St Cecilia's
Catholic Primary School
Wyong

2013 Annual Report
1. **Message from Our School Community**

1.1 **Message from the Principal**

Saint Cecilia’s Catholic Primary School, Wyong, has once again provided members of the school community with many wonderful opportunities and experiences. The whole community including the children, parents, staff and Parish Priests have all contributed to ensure the school has prospered in 2013. This report will outline the year in detail and share with parents the success the school has gained this year.

1.2 **Message from the Parent Body**

The learning of the children continues to be the primary focus. The welcoming sense of community that people experience is vital to the success the children experience in their everyday school lives. Parents all want what is best for the children – for them to be happy and learning! It is the continual nurturing of that home-school relationship which provides this for the children. The parent body continues to support the children and the school in many areas.

The relationship that exists between the school and parents has also seen many jointly funded projects undertaken in our school including the new shade sail for the infants playground, oven for the canteen and the electronic sign at the front of the school.
1.3 Message from the Student Body

Our leaders regularly put forward their class’s suggestions for how we can improve our school. This saw the repainting of lines for our handball courts, improvement with seating for primary classes and locks and doors being fixed in the toilets.

This year has seen our Student Representative Council (SRC) leaders, from Years 3 to 6, lead with pride and enthusiasm. Our portfolio teams of Environment, Social Justice/School Values, Creative Arts and Social/Community were kept busy yearlong with many school improvement initiatives.

SRC involved themselves on many levels this year. Responsibilities included helping with the Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day Stalls, marching in the ANZAC Day parade in Wyong, representing the school at the Remembrance Day Ceremony in Wyong and co-ordinating the Great Aussie Book Swap. Late in Term 2 the SRC was involved in a Leadership Day which saw the SRC from St Peter’s Catholic College, Tuggerah come to our school and mentor our students on what makes a good leader. Children were involved in public speaking activities, problem solving tasks and mentoring sessions.
2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2013:

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</table>

*Language background other than English

2.2 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an Enrolment Policy† which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

†Copies of this policy and other policies in this report may be obtained from the Catholic Schools Office website at: http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au/about/index.html or by contacting the Catholic Schools Office.

2.3 Staff Profile

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

a) have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines;

b) have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications;

c) do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:

- to ‘teach’ in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
- as a ‘teacher’ during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

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Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school’s profile page on the My School website.

2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2013 was 95%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2012 to 2013 was 92%.
2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

In each of the end of term review meetings staff commented upon the positive staff morale and the support provided to the school and staff. The focus on the children’s learning was evident even though there were numerous challenges throughout the year. The staff valued the opportunity to meet with leadership in MASP (Monitoring All Student’s Progress) meetings to discuss individual children and to develop strategies that could be used to enhance each child’s learning. The opportunities the staff had to participate in a wide variety of professional learning opportunities were recognised, as was the influence of the teacher on the children’s learning.

2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average student attendance rate (%)</th>
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</table>

The average student attendance rate for 2013 was 95%.

Management of non-attendance: In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents’ legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the Principal:
• provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging;
• maintains accurate records of student attendance;
• implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise;
• communicates to parents and students the school’s expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations; and
• recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student’s continuum of learning where possible.

The Catholic Schools Office monitors each school’s compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system’s School Review and Development processes.

2.7 Student Satisfaction

Students at St Cecilia’s have reported that they feel cared for and protected in the school environment. They believe they are given many and varied opportunities both in the classroom and as extracurricular activities. The students say that the staff is ‘very kind and understanding’ and that the school’s physical environment is great. Having the chance to sing in the school choir, learn the guitar, attend drama group, join the chess club, participate in public speaking and a wide array of sporting opportunities allow each and every child to share their talents and ”Let their Light Shine!” All classrooms now have interactive electronic boards and are air-conditioned which has made our learning environments comfortable and fun. The children also demonstrate their affinity with the school by the manner in which they participate so eagerly in so many activities and the way in which they thank the adults in their lives for such amazing opportunities.
3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

The school was opened in 1916 by the Sisters of St Joseph. The Sisters originally established it as a secondary day and boarding school as well as a primary school. The primary school was named St Cecilia's and the secondary school, which provided an education up to Intermediate level, was called St Joseph's.

In 1966, the decision was made to offer only a primary education.

During the early eighties, there was a considerable increase in school enrolments and several classroom blocks were erected to cater for the numbers. The Sisters of St Joseph withdrew from St Cecilia's at the end of 1988 and the first lay Principal was appointed in 1989.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

Mary MacKillop's charism is alive and well in our community, in the way we celebrate our faith, learn about our faith and practise our faith in the everyday interactions we have with each other.

