2015 Annual Report

1. SCHOOL FEATURES

Our Lady of the River School is a Catholic, Reception to Year 7 rural school for over 100 students. Administered through the Catholic Education Office, Port Pirie, the school follows the charter of its founding religious order, Sisters of St Joseph, endeavouring to be a parish, a school and a place where friends meet and enjoy their learning. At Our Lady of the River School we are very proud of our achievements and the impact that Catholic education has had in the Riverland region. Students come from families living on properties and within the Berri town-ship 24% of students live in outlying towns, districts or properties and travel to school by car. The catchment area is from Renmark in the North, Barmera to the West and Loxton to the South. Families face the challenges of the unpredictability of nature and face substantial hardship with drought years and general downturn in the agricultural and viticultural industries. The effects are felt by the whole community financially and emotionally. The 2015 school SES was 91.0 and School Card was 5 students.

STUDENT ENROLMENT

Our Lady of the River School commenced the 2015 school year with 106 students. The student population had some movement throughout the year with 2 Year 6/7 students, 4 Year 5’s, 1 Year 4, 2 Year 3’s, 3 Year 1’s and 2 Foundation students moving from the school for mostly relocation of families due to parental employment. Classes were: R/1, 1/2, 3/4, 5 and 6/7.

Following is the enrolment in each year level by the completion of 2015:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indigenous Students: 3.7%
Funded Students with a Disability: 0.00

2. STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The attendance rate remained quite consistent with that of previous years.

Attendance Rates (Comparison 2015 to 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Rate per Year Level 2015</th>
<th>2014 (Terms 2,3,4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>90.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>88.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>91.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>94.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>93.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>94.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>87.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>94.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall School Attendance Rate 2015</td>
<td>91.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

Non-attendance is managed by text, telephone call or follow up by Principal or administration staff to parents requiring explanation for unexplained absence. Following is an excerpt from the school information handbook regarding management of student absence:

“Charity at all times” www.olor.catholic.edu.au
Parents are requested to either phone the school, send a note via email or write a note in the student’s diary to the teacher informing of a child’s absence or following a student's absence. Office staff will notify the teacher of any telephone messages received from parents advising of a student’s absence. If a teacher believes a student is absent for insufficient reason this should be discussed with the Principal. If a student is absent for three days in a row with no explanation, on the third day the teacher is to notify the Principal and make contact with the family. In the case of unexplained absence, the Principal is to follow this up with the parent/guardian seeking a reason. Class Roll Pencil cases are to be sent to the Office by 9.15am daily. A note to the student's teacher on the day concerned suffices for doctor, dentist or other appointments when these cannot be made outside of school hours. Students must be signed out as they leave, and signed back in upon return.

Students who arrive at school after 9.00am are required to be signed in at the Office by a parent or guardian.

Extra-ordinary absences - permission for absence for family holidays, sporting or club commitments should be discussed with the Principal.

3. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

ADDITIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES

The school staffed programs to support students in: LLI Literacy Levelled Intervention, Quicksmart Maths, Mathletics and Modified Individual Learning Plans that included teaching methods of Kathy Walker Approach, Multiple Intelligences, Blooms Taxonomy and Kagan Theory. Student Wellbeing programs and support were offered in Terms 3 and 4 through Student Mentoring sessions, Kids Matter, and ‘What’s The Buzz’ (Social Skills) groups. Music, Chinese, Art and PE were offered by Specialist Teachers across all year levels and this provided the required release time for class teachers (non-instructional time).

Private Music tuition in piano, guitar and drums supported parental requests. School Playgroup established.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Students are involved in their fifth term at school in the ‘Early Years Assessment’ conducted by the class teachers. Students in Year 3, 5 and 7 participated in the 2015 NAPLAN assessment in May. The NAPLAN, EYA and school based testing results are all used in combination with many other forms of assessment and reporting to inform and guide teaching practice and student learning, track student progress and growth, and report to parents. We met with parents in Term 1 for an OLOR EXPO – Parent Information Night. In Term 3 optional Parent/Teacher Interviews were offered. Parents were always encouraged to make time to meet with teachers at any other time by arrangement. Written Semester reports were provided to parents at the end of Term 2 and 4.

Our goals in both Literacy and Numeracy are to improve the literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students in all year levels. One of the most important aspects we look at as a staff is individual growth in students, comparing their learning progress from year to year. For comparison purposes the percentage of students achieving the National Minimum Standard is included to compare the gain or loss from 2013 to 2014 then 2014 to 2015. Results indicate that generally across Year 3 and 5 across the five assessment areas there is an increase in student achievement in the NAPLAN testing. There is consistency by the end of Year 7 in all but two areas, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation, this is highlighted in our efforts to improve for 2016. The school summaries identify areas for us to focus on in developing student’s learning and achievement.

