

St Matthews Central School, Mudgee

Annual School Educational and Financial Report

2008



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ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Matthews Central School, Mudgee is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and is part of a system of schools managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Bathurst. The CEO Bathurst, is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Educational and Financial Report for this year provides the school community with reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education (NSW) in conjunction with requirements of the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

This Report also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year, and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school's Annual Development Plan.

Accordingly, this Report demonstrates accountability to the school community and the CEO, Bathurst.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, yearbooks and other regular communications. This report will be available on the school and CEO websites by 30 June 2009 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on (02) 6372 1742 or by visiting the website at www.stmattsmudgee.nsw.edu.au.

PRINCIPAL: ROSE-MARIE VAN RAAD

DATE: 30 DECEMBER 2008

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

2008 has been a busy year for St Matthews with many successes and highlights in all aspects of school life - Religious Education, Academia, Cultural and Sporting. It is a great privilege to lead St Matthews Catholic School with the support and hard work of dedicated teaching and support staff, our parish, excellent students and a supportive parent body. Our school continues to be at the cutting edge of education because of the combined efforts of everyone involved.

This year we participated in an independent audit of the school and its operations and we were delighted with their findings, some of which included:

- A very welcoming and happy school
- The best documentation they have ever seen in any school, including teaching programs, policies and school administration
- A strong curriculum with an excellent variety and choice of elective subjects
- Excellent structures and programs in place for the transition from primary to secondary schooling
- Excellent resources to support teaching and learning and an extensive network of ICT resources/services

In 2008 our children have taken part in a broad range of learning experiences that were both challenging and exciting. Some of the highlights in 2008 were: Our secondary students made it to the State Final in the Science and Engineering Challenge; the National Finals in the Solar Car/Boat Challenge; a Year 10 student won a national writing competition; one of our Year 10 boys was one of 12 students from across NSW selected to represent our school at ANZAC Cove on ANZAC Day in 2009. The school performed the musical "The Wizard of Oz" in term three. The singing, acting, music, dancing, costumes, scenery and artwork were all fantastic and received rave reviews. Congratulations to all the students, teachers and parents involved in this amazing production.

Whilst it is easy to point out another set of exceptional results in 2008, it is the hidden joys of achievement for so many students whose results are not necessarily making headlines or for those who achieve against enormous personal odds that continue to be the most satisfying of all our 'successes' at the school. This can only happen when students, staff and parents work together positively and honestly. I am deeply grateful and appreciative to all in our school community for such support.

Rose-Marie van Raad
Principal

PARISH PRIEST'S MESSAGE

Congratulations on another fine year for our school. It gives me much joy when I meet our teachers, parents and young people who are trying to live out the Gospel in our community. Ultimately the school is about that which is of God and the Kingdom and we thank all those who are attempting in their family life to "love God and love their neighbour" as Jesus asked us to do. This year it was great to see the involvement of many young people who were part of the visit of the Cross and Icon to our school and parish, and to see the students and ex-students who were able to be part of the World Youth Day week in Sydney.

Father Garry McKeown
Parish Priest

PARENTS and FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

There is a strong partnership between the school and parents and we do valuable work together. The P&F achievements in 2008 included:

- Major fundraising including a raffle, silver trail, spellathon, and Christmas Fiesta
- Many social activities including the fishing day, Mothers' and Fathers' Day stalls and the welcoming cocktail night;
- Purchasing of new literacy resources and ICT resources including an activote system.

The P&F looks forward to continuing to support the outstanding efforts of the school and its teachers and students.

Samantha Orr
P&F President

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

The mission of St Matthews Central School is to create a safe and caring Catholic community within a dynamic educational environment where Christ is the centre of everything we say and do. St Matthews Central School seeks to deepen students' faith in Jesus Christ through study, prayer, worship, sacramental life and service so that the school motto "Truth is great and will prevail" is truly lived.

The school acknowledges the role of parents as first and foremost educators of their children and the role of the parish in the faith formation of students. Hence, links with the local parish are vital in the life of our school.

St Matthews Central School follows the Bathurst Diocese Religious Education Curriculum. The Religious Education programme:

- Provides learning experiences which develop faith, religious and social understandings of the students, highlighting the need for compassion, justice and service in our wider community
- Makes accessible the Catholic Christian tradition through the person of Jesus Christ and the rich heritage of tradition, ritual, prayer, scripture and liturgy
- Makes accessible the traditions of other religious communities
- Provides access to relevant experiences of prayer, liturgy, opportunity for spiritual reflection and Sacramental participation, out of school retreat experiences and community ministry and action
- Provides the students with the opportunity to clarify their own religious thinking and attitudes
- Provides a developmental, cohesive and integrated programme which meets the needs of students throughout their years at St Matthews.

