mothers and Fathers days provided addition opportunities to engage in literacy experiences with the wider community.

All Stage 2 and Stage 3 students attended an Aboriginal Art workshop held in the local community. Aboriginal artist, Les Elvin demonstrated traditional and contemporary Aboriginal art forms. This workshop supported the curriculum focus on Aboriginal Cultural Perspectives as well as Creative Arts.

Sporting Achievements

St Joseph's Primary School students and teams have participated in many sporting opportunities in 2014. Swimming, cross country, athletics and horse sports were the main sports offered at competitive levels. A carnival was held for all these sports using our own or local council facilities. All students from Kindergarten -Year 6 were given the opportunity to excel at their age level. In addition, our primary students had opportunities to try out for places on Regional teams in a variety of sports. A team of St Joseph's swimmers was selected to compete in the Regional and Diocesan Swimming carnivals. We also sent students to the Regional and Diocesan Athletics carnivals. A team of St Joseph's runners competed at the Diocesan Cross Country in Lochinvar.

Participation in Horse Sport Events by Primary students was very high. Many of the St Joseph's students excelled in their individual events and as a team were very successful also.

St Joseph's Merriwa hosted the third annual St Joseph's School Junior Campdraft. This was a great success and afforded our children the opportunity to compete and display their riding skills to the wider community.

Learn to swim classes conducted by the school had unprecedented parental participation. The number of non-swimmers was drastically reduced as a result of the program and all students achieved a good level of water safety.

Other Highlights for 2014

The Transition to Kindergarten Program was refined in 2014 to include a series of parent sessions discussing the school curriculum in the early years; school readiness; emotional well-being and social skill development; English and Maths learning and school routines and procedures. Strong links between the school and the parent body have been developed through this process. It has enabled parents to help their child become successful learners from the outset of their school enrolment.

2014 saw an increase in parent participation in all aspects of school life. This will have very positive impact on student learning outcomes.

Staff Qualifications

Qualifications and Experience	Number of Staff	
I. Teachers with teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).	7	
II. Teachers with qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by NOOSR but lacking formal teaching qualifications	7	
III. (a) Teachers not having qualifications as described in I or II above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context	(a) 0	(b) 0
III. (b) Of these which are New Scheme Teachers.		

Workforce composition

Number of Staff	
Total teaching staff	7
Total non-teaching staff	5
Grand total	12
Percentage of teachers who are Indigenous	0

Professional Learning Undertaken

English: Backwards planning of English (all teachers), The teaching of Reading (1 teacher), Programming of English K-6
 Mathematics: Mathematics Syllabus K-6 (all teachers), Mathematics Skill snacks (all teachers), Syllabus workshop (all teachers)
 Science: NSW Science K-10 (all teachers),
 Learning Technology: LT forum, 1 x 21st century Learning design workshop,
 Religious Education: RE training (Coordinator), Understanding Children's spirituality (all teachers), 2x Faith accreditation course, Lenten Program (3 teachers), 1 x Community Theology Study day.
 Librarian: Librarian training day,
 CEFPI conference: The Science of Learning (1 teacher)
 Child protection training (1 new teacher to the school, 1 x support staff)
 Positive Behaviour Support training (2 teachers)
 Health: CPR (all staff), 1x Mental Health and Well being, Asthma training (all staff)
 Non violent Crisis intervention training, (1 teacher, 2 learning support assistants)
 Professional Learning Community Training day: All teaching staff and all Learning Support staff.
 Learning Support workshop: 2 x Learning Support teacher, Disability Standards in Education e-learning course (all school staff)
 Dr John Irvine: Childhood anxiety workshop, (All teachers and learning support staff)
 Coaching Course: 1 x co-coaching, 1 x growth coaching, 1 x Intro to leadership coaching
 Beginner teacher's workshop: 1 teacher
 Schools Services Forum: (2 teachers)

Teacher Attendance

The average teacher attendance rate for this school is 98%.

Teacher Retention

The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 100%.

Enrolments

Actual Enrolments 2014

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
Kindergarten	14
Year 1	11
Year 2	10
Year 3	9
Year 4	12
Year 5	9
Year 6	5
TOTAL	70

Student Attendance

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2014:

Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	School Average
93.67	91.49	90.74	96.53	95.67	94.50	93.27	93.70

Managing non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents and guardians, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The compulsory schooling age is 6 to 17. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve problems of non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act (1990) the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation. The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including student and parent interviews, reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program, development of a school-based attendance improvement plan, referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies and support from school - based personnel. If a range of school - based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Catholic Schools Office.

Annual School Priorities

Priority	Steps taken to achieve the priority
Improve student reading skills	<p>Implemented NP Low SES program.</p> <p>Targeted assistance given to students who were identified as falling below the National benchmark in Literacy and Numeracy including closing the gap for Aboriginal students.</p> <p>Teachers were provided with ongoing PD which increased their effectiveness in teaching literacy.</p> <p>Increased provision of learning assistance time in the classroom to enable targeted students to access specific programs for improvement.</p> <p>Provision of parent meetings to explain the importance of developing reading habits and skills.</p> <p>Increased opportunities for shared reading activities at community events such as Mother's Day and Father's day.</p>
Specifically target the teaching of K-6 Mathematics to improve student outcomes	<p>Teachers were engaged in Explicit professional learning opportunities for the continued emphasis on the teaching of Mathematics specifically focusing on problem solving and higher order thinking.</p> <p>Teaching practices have continued to focus on Higher order thinking.</p> <p>Purchase of resources for differentiating Mathematics teaching.</p>
Investigate and promote contemporary, pedagogical and ICT approaches to support excellence in learning and teaching	<p>Professional learning opportunities for teachers to assist in developing pedagogical skills as part of the Digital Education Revolution were provided and beneficial.</p>