We began our school year with a beautiful Mass in the school hall. We welcomed our new Kindergarten students and commissioned our senior students to be noble school leaders. During this Mass the Year 6 students prayed over their Buddies as they began their first year of school.

Before we knew it the season of Lent and Easter was upon us. Each grade focused on a particular aspect of Lent whilst our school leaders led the community in the ancient tradition of walking through the Stations of the Cross.

Religious feast days and special days such as Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day were marked through prayer, song and dance always praising God for his abundant blessings.

A favourite tradition at St Cecilia's is the School/Parish Mass. Each term one of the grades leads a Sunday Parish Mass. Many students and parents took up ministries during these Masses, changed schedules and came along to build communion within our Parish. Such a valuable experience for the children, and yet another example of our fantastic faith community.

As always, St Cecilia's endeavoured to provide faith formation opportunities for the grown-ups in our community. In Term 2 a Mission services Education Officer ran a faith formation morning for women with the help from some of our own mums. They shared morning tea, got to know each other, prayed, even got their nails done!
3.3 Catholic Worldview

The dedicated children who belong to Mini Vinnies continue to show how well they work for our community and the community at large. They had regular visits to the Berkeley Vale Aged Care Facility and supported the St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal.

The students in Mini Vinnies have continued to let our light shine with their work in the school and local community. They led the Harmony Day celebrations in Term One, supported the St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal and the immense joy they brought to the men and women in the local nursing homes continues to show their commitment to discipleship. We are so very proud of their work throughout the year.

As in past years, our numbers of children enrolling in the Sacramental Program keep increasing. We celebrated Confirmation with Year 2, Reconciliation with Year 3 and First Eucharist with Year 4. We also had 3 children baptised this year. We held two enrichment days for the Sacrament of Confirmation and First Eucharist this year. It was a day when children celebrated what was about to take place. These days were a great success and we will endeavour to continue to run these days in the future.

3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an Accreditation Policy for Staff in the Diocesan School System in respect to the Mission of the Church which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

Our staff enjoyed a day at Norah Head Surf Club talking about faith and their own spirituality. The day was shared with spiritual leaders, the Parish Priests and all staff members. Each staff member reflected on their own personal faith journey and expressed this through art. It was a rewarding, personal and valuable experience for the participants.

Several staff members have completed or are in the process of completing study in the theological area and have participated in Ministry for Teachers I and II.
4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policies including Student Welfare and Anti-Bullying, which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

This year at St Cecilia’s we saw the launch of ‘KidsMatter’. KidsMatter is a mental health and well-being framework for primary schools that aims to work with parents, carers and the wider community to nurture happy, balanced kids.

In Term 1 our school community officially launched this initiative. The children participated in a range of activities exploring social and emotional concepts. It was the first time they met in their peer support groups which developed new friendships. The school community was also invited to look through a variety of displays that showcased what happens at our school. They then went on to enjoy a picnic lunch with their children. There was also an informative talk to parents outlining what KidsMatter is. Throughout the day our Aboriginal Education Officer worked with teachers and students to create an aboriginal mural that included every child in our school as well as every teacher.

St Cecilia’s staff undertook training in the first of the Four Component areas – ‘A Positive School Community’ early in the year, then Component Two ‘Social Emotional Learning (SEL) for Students’ in Term 3. Training in Component Two gave teachers professional development in the teaching of SEL and allowed staff to look at the social needs of the children and how to explicitly teach resilience.

The PATCH (Positive Activities to Create Happiness) club was set up in Term 3. This club was run at lunch times and was designed to target those children who sometimes might struggle socially on the playground. Each session involved the students learning about a particular social skill. They were then given some time to participate in activities with their peers and practise this skill.

Throughout the year the children have been learning about ‘Bucket Filling’ and how to be a bucket filler. Bucket filling is when you say or do something nice to someone; you are filling someone’s imaginary bucket. When you do or say something not so nice you are dipping into someone’s bucket.
4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

A KidsMatter parent committee was also set up to assist the KidsMatter Action team. This committee’s job is to continue with developing a positive school community and to look at ways we can support parents and carers in their roles.

The school counsellor consulted with many families and children. These individuals were linked with other support agencies within the local community or helped out at a school-based level.

Other events throughout the year that enhanced the pastoral care for families within the school included Tea and Tissues for new Kindergarten parents, class parents and their significant role in the school, Monday morning in the parent room, helping families in need and the Morning Tea with the Principal every term.