Spirituality is fostered through the centrality of prayer in the life of the school – daily student prayer, classroom prayer and Tuesday staff prayer. Through such integration there is a sense of common meaning and purpose.

SCHOOL FEATURES

St Matthews Central School is a co-educational school of approximately 550 students situated in Mudgee, educating students from Kindergarten to Year 10.

At St Matthews we strive to educate the whole person as spiritual, physical, emotional and academic beings so that our young boys and girls grow to be confident young adults who make positive contributions to the world.

St Matthews continues to be “small enough to care”; a school where teachers have a chance to know their students individually, to understand their needs and recognise their special gifts.

One of the greatest strengths of our Pastoral Care program is that students have a significant adult looking after their day-to-day welfare which provides a point of reference for parents, allowing for the care and attention of the individual.

We have high expectations of our students and are committed to ensuring that they are inspired and challenged not only to outstanding academic success, but also to faith development and support for social justice issues and service to others.

We pride ourselves on our modern facilities, clear standards and expectations of students, our fine record of academic success and care for each student. This, combined with a wide range of sporting and cultural activities, challenges every student to identify talents and develop them with excellence. The school boasts a very strong music department, with visiting music tutors, a school band and choirs in infants, primary and secondary.

Our students are taught by committed and enthusiastic staff in a learning environment that recognizes the needs of the individual.

St Matthews greatly values its relationships with its families and encourages them to be ‘part of the journey’ as their sons and daughters progress through the school. A commitment to be involved in the education of sons or daughters through participation in the life of the school brings untold benefits to parents. Meeting other parents and involvement in this phase of a child’s journey is a wonderful experience not to be missed. The support and involvement of parents is very much part of the ‘St Matthews spirit’.

The active support of a generous Parents and Friends Association has also added a substantial level of financial and personal support to the whole school community.

ENROLMENT POLICIES AND PROFILES

Composition of Student Population

Enrolments remained steady in 2008 with 583 students enrolled. There are approximately 52.5% boys and 47.5% girls in the school. 72% of students enrolled in 2008 were baptised Catholic. In 2008, we had 26 classes.

Enrolment Policy & Pre-requisites for Continuing Enrolment

St Matthews Central School is a comprehensive coeducational K-10 Catholic school providing an education underpinned by Christian values and operating within the policies of the New South Wales Board of Studies. All applications are processed in order of receipt, and consideration is given to the applicant's support for the ethos of the school, the presence of siblings already attending the school, and other criteria as determined by the school.

Once enrolled, students are expected to maintain their enrolment by:

- Supporting the school's ethos
- Demonstrating appropriate effort, attitude and behaviour
- Complying with the school rules

Children must turn 5 before the 30th June in the year of enrolment.

The full text of enrolment policies may be accessed via:

The school office

The school website: www.stmattsmudgee.nsw.edu.au

There were no changes to the enrolment policy in 2008.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate during 2008 was 96%.

St Matthews enjoys a high student attendance rate. Productive and meaningful lessons and activities remain our focus throughout each term and at the end of the year. We aim to have as close to maximum student attendance as possible. In addition, on sport days and on days with extra curricular activities our normal expectations regarding student attendance apply.

POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

- 92% of Year 10 students went on to further study (Years 11 & 12 or TAFE)
- 8% of Year 10 students went into the workforce

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

St Matthews Central School, Mudgee follows the Board of Studies syllabus for each course offered (as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Education Office. Teachers at the school are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the school curriculum.

The school offers sixteen Board of Studies mandated and approved School Certificate (SC) subjects. In 2008, SC electives included: Information Software Technology, Wood Technology, Food Technology, Graphics Technology, Drama, Commerce, Visual Arts, Physical Activity and Sports Studies (PASS) and Agriculture.

The core subjects offered in Years 7 & 8 include: Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Visual Arts, Music, PDHPE, LOTE (French), Technology (Design, Food, Wood and Computers) Mandatory.

From K-6 students are taught from seven different Key Learning Areas: Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science & Technology, HSIE, PDHPE & Creative & Practical Arts.

A new Mathematics program "Go Maths" was successfully introduced to the Primary this year. This program focuses more on critical thinking and working mathematically.

The school continued to work toward improved differentiation of teaching and learning across the curriculum. Support for students at all levels was again offered by way of programs for Gifted and Talented students, Special Education students, and learning support for those students with learning difficulties that do not attract government funding.

The school offers a very strong co-curricular program in the area of sport, creative and performing arts and science and technology.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN)

Literacy and Numeracy

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 around Australia sat the NAPLAN Tests in May 2008. Individual student reports were provided in September 2008.

