OUR LADY OF MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
ANNUAL COMMUNITY REPORT 2015

SCHOOL PROFILE

Our Lady of Mercy School is founded in the Catholic Christian tradition. The school is in the Meander Valley Parish which serves both Westbury, Deloraine and surrounding areas and is situated adjacent to the Holy Redeemer Church in Deloraine.

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School aims to provide an education which fosters the spiritual, academic, social, emotional and physical development of its students through a balanced curriculum.

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School is committed to nurturing Faith and encouraging each person’s relationship with God, through Jesus Christ. We value a Christian way of living that promotes a commitment to care, service and respect for justice and compassion within our school community and in society in general. We strive to provide the best possible learning environment.

We value excellence in the pursuit of all aspects of school life. We encourage all individuals to achieve their potential. We value a strong sense of community and encourage full involvement of parents, students and staff in the life of the school.

We value each child’s uniqueness and welcome his/her particular and special abilities and needs.

Our Lady of Mercy School was established by the Sisters of Mercy in February, 1895.

The Sisters taught both boys and girls from infant to secondary classes and also took in girl boarders. In 1971 the secondary section was closed and the boarding school closed in 1972.

The first lay principal was appointed in 1996. The school is now staffed entirely by lay people.

The school’s motto, ‘The Lord is my Light’, is reflected in Liturgy, assemblies, gatherings and is central in all planning.

The school tastefully blends ultra-modern facilities and refurbished heritage sections. Complementing the buildings are well-maintained spacious grounds, two adventure playground areas and a full-sized netball/basketball/tennis court.

The School Board works in collaboration with the Principal in the planning for, and bringing to reality, improvements in all areas of function at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School. The Board also oversees the responsible supervision of school resources and sees that the school meets its governmental, financial, industrial and legal obligations.

Parents are actively involved in many ways, especially through classroom help. We have a very committed Parents and Friends Association who have a representation on the Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Council.

CATHOLIC LIFE AND MISSION

Liturgy and Prayer:

Regardless of religious background, all children are welcomed at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School. We celebrate being a community of Faith where values for living have, as their root, the Gospel values.

Our Catholic identity and ethos are integral to all areas and function of the life of the school.

The learning offered at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School is an invitation for each student to develop to his/her full potential as a person. The education program is delivered in a faith context and is therefore an invitation to a relationship with God.

The school’s Catholic identity is expressed in various ways: through class and whole school prayer, liturgical celebrations, religious symbols, the Religious Education Program, community service and the manifestation of Gospel values in the day to day happenings and interactions of the school community.

Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration

We began our school year with an Opening School and Commissioning of Staff Mass attended by students, parents and parishioners. We gathered again for Ash Wednesday and Mercy Day. Whole School Assemblies began with a prayer. The principal attended the Parish Pastoral Council meetings, giving an update on school events.
Each class has an established sacred space and prayer is an integral part of the day in each class.

In 2015, the school continued to provide a variety of experiences to foster the students’ spiritual and faith formation. All students from Kinder to grade 6 engaged in prayer liturgies in the Church and Multi-Purpose Hall, with Prep to Six students attending parish masses. This structure was in consultation with Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Parish, and in particular, Father Terry Yard who regularly leads many of the liturgies. Advent, Lent, Easter, Holy Week along with significant events such as Mother’s, Father’s and Grandparents Days were liturgically celebrated with strong attendance by family and friends.

Parents and friends were invited to join their children in all the liturgical celebrations.

**Religious Education Curriculum:**

Religious Education is the foundation of our school and is an integral part of our Curriculum.


The MJR (Making Jesus Real) programme continues to be integrated into life at the school and students and staff are able to draw on it to reinforce the development of values and spirituality in the classroom and playground settings. This program, specifically offered to Grade 6 students, is overseen by Peter Mitchell and Mr Julian Davie and is designed to promote Christian leadership and to foster a relationship with Jesus that is real to the students and applicable to their daily lives.

**The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese:**

Led by Fr Terry Yard the Parish has responsibility in candidate preparation for the Sacramental Program. The school continued in its role as support for both Parish and parents in preparing children for the reception of the sacraments of First Eucharist, Confirmation and First Reconciliation. The sacramental program is parish-based and supported by the school.