4.4 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.5 Work Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for WHS and complies with the Australian Standard for WHS Management Systems. The WHSMS adopted by the CSO for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a ‘safe and supportive’ environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant CSO personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school’s compliance with WHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office’s Annual WHS Plan. External WHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.
5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

In 2013 St Cecilia’s continued developing the three priority areas of the Schools Improvement Plan including Catholic Life and Mission, Student Wellbeing (Pastoral Care) and Teaching and Learning. In the area of Teaching and Learning the goal was to improve student learning outcomes in Reading and Writing K-6 and to identify student strengths and needs in Maths.

The adoption of several new assessment tools has allowed the school to create some baseline data of the students’ achievements. The new assessment tools allowed the staff to identify areas of concern both as a class and for individual students. Some of these assessment tools included the PAT Maths and Reading tests, Clinical Interviews for identified students in Maths and Best Start Analysis interviews for our Kindergarten children.

The determining of specific targets for each class to achieve was also created and the analysis of these achievements will inform further targets and specific class and individual student goals. With the use of more explicit data staff were trained in identifying patterns, teacher ‘hunches’ about student progress were confirmed and more explicit teaching evolved.

Continued work in the areas of Spelling with the adoption of a whole school Spelling Scope and Sequence and the demand of consistent expectations in the Literacy Block for all children, across all grades were areas which were maintained from the previous year. This along with the beneficial sharing of ideas and expectations with regular Literacy meetings for K-2 and Years 3 and 4 teachers certainly enhanced our learning in this area.

The targeting of Comprehension skills was identified as a need through the analysis of specific data. As a school our Reading fluency and phrasing was at a very good level whereas the Comprehension of Reading was not at the same level. This realisation allowed us to focus on the teaching of specific Comprehension skills. This was achieved through professional learning with staff development days, peer tuition and the creation of IWB flipcharts as a valuable resource for all teachers to share.

A valuable tool for the teachers was the continuation of MASP (Monitoring All Students’ Progress) meetings where the teachers worked collaboratively in identifying those students with needs with the school leadership team, grade partner and Learning Support Teacher to identify specific strategies to help children achieve their best and to help ‘close the gap.’ The time provided for this gave the classroom teachers time to develop strategies to help all individual students achieve their best. The skill and support of the learning support assistants is crucial to the development of all children and the LSAs always work hard to support the teachers and the students in their care.
5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 3 and 5 undertook tests as part of the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3**, students placed in Band 1 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are performing at a standard deemed to be above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 and 6 are “at proficiency”.

- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are performing above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 7 and 8 are “at proficiency”.

- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions.

- State data for Band distributions is sourced from the School Measurement and Reporting Toolkit (SMART2), developed by NSW Department of Education and Communities. All national data and state figures for the percentage at or above national minimum are sourced from the NAPLAN Summary Report (Preliminary Results for Achievement) published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). All school data is sourced from SMART2. Because figures are rounded and exempted students are not included in Band distributions, percentages may not add up to 100.

- In the 2013 cohort, there were (44) students in Year 3 and (59) students in Year 5.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are shown separately for Years 3 and 5. Additional information can also be accessed from the My School website (http://www.myschool.edu.au/).
**Band Distributions (%) – Year 3**

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<th></th>
<th>Band 1</th>
<th>Band 2</th>
<th>Band 3</th>
<th>Band 4</th>
<th>Band 5</th>
<th>Band 6 (+)</th>
<th>% at or above national minimum</th>
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Of the 44 students in Year 3, 25 achieved top 2 Bands in Reading, 36 in top 3 Bands.

41 students achieved top 3 Bands in Writing.

33 students achieved top 3 Bands in Spelling.

35 students achieved top 3 Bands in Grammar and Punctuation.

36 students achieved top 3 Bands in Numeracy.

The Year 3 cohort achieved results that were above Diocesan Mean Score in Reading, Writing, Data and Number strands.

**Band Distributions (%) – Year 5**

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<th>Band 5</th>
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<th>Band 7</th>
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Of the 56 students in Year 5, 38 achieved in top 3 Bands in Reading.

29 students achieved top 3 Bands in Writing.

32 students achieved top 3 Bands in Spelling.

38 students achieved top 3 Bands in Grammar and Punctuation.

31 students achieved top 3 Bands in Numeracy.
5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

There is always a multitude of activities available for the children to involve themselves in each year. The continuation of the school choir, mini Vinnies, guitar group, drama group and the garden club are all initiatives in which all students can play a role. This is not to mention the many wonderful opportunities the children have in the sporting arena to share their gifts and talents.

