



2013 ANNUAL REPORT

ST ANTHONY'S PARISH SCHOOL

DIMBULAH

School Profile:

St Anthony's Primary School is an integral part of the Cairns Diocese and the Parish of St Anthony's, Dimbulah.

The school is considered rural and remote with 77 students currently enrolled. Families are mostly from farming backgrounds, therefore, where possible, teachers try to make relevant links with farming and real-life situations.

St Anthony's offers an educational range from Prep to Year 7. The School has four classes, with visiting specialists in Literacy Enrichment, Health and Physical Education, Learning Support and Counselling. The school is committed to the goals of inclusion within a supportive school environment.

Classes at St Anthony's School are generally composite with the grouping of grade levels varying from year to year depending on student enrolments and staffing needs. This school provides a wide variety of learning experiences for students through curriculum programs in all Learning Areas. Intervention programs are offered to support students in their learning.

St Anthony's has a welcoming feel to it and a group of dedicated and motivated parents who assist with the provision of the best educational environment possible for their children.

Close liaison also exists between the school and the wider community, ensuring maximum outcomes for student learning.

Catholic Life and Mission:

Spiritual Development

The Religious Education element of our whole school curriculum is embedded in the everyday life, relationships and culture at St Anthony's. We recognise the presence of God in our school community in each of our students, staff, parents and in the extended members of our wider school family. The sacredness of our people, their lives and our school life together is affirmed and celebrated. Celebration of liturgies and the sacraments are an integral part of the formal, public prayer and worship at St Anthony's. Our staff nurtures conscious and active participation in the prayer life of the school. We aim to develop a variety of approaches to ritualising everyday life in our school using words, actions and symbols in light of the gospel. Our religious education curriculum aims to develop the religious literacy of all of our students to provide a foundation for them to critically inform their participation in the life of their faith communities and in wider society.

In 2013, some of our students from Years 4 to 7 have been guided through their sacramental journey of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation. We have participated in community events including in Catholic Education Week, the Dimbulah Lions Festival, Anzac Day and the Great Wheelbarrow Race. Our school community actively plans and implements structures and practices reflective of the scriptures and Catholic social teaching for justice, peace and ecological sustainability. At St Anthony's, in partnership with Catholic Education Services, we are committed to providing "a quality education for our students by enrich and promoting our Catholic identity, tradition and ethos and through quality Religious Education and Faith Formation". (Strategic Priorities, Diocese of Cairns, 2002)

This year, all classes participated in the 'Making Jesus Real' Program (MJR). The program examines how to find Jesus in our everyday lives. It was written by Peter Mitchell (Archdiocese of Hobart) and St Anthony's was lucky enough to have a visit from "Mitch" in 2013. Although the program is aimed at students in Year 6 and 7, our MJR Teacher adapted lessons to suit the younger grades.

The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese

The school community reflects the diversity of society with families of differing cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The school caters for diverse learning needs within an atmosphere of mutual respect and where individual differences are valued. St Anthony's is an integral part of the parish community. The spiritual growth and welfare of each student, along with sound educational practices is a shared responsibility of the parish priest, principal, staff and parents under the supervision of both Catholic and Government Educational authorities.

Parent Participation

Parents are involved either formally through the Parents and Friends Association or assisting in various activities that are part and parcel of school life. St Anthony's School is fortunate to have a significant level of parent involvement within the school community. Parents contribute to and support the school as classroom helpers, as excursion and whole school camp volunteers and at sporting events.

Parents of children with additional learning needs are active participants in term planning meetings to establish educational goals for their children.

Parents continued to be encouraged to become involved in all aspects of the religious and faith life of the school. Whether it be liturgical celebrations such as class masses, assemblies or a variety of special occasions with a particular prayer or faith focus, parents continued to be regularly invited to share with us whenever such opportunities arose.

A reference group was formed in 2013 to provide interested parents with a forum for discussing concerns, analysing survey results and assisting with the future planning of the school.

Staff Profile:

The staff at St Anthony's Parish School is a dedicated group comprising of:

- Teaching Principal
- APRE
- Curriculum Coordinator
- 3.5 Classroom Teachers
- 2 Specialist Teachers
- LET (Literacy Enrichment Teacher)
- Administration Support Officer
- 1 Indigenous Liaison Officer
- 4 School Officers
- 1 Cleaner

Our school would not continue to prosper without a professional and dedicated teaching and support staff. All of these people fulfil their duties giving far beyond what is required supporting our students and our school community.