The test results provide information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

YEAR 3

Overall Literacy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2006	418.0	427.9	451.1
2007	424.0	426.1	443.6
2008	419.5	428.5	436.8

Numeracy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2006	409.0	420.5	443.2
2007	407.0	411.5	421.4
2008	409.6	418.5	418.9

YEAR 5

Overall Literacy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2006	499.0	500.4	510.9
2007	501.0	507.0	517.6
2008	497.4	502.4	520.2

Numeracy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2006	491.0	489.5	495.9
2007	495.0	499.6	501.0
2008	489.1	495.4	514.9

YEAR 7

Overall Literacy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2006	541.0	547.0	548.4
2007	543.0	553.0	577.4
2008	541.2	544.9	556.7

Numeracy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2006	550.0	555.2	572.3
2007	556.0	567.3	606.3
2008	552.9	548.7	557.8

YEAR 9

Overall Literacy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2008	579.5	585.1	582.9

Numeracy	State Mean	Diocese Mean	School Mean
2008	579.5	590.2	596.9

National Minimum Standards

In 2008 the Commonwealth Government set minimum acceptable standards for Reading, Writing Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy for each grade tested through NAPLAN. These are referred to as 'national minimum standards' and replace the 'national benchmarks'.

The percentages of students in this school achieving the national minimum standard are reported below.

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Year 3	98%	100%	98%	98%	100%
Year 5	100%	98%	100%	100%	98%
Year 7	98%	98%	100%	98%	100%
Year 9	97%	94%	98%	98%	100%

These results reflect both the high standard of teaching and learning in the school.

School Certificate Results

The percentage of students achieving bands 4, 5 and 6 is reported against statewide performance in each of the subjects shown. Comparative performance with the 2007 cohort is also shown.

% in Bands 4, 5, 6	English Literacy		Mathematics		Science		Australian History		Australian Geography		Computer Skills	
	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State
2008	96%	76%	64%	59%	91%	65%	65%	51%	81%	66%	100%	98%
2007	81%	72%	38%	45%	75%	65%	68%	59%	84%	71%	100%	98%

The 2008 School Certificate results continued the overall trend of being significantly above the State average. The mean percentage for St Matthews for the total number of students scoring bands 4, 5 & 6 was 14.5% above that of the state.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

Professional learning

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

The school held four whole staff days in 2008. The content of these days were as follows: The Quality Teaching Framework (Term 1), KLA Days held at St John's College in Dubbo (Secondary) & Quality Teaching & Assessment as well as Differentiation for Gifted and Talented students (Primary) (Term 3), A full staff retreat day off campus under the leadership of an invited guest Br Graham Neist (Term 4), School Strategic Planning (Term 4). Additional professional development sessions were held after school for all staff in: Behaviour Management, Speech Pathology – Identification and Strategies, Religious Education, Go Maths and Mental Health Update.

Department meetings are regularly held formally once per fortnight, with additional meetings held to complement whole staff meetings and executive meetings held weekly, such as faculty meetings in secondary and grade meetings in primary.

The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning for 2008 was \$385. Staff participated in 1450 hours of professional development throughout 2008.

Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers on this staff who fall into each of the three categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications	Number of Teachers
1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	43
2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0
3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.	0

TEACHER ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

The average teacher attendance rate during 2008 was 96.96%

The Teacher retention rate from 2007 to 2008 was 93.88%

SCHOOL POLICIES: STUDENT WELFARE, DISCIPLINE, COMPLAINTS and GRIEVANCES

St Matthews policies and procedures related to the discipline of students are published through a combination of the student diary, staff handbook, parent/student handbooks, newsletters and the school prospectus. A full copy of the school's Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy can be obtained from the school office, or from the school's website www.stmattsmudgee.nsw.edu.au

Students are required to abide by the school's rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people in authority delegated by the school. In general, no students shall say or do anything contrary to good order, decency and common sense. Students are expected at all times to behave courteously, to show consideration for others and for the community as a whole, to value their own self respect and the good name of the school. Where disciplinary action is required, penalties imposed vary according to the nature of the breach of discipline and a student's prior behaviour.

Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances.

The school believes that every student has the right to a safe, supportive and caring environment which:

- minimises the risk of harm and ensures that students feel secure
- encourages students to be intellectually able, spiritually aware, socially responsible, emotionally mature, physically healthy and culturally enriched
- provides student welfare policies and programs which develop a sense of self worth and foster personal development.