We are very grateful for the enthusiasm of the students to become a part of the school in these areas and also for the willing staff who quite often give up their own time to lead and supervise the activities for the children.

In 2013 the school held a whole school musical where every child played a role in some way or another. Each class was assigned a decade of music to perform to and to tell that decade’s musical story. "Ragtime to Rap” gave each student the opportunity to perform in front of family and friends and to learn about some musical history. The singing, dancing and acting was phenomenal and the end result was two fantastic performances that were thoroughly enjoyed by the audience members.

5.4 Professional Learning

A Professional Learning Staff Meeting is held on each Monday afternoon. The three specific goals of the school help prioritise the professional development of staff. The primary focus of these meetings is for the staff to keep abreast of educational ideas and how to utilise them at the local level of our school.

Staff Development Days around the themes of Literacy – Reading and Comprehension Skills; Prayer, Spirituality and expressing Faith through art; iPads in the Classroom and a combined Professional Learning Day on the Australian Curriculum ensured the staff were continually informed.

The school leadership team also took the opportunity to attend a conference in Melbourne based on education in the classroom and for school leaders. The Principal was also fortunate enough to visit Singapore and Shanghai to visit schools and school systems to investigate high-performing schools in the regions. There are also several staff completing further study in Religion and Theology.
6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2013 Priorities and Achievements

In Catholic Life and Mission the staff, parents and students were all given the opportunity to share their faith and experience different methods of experiencing prayer in their lives. The ‘Examen’ formed the focus of the school’s prayer life in each of these areas.

In Learning and Teaching the adoption of more consistent assessment tools enabled the teachers to identify and target children in need of support and evaluate the progress of each student. The setting of specific targets and establishment of baseline data in different subject areas enabled the staff to explicitly target specific children and areas of the curriculum. With more improved teaching of comprehension in the reading strand and the continual demand of consistent English blocks and expectations, along with parent education, the growth and development of the children in the Literacy area flourished.

Pastoral Care saw the implementation of the KidsMatter program brought together and emphasised the many wonderful things that happen in this area at St Cecilia’s. The launch day and the parent information session highlighted the wonderful support available to all members of the school community.

6.2 2014 Priorities and Challenges

In Catholic Life and Mission the goal is to evaluate the type of prayer that takes place in our school. We will also continue to offer faith formation activities to all and develop more ways to implement social justice initiatives in the lives of the teachers, children and parents.

The Learning and Teaching domain will see the school place more emphasis on the Numeracy component of the children’s education. The implementation of the EMU (Evaluating Mathematical Understanding) program will be a focus. The task of maintaining the great success of consistent English Block whilst focusing on the Mathematical aspect of the curriculum will certainly be a difficult one. The continual use of appropriate assessment and providing support for all children is a challenge in which we are fortunate to have solid structures in place to achieve success.

The focus on curriculum based social and emotional learning through the ‘Bounce Back’ program, along with the PATCH club and peer support initiatives such as restorative practices will be the challenge in the Pastoral Care area for 2014. The drive and dedication of staff to implement KidsMatter initiatives will provide the school with undoubted success in this key area.
7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

St Cecilia's Catholic School continues to share an excellent relationship with parents. The parent body contributes in many ways to the forward planning and growth of the school and the daily involvement with the children. Not only do the parents play a prominent role in the fundraising activities they also contribute positively to the building of community which is paramount to the school and the education of the students. We are indeed fortunate to have a core group of hardworking parents who provide support for the school in a myriad of ways.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Parents have indicated that they are very satisfied with St Cecilia’s School. The parents are well informed of their role in developing the unique partnership between families and school as educators. There is a strong sense of partnership and support.

There is a lot of communal spirit in the parent body. Parents appreciate the involvement of the staff with their children and the open and regular communication available through interviews, diary entries and informal and formal meetings. The introduction of ‘Morning Tea with the Principal’ was an innovative way to improve the two way communication.

There is a vibrant community feel within the school community, whether it be by contributing with fundraising tasks or enjoying social outings. This essential relationship that enhances a child’s education is embedded in the culture of St Cecilia’s.
8. **Financial Report**

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below. More detailed financial data is available on the "myschool" website at [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au). Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the Diocesan school system Annual Report, which will be available at [http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au)

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**Income**

- 58% Fees & Private Income
- 18% State Government Grants
- 20% Commonwealth Recurrent Grants
- 4% Government Capital Grants
- 0% Other Capital income

**Expenditure**

- 78% Salaries & Related costs
- 22% Non Salary expenditure
- 0% Capital expenditure

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The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School’s consultant, Frances Reynolds.