Our Learning Community:Professional Learning

In 2013 the school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes. These included:

- Student Protection
- Copyright
- OnTrack Reporting
- NAPLAN Analysis
- AC Geography
- AC Geography Planning Days
- Differentiating for Students with Special Needs
- Circle Solutions
- Literacy Coaching
- Special Needs Conference (Melbourne)
- Students with Disabilities Conference
- QCEC Indigenous Conference
- New Leaders Professional Development
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Training
- Kids Matter
- Cerebral Palsy League – Physiotherapy Training
- RE Curriculum Planning Day
- Shared Services

Learning and Teaching

Literacy Focus:

A focus on the improvement of student achievement in literacy has been evident in 2013 at St Anthony's, which is linked directly to the Federal Government's Literacy and Numeracy National Partnerships initiative (DEEWR). The Literacy Enrichment Teacher (LET) aims to improve literacy outcomes for our students, the LET has been required to stimulate robust, innovative literacy learning at our school and to facilitate strategically reflective literary practices in order to improve the quality of instruction and therefore student learning outcomes.

This year, St Anthony's also placed a large emphasis on consistency in planning. We have had a high turnover of staff members in the past and lacked some consistency in the area of planning. The school has invested considerable time and money to develop a basic level of planning for the whole school with the aim to improve consistency and increase the standard of planning and delivery of the curriculum across the school. This project is now almost complete and will be rolled out in 2014.

Student Performance

In 2010, student reports reflected significant requirements legislated federally of all schools across Australia. The written reports were issued in July and December and reflected the A-E rating as the mandated five-point scale using the 'OnTrack' system. Opportunities were also provided for specific parent/teacher interviews enabling parents to speak with teachers about their children's progress. Parents are regularly encouraged to work in partnership with the school and are always welcome to discuss their child's progress at any stage of the year by mutual arrangement of a convenient time.

Year 3, 5 and 7 test results

2013 National Assessment Program School Results (Year level by School, State and National means)

		Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Reading	Numeracy
Yr 3	School Av	394	379	420	382	376
	State Av	407	396	419	408	386
	National Av	416	411	428	419	397
Yr 5	School Av	461	475.6	515.3	529.5	529.8
	State Av	470	485	495	497	481
	National Av	478	494	501	502	486
Yr 7	School Av	510.1	504.7	514.6	502.8	554.4
	State Av	515	542	532	533	539
	National Av	517	549	535	541	542

Our goals are to continue emphasising literacy and numeracy, with a concentrated effort being placed on students who, due to learning difficulties, do not achieve their educational potential at school. These students receive individual classroom programmes

when necessary and are assessed by our Learning Support Teacher. They are then exposed to specific programmes such as Support-A-Reader/MultLit to increase their skills. These programs are funded through Commonwealth Targeted Programme Funding and Early Literacy Funding to allow an experienced school officer to work one to one with the students 'at risk'. Parent Education is also an important part of this process.

Community Involvement:

St Anthony's School is committed to ensuring that links are maintained with various agencies, organisations and groups within the wider community. Integral to the mission of St Anthony's Parish School is our commitment to supporting parents as the first and primary educators of their children. We assume the belief that schooling is a partnership operation. It is in working as partners – in supporting and encouraging each other's efforts that we benefit in bringing children to a genuine knowledge of themselves and of the world in which they live. Together it is hoped that efforts of co-operation and mutual support will complement each other through the sharing of a common vision and of common goals. This idea of partnership is lived out in many ways and evident on a daily basis.

The small school enrolment (46 families) creates a family atmosphere at St Anthony's. The other benefit of a small school is the capacity for everyone to become involved in the social and family orientated events held each year. One such event is the annual Whole School Camp. This Whole School Camp is planned with the vision of providing students with opportunities that enrich and broaden their own experiences of life as well as to nurture school spirit and maintain a healthy school ethos. This has become quite a family affair – emphasizing the importance of families in our school as both a place of learning and as a community of faith. Many families take the opportunity to utilize the school camp experience to break away from the regularity and 'busy-ness' of life to spend some time as a family and as members of the wider school community. This year's camp was at Kurrimine Beach and was well attended by families.

Our annual Christmas Fair was one of the most successful ever, with funds raised by our P&F Association directly benefiting the school. This year's success was helped enormously by the generous donations of local business owners who contributed through sponsorship for the event.

Priorities for 2014:

- Continue a cycle of School Review and Improvement.
- Critically analyse NAPLAN data using the SunLanda Program and initiate professional development in the area of numeracy and literacy.
- Continue to update the Australian Curriculum in Mathematics, English and Science, History and introduce Geography.
- Implement the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program across all year levels.
- Implement the Kids Matter Framework into school planning documents.
- Continue to find ways to engage students in learning including the continuation of lunch clubs, the interactive garden and Better Buddies program.



Katrina Miller
Principal