To ensure that all aspects of the schools mission and the pastoral needs of our students are met, the following policies and procedures are in place:

- Child Protection Policy
- Security Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy

Documentation relating to these policies are to be found in:

- Staff Handbook
- School Policies and Procedures Handbook
- School Diary
- Student/Parent Handbook
- CEO Policies and Procedures Handbook

Student Welfare (Pastoral Care) Policy

The School's Pastoral Care Policy is concerned with the fostering of students' self discipline. It aims to develop persons who are responsible. It sets out to help students recognise that their fundamental freedoms and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities. To this end various programs aimed at helping students value themselves and experience well-being are incorporated into the school's pastoral curriculum.

The full text of the school Student Welfare Policy may be accessed via:

- The school's website: www.stmattsmudgee.nsw.edu.au
- The school office

There were no changes made to the Student Welfare Policy during the year.

Discipline Policy

The Discipline policy outlines the mutual rights and responsibilities of students and staff and all members of the St Matthew's school community. The management system for discipline clearly outlines four levels of discipline according to principles of procedural fairness. Trust between all parties is essential to maintain a Discipline Policy that is fair, just and compassionate.

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by school persons and non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the school.

The full text of the school Discipline Policy may be accessed via

- The school's website: www.stmattsmudgee.nsw.edu.au
- The school office

There were no changes made to the Discipline Policy during the year.

Complaints and Grievances Policy

A policy which outlines the principles and process of parent complaints and grievances is printed annually in the school newsletter. The full text of the school Complaints and Grievances Policy may be accessed by contacting the office and requesting a copy. In principle, it is important that concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively to address the issue, allay fears and prevent issues developing into major problems. It is expected that all complaints are dealt with impartially, confidentially, fairly and speedily.

In general, parents should first address the problem with the staff member closely concerned.

There were no changes made to the Complaints and Grievances Policy during the year.

SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT AND TARGETS

Each year the school develops an annual development plan comprising priority areas for development, performance indicators and strategies. This is drawn from the School Strategic Plan developed following our full school appraisal in 2006. The 2006-2011 Strategic Plan is available from the school's office. Some of the goals/targets for 2008 included:

- Staff inservicing on the Quality Teaching Framework
- Staff inservicing on "Creating a Challenging and Thinking Classroom"
- Upgrade of ICT resources including the purchase of 46 new iMacs and 8 new staff laptops
- Purchase of new music equipment, including new drums and guitars
- Upgrade classrooms; new carpet in many classrooms across the school
- Gifted and talented extension and enrichment days in the areas of Science & Creative & Practical Arts
- Maintain a viable extra curricula program which includes sport and the arts.
- Review the primary sports program
- Develop and implement a new Maths program into K-6 as part of a whole school numeracy program, focusing on working mathematically
- Introduction of a new program called RISC – a database program to provide tracking, communication and accountability of all pastoral care issues, K-10
- Develop a new school website and individual email accounts for all staff
- Purchase and install a new Apple widescreen TV in the library to showcase photos and movies of school events
- Renovate school hall
- Install new security around the school, new school fence and upgrade of alarm system.

INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Our school has the welfare of our students, and their general wellbeing, as our highest priority. We really care for our students. Our achievements in 2008 include:

- Lunch time competitions in the primary with the emphasis on maximum student participation
- Supervised after school study in the secondary
- Shine program for Year 8 girls
- Boys into Fine Men for Year 10 boys
- Human Rights Day for Year 8
- Buddy reading program
- K-6 buddy program
- Yr 6 & Yr 10 leaders – roles and responsibilities

Members of our school represented St Matthews at the local ANZAC Day ceremony and laid a wreath on behalf of the school community. In term three we conducted a leadership camp for Year 9, and in term four a one day camp for Year 5.

During the season of Lent our students raised \$1,321 for Caritas Australia. A further \$2395 was raised for the Missions and other nominated charities on our mission day in September. Other fund raising included Jeans for Genes Day, Oxfam Christmas Appeal, Saint Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal.

Retreats were held for all students in Years 3, 6, 7, 9 & 10. A reflection day was held for Year 8, while whole school Masses, Year group Masses and class reconciliation services were held regularly throughout the year.

A variety of activities developing respect and responsibilities, which are quite challenging and promote a sense of respect for others and responsibility towards others is at the heart of our shared charism.

PARENT, TEACHER AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

Generally there is a strong community morale at St Matthews with a sense of shared purpose and drive. No one is perfect at any level. However, there is a healthy sense of reality and an appreciation that we strive together to achieve the best we can – at this time and under whatever circumstances – for our children. Feedback from the P&F is realistic and honest and if there is an issue to be addressed, it is. We continue to evaluate and welcome feedback that is constructive and direct. It forms the basis of our planning for the future. The success of our students is testimony to that strong foundation.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (2008)

Catholic Schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Catholic Education Office, Bathurst submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the 34 primary, central and secondary schools. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Education Office are audited annually.