Primary grades prepared and attended the weekly Wednesday Parish Mass.

**Community Participation and Christian Outreach:**

Students and their families donated food for St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal and food donations were also given to Deloraine House for their Christmas Appeal.

In 2015, our school continued its outreach program of providing assistance to Catholic charities. These included the Archbishop’s Samaritan Fund and Caritas.

Students also participated in the Deloraine Carols by Candlelight.

**Parent Participation:**

At the commencement of the year Information Sessions were held by class teachers. Parents met with class teachers where details were provided for the management of each class, homework and communication expectations.

Student goal setting meetings were held by each class teacher early in the year and Parent/Teacher Evenings in first term.

Parent involvement is actively encouraged through our Volunteer’s Program. All Volunteers attend an Induction Session with the Principal prior to working with students in the school.

The weekly newsletter contains items of general information, educational articles, a diary of upcoming events, a report from class teachers on a rostered basis, Parents & Friends and community notices. Photos highlight the activities of students during the previous week.

The school sincerely appreciates parents assisting in the classroom, canteen, fundraising and excursions.
OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School is committed to providing the best possible education for its students. The school aims to develop the whole child spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and morally. The Australian Government mandates eight learning areas. Teachers use the Australian Curriculum as a basis for student learning. As a Catholic school an additional high priority learning area is Religious Education.

Learning and Teaching:

The staff of Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School is dedicated, committed and energetic. They are an open, welcoming and cohesive team who build strong, quality relationships with students, parents and each other and contribute to a very supportive and collegial atmosphere. Staff is encouraged to build professional capacity through quality professional learning. The Principal is proactive in encouraging discussion with staff members to provide support for quality classroom practice.

Weekly staff and curriculum meetings were held which reflected term, annual and System direction. Whole day professional development experiences were also held.

The school uses the Good News for Living Religious Education Curriculum and the Australian Curriculum. From K – Gr 6 specialist lessons include Music, Speech and Drama, Physical Education and Japanese.

Within the classroom children are involved in individual, small group and whole class activities. Our approach to children with special needs is to identify those students of concern, involve specialists when necessary and prepare specific programs to address the needs of students. Our approach is inclusive and programs are overseen by the class teacher, parents / guardians, Learning Support teacher, Principal, Catholic Education Office personnel. Parent input is seen as vital with communication with parents occurring regularly. This enhances the teaching and learning program within the classroom and gives students the opportunity to receive one-on-one or small group assistance.

Targeted Programs

Our Lady of Mercy has a number of students who receive Equity Funding for Targeted Programs. Identified students benefited from the extra funding and received additional support in the classroom through individualised programs, programs requiring 1:1 support and small group focus, by working with teacher aides. The teacher aide role is to support the teacher in the classroom enabling the teacher to give the intervention and explicit teaching required with intervention programs for students in the area of literacy, numeracy and social skills. Teacher aides take a significant role in supporting teachers with the implementing of Individual Education Plans for students with special needs. They also implement the funded speech programs. The professional relationship which exists between teachers and teacher assistants has contributed in a significant way to the enhancement of student outcomes at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School.

Student Leadership

Student leadership is encouraged and fostered. Formal positions of leadership included school captains and vice captains as well as house captains. School leaders were given opportunities throughout the year to develop leadership skills and individual gifts and talents were developed.

In Term 4, Grade 5 students were selected to attend a Caritas Day with other northern Catholic school students. This day provided an experience for those students in being a leader. The staff at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School is deeply committed to caring for each child and recognises the uniqueness of each.

The school continued to provide opportunities for students to develop capacity in the area of leadership. The majority of Grade Six students were exposed to leadership experiences through leadership days, sporting carnivals and interaction with other students.
NAPLAN 2015 Summary Report
Our Lady Of Mercy Catholic School

Year 3 Reading

Year 3 Persuasive Writing

Year 3 Spelling

Summary
Percentage of Students with Relative Gain (from 2 years prior)

Prepared by Educational Performance Services 7/08/2015
Page 1 of 4
# NAPLAN 2015 Summary Report

## Our Lady Of Mercy Catholic School

### Year 5 Reading

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Positive Behaviour Support

School-wide Positive Behaviour Support is premised by students being accountable for their own actions and decisions. Students are given clear guidelines as to school expectations and are explicitly taught what these mean. While there may be consequences for their actions the primary focus of our school is to teach the expected behaviours. There is out-of-school support for those students with ongoing challenges, using local community expertise where possible. There is zero tolerance to fighting and bullying with set procedures and consequences. The school believes in working in partnership with parents to support students.