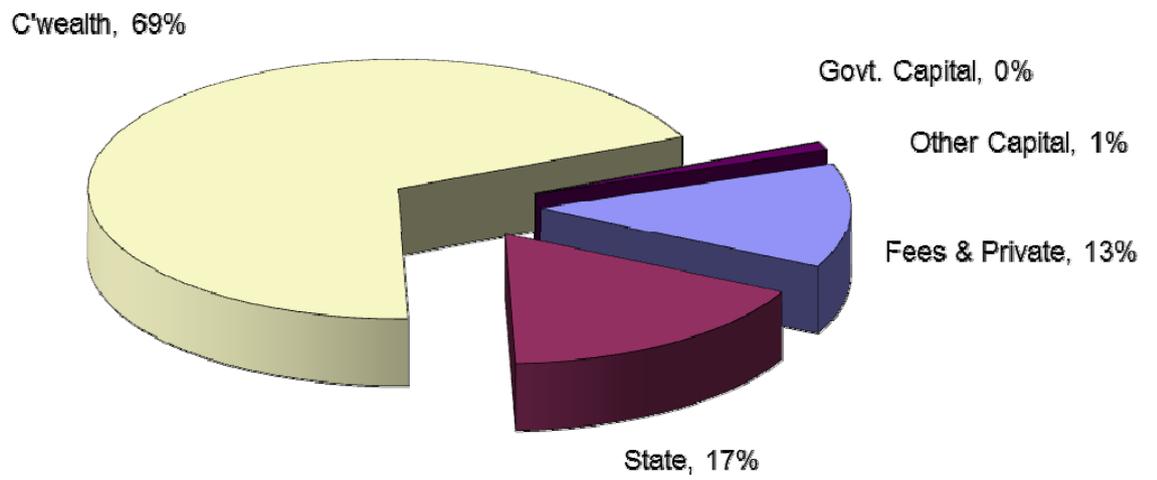
Community Satisfaction

St Joseph's School is well respected in the Merriwa and wider community. The students and staff are proud of their school and enjoy attending daily. The attendance record shows very little time out of school. Students and parents attend extracurricular school activities in good number, such as working bees, fund raisers, social events and representing the school at civic functions. The school is called upon to perform various civic roles within the wider community which is testament to the pride the community has in the school. The Parents and Friends Association is very well supported by parents in its efforts to assist the school. Staff rollover from 2013 – 2014 was 100%. This along with anecdotal feedback from staff indicates that the staff is very satisfied with the operation of the school. Enrolment numbers have been on a steady increase for several years.

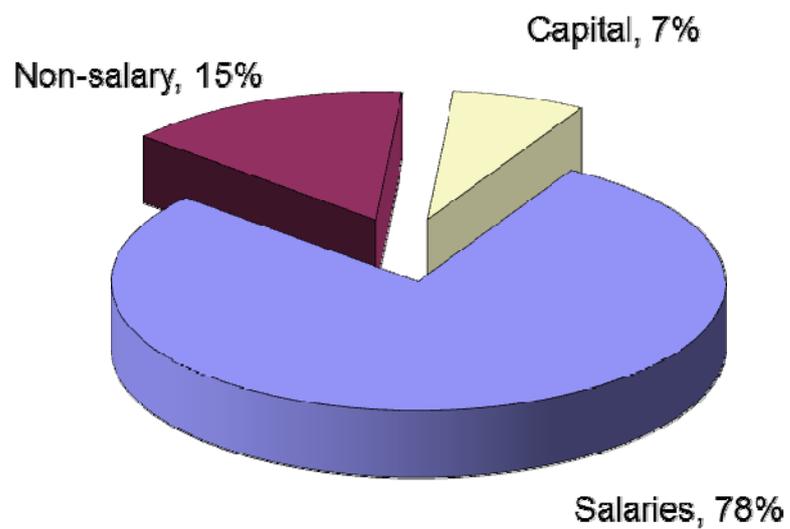
Financial Information

The following graphs represent the income and expenditure for St Joseph's Primary School, Merriwa for the school year ending 31 January 2015 as aggregated from the annual returns to the Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training.

Recurrent & Capital Income



Recurrent & Capital Expenditure



Concluding Statement

St Joseph's School Merriwa is a school of great learning and a wonderful partnership between the home and school. The commitment of the staff to the education of the students ensures the academic, social, spiritual and physical well-being of every child.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the teachers and staff at St Joseph's for their professionalism and deep sense of vocation in their education of the children. The theme of 2014 was to "Keep the Main thing, the main thing". The teachers have done that very well. The improvement of student learning has been their goal and they have not wavered in their pursuit of this.

My thanks to Mrs Anne Marie Peebles and Mrs Sally Gilbey for their assistance in preparing this report.

My appreciation also goes to The Catholic Schools office staff for their support of our school in all aspects of its operation. I thank Fr John our Parish Priest for his spiritual direction.

Report Access and Publication

This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, The Board of Studies, The Parents and Friends Association, the Parish Priest and to all parents.

Copies of this school's Annual School Report are available to the general public. Persons wishing to access a copy of the report may do so by accessing the school website at <http://www.merriwa.catholic.edu.au/> or by contacting:

Mrs Helen Whale
Principal
St Joseph's Primary School
Marquet Street
MERRIWA NSW 2329
(02) 65482035

For further information relating to the Diocesan Policy please refer to: <http://mn.catholic.edu.au>