A buddy system between the older and younger students develops positive relationships. Opportunities arise in the educational, social and religious settings.

ENROLMENT

Class structures in 2015 were:
Kindergarten – 10 students,
Preparatory – 14 students,
Grade 1 – 17 students,
Grade 2 - 15 students,
Grade 3 18 students
Grade 4 23 students.
Grade 5 16 students
Grade 6 11 students

There were 80 families represented in the school. Just over half of the student population was drawn from regional areas around Deloraine with the remainder coming from the town of Deloraine. There were 57 catholic students and 72 non-catholic students. The school also offers the B4 Program for children from birth to 4 years.

The Enrolment policy is in accordance with the TCEC guidelines, with the guarantee of a place for every Catholic student seeking enrolment. In Term 1, Kindergarten students attended school for three full days. All other students attend school fulltime.

The average attendance rate was 95% for Prep - Grade 6 students.

Parents of students absent from school are required to ring or email the school to notify student absence. The school follows guidelines for student absence as directed by TCEO.

Our teaching staff comprises experienced professionals whose qualifications enable them to be fully registered with the Tasmanian Registration Board. There were 12 teaching staff and 7 ancillary staff members.

The Leadership Team was comprised of the Principal, Assistant to the Principal: Religious Education and Assistant to the Principal: Learning and Teaching.

Teacher aides at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School are dedicated and highly skilled. They liaise closely with teaching staff, Catholic Education Office personnel and specialists.

Staff also includes a Finance Officer and Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Utility Officer, WHS officer, ICT Aide and cleaner. These roles have differing hours of employment.

The Parish Priest, Fr Terry Yard, fosters active participation of all our students in the Faith life of the school and has developed a positive relationship with both staff and students. Father Terry Yard is a member of the School Board of Management.

SERVING OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY in 2015

Leadership:
Principal: Mrs Josephine Craddock(Terms 1 & 2) Mrs Mary Wall
AP:LT and Literacy Project Officer - Mrs Chris Huett
AP:R.E - Miss Dianne Murray
Miss Tegan Bailey - Prep
Miss Dianne Murray & Mrs Pauline Denman – Grade 1/2
Miss Mariah Parsons & Miss Michelle Donohoe – Grade 3
Miss Jenni Hughes – Grade 4
Mr Christopher Weare – Grade 5/6
Mrs Amelia Reynolds – Music, Drama, School Choir, Chamber Choir
Mr Nick Cramp - Physical Education
Mrs Clare Weare - Learning Support
**Teacher Assistants:**
Mrs Anita Bowman – Kindergarten
Mrs Kim Dane
Mrs Carol Lyall - Primary
Mrs Amanda Maude - Primary
Mrs Georgie Warham - Kindergarten

**Administration:**
Mrs Anne Stewart - School Secretary/Finance Officer
Mrs Katie Gardner – Administration /ICT Aide/WH&S

**Services:**
Mr Pat Coleman – Groundsperson/Security
Miss Rachel Lowery - Cleaner

**School Board Membership 2015:**
Chair – Mr Simon Bennett
Vice Chair -
Secretary - Ms Vanetta Harding
Treasurer – Mr Simon Bennett
Members – Mr Michael Sullivan, Mr Simon Bennett, Mr Ken Puccetti, Ms Vanetta Harding, Father Terance Yard, Mrs Josephine Craddock and Mrs Mary Wall.

**Parents and Friends Executive Committee**
President – Mrs Gina Sullivan
Vice President - Penny Burbury
Secretary – Yvette Donovan
Treasurer – Mrs Cindy Kelly
Canteen Coordinator – Mrs Jayne Bennett
Uniform Coordinator - Vanessa Gibson
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

OUR LADY OF MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
EXPENDITURE 2015
Total Expenditure $1.6 million

OUR LADY OF MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL
SOURCES OF INCOME 2015
Total Income $1.5 million