**Students are to be congratulated, on their attendance and participation in the NAPLAN testing.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR 3</th>
<th>Students Participating (9 students)</th>
<th>% Achieving National Minimum Standard</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Student Gain in Achieving NMS - Comparative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>392.6</td>
<td>395.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>368.5</td>
<td>379.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>384.6</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>406.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>361.4</td>
<td>386.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Charity at all times" www.olor.catholic.edu.au
### YEAR 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students Participating</th>
<th>% Achieving National Minimum Standard</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Student Gain in Achieving NMS - Comparative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>89% (2 withdrawn)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>465.1</td>
<td>512.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>89% (2 withdrawn)</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>420.8</td>
<td>484.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td>89% (2 withdrawn)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>454.7</td>
<td>521.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>89% (2 withdrawn)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>468.6</td>
<td>562.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
<td>95% (1 withdrawn)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>444.1</td>
<td>513.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### YEAR 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students Participating (1 absent all tests)</th>
<th>% Achieving National Minimum Standard</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Student Gain in Achieving NMS - Comparative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>11 - 92%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>521.6</td>
<td>536.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>11 - 92%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>520.8</td>
<td>511.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td>11 - 92%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>545.5</td>
<td>538.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>11 - 92%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>538.0</td>
<td>531.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
<td>11 - 92%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>528.2</td>
<td>547.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. STAFF PROFILE 2015

Staffing consisted of:

- **10 Teaching Staff (includes Principal):** 4 full-time and 6 part-time
  TOTAL: 6.9 FTE teaching staff (Averaged out over year)

- **7 Educational Support Officers (ESOs):** 0 full-time and 6 part-time (including Administration, Finance, OHSW, Curriculum)
  TOTAL: 2.07 FTE ESO staff (Averaged out over year)

OVERALL STAFFING TOTAL: 8.97 (Averaged across year)

Overall our staffing was reduced slightly from 9.42 FTE (Full time equivalent) staff in 2014 to 8.97 in 2015. This was necessary due to anticipated drop in funding and an industrial matter resolved.

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TEACHING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS
Staff bring a wide range of qualifications, skills and expertise to our school. Following is a summary of the qualifications of staff:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma or Bachelor of Education Teaching</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma in Education</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working towards Masters</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OVERALL STAFF RETENTION COMPARISON
We retained 63.63% of staff from 2014 into the 2015 school year.
We retained 88.23% of staff from 2015 into the 2016 school year.

STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The following staff left OOLOR during or at the end of 2015:
Bianca Pandopulos – worked for 4 Terms Year 5 (1.0) Contract Teaching position
Lee Verrall – part-time contract not funded in 2015.

STAFF LEAVE
At various times staff took Long Service, Carer’s, Parenting, Sick Leave or Leave without Pay.

Staff are to be commended on, and thanked for, their dedication and professionalism.

5. STUDENT, PARENT AND STAFF SATISFACTION

STUDENT SURVEY
A total of 47 Year 3-7 student surveys were returned out of a possible 58; an 81.0% return.
In response to statements about student learning, events and uniform the majority of responses were in the “Agree” – “Strongly Agree” categories, indicating general satisfaction is good. Once again the majority of responses indicated that students feel safe at school, have friends and bullying while minor incidences were reported by the students, generally they were happy that the issues were resolved. Responses in the mid to low range or “Disagree’ to “Strongly Disagree” occurred in the following areas which indicate that this needs to be considered in our pedagogy and planning in 2016:

- I feel safe in my classroom and playground areas (6 responses)
- Catholic Education Week Day was too busy and lots of people in the school yard (1 response)
- Masses are too long (2 responses)

On the surveys there was space for additional comments, following are some examples:

- I like my teacher and sport lessons. The Science Star Dome Visit and Catholic Education Week were fun. I enjoyed Confirmation. Holy Week Plays are a special time.
- Sydney Camp was amazing, we should go every year. Our school uniform is comfortable and warm.

PARENT SURVEY
A total of 38 family surveys were returned out of a possible 68; 56% return. The responses from Parents and Caregivers were mainly in the range from “Extremely Satisfied” and “Satisfied” categories indicating that families are satisfied with most aspects of Our Lady of the River School. Responses in the mid to low range occurred in the following areas which indicate that this needs to be considered in planning in 2016:

- Does the school promote justice and compassion? (1 response)
- How satisfied are you that your child/children feel safe at OOLOR? (1 response)
- Student Uniform concerns include, poor wear and tear of the t-shirts and the students don’t like the track-pants. (6 responses)
- Would like to see structured interview times in Term 1 (5 responses)
- Hope Swimming is not in Term 1 (1 response)
On the surveys there was space for additional comments, following are some examples:

**Twilight Sports Day idea was fantastic, so many parents could attend. Enjoyed our family nights, including the Movie Night and the Cabaret. School Assemblies on Friday afternoons is the best time.**

**Dress-up weeks are enjoyable for the children. Book Week, Footy Colours Day and St Patrick’s Teachers and students put in a lot of time and effort for their Masses, appreciated by parents. Sacramental program was good. School Band and Choir are fantastic options for the students.**

**STAFF SURVEY**

A total of 4 staff surveys were returned out of a possible 17; 24% return. The responses from staff were mainly in the range from “Extremely Satisfied” and “Satisfied” categories indicating that staff are satisfied with most aspects of Our Lady of the River School. Responses in the mid to low range occurred in the following areas which indicate that this needs to be considered in planning in 2016:

**Twilight Sports Day is a long day. Quality of the school t-shirts is poor and they look untidy. School uniform expectations with sandshoes needs following up. Fruit and Fitness times cut into literacy block, can we look to change in the future.**

Areas identified for development and to be included in future planning are:

**More IT facilities and improve grounds and maintenance for nature play. Focus on Reading basics and consistency in expectations of assessment across the whole school.**

6. **FINANCE**

**SCHOOL INCOME 2015**

The school received income from the following sources:

- Australian Government Funding: 1,028,152
- State Government Funding: 191,087
- Fees, charges, parent contributions: 105,595
- Other private sources: 147,592

In addition the school receives income from:

- Country Areas Program (CAP) funding: 6,180
- Literacy, Numeracy and Special Needs Learning Program: 5,408
- Languages grant: 2,000
- Curriculum grant: 5,100
- Interest: 7,786
- Additionally distributed funds: 1,938
- Other Grants or funding applied for as the opportunity arises (eg Chaplain): 10,000

7. **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

**DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

Development Plans are strategies to address ongoing improvement of the school in all of the areas reported on previously. The plans may address requirements of the school, the wider community, the Parish, requirements of the Catholic Education Office and Government bodies. Development Plans are contributed to by staff, students and parents to identify development goals, strategies to implement them and identify resources required to achieve the goals within a timeline.

Following are the long term Plans we have guiding our development:

- Our Lady of the River School Annual Plan 2015
- Diocesan Plan
- CESA Strategic Plan
Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools
Financial Plan / Budget

Development plans are submitted to both the Port Pirie and Adelaide Catholic Education Offices. Plans are submitted, discussed and reviewed with the Principal Consultant.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

During 2015, the school has engaged in a self-assessment process that led into the revision and development of a new School Improvement Plan to be drafted in 2016. This will be based on the domains specified in the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools (CESA)

2015 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Our focus for the year included:

- Review of our Enrolment Policy
- Consolidating our Bring Your Own Device
- Collaborative Planning – English with the Riverland Schools.

It was pleasing to work with our dedicated staff who were eager to look at professional development in relation to making a greater impact in the teaching of English and imbedding investigative learning techniques across the curriculum. Our teachers joined with the staff in all four Catholic Primary Schools in the Riverland to amalgamate the professional learning and collegially work together to gather data and provide valuable feedback to one another in the teaching of English in all year levels. This was assisted by supportive consultants from the Catholic Education Office in Adelaide.

I acknowledge the positive impact this has had and staff will continue to regularly meet in the future with staff from the Riverland Catholic Schools to assist with curriculum planning, data collection, assessment activities and professional development.

Administrative Dimension

Our School Board's major achievements in 2015 were school grounds improvements and most importantly providing support through fundraising efforts to support the implementation of the Chinese tutor program online, our School Band project supported by Mr. Lance Gumm and purchase of new ICT equipment.

The Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework continues to guide our School Board in enabling our progress to be viewed against key performance indicators. In 2016 we will draft a new Strategic Plan for 2017-2019.

In particular, we have adopted a new enrolment policy with a mid-term intake and provided a major community activity, our BOP and BOPPERS Playgroup. This service continues to go from strength to strength and it is opportune to congratulate Mrs. Vicky Deakin and Mrs. Bonnie Singh for providing the necessary passion, knowledge and skill to cater for the needs of our families and their pre-school children. The presence of a successful Playgroup on our school site enables us to dialogue with CESA in the future regarding the possibility of a Early Learning Centre which would enable a Catholic Education Pathway for children in the Riverland region from the Early Years to possibly Year 12. This will continue to be a focus for our School Board over the coming years.

Community

The health of a community is often judged by the way in which they look after their most vulnerable. I am very proud of the manner in which our school community demonstrates a strong focus on ‘catering for the needs of others’.

We are grateful for the generosity of our families who offer their time and energy to drive and participate in our activities such as the annual Berri Easter Breakfast, Community events and business visits, pancake days and feast day celebrations, SAPSASA transport and coaching, dress up days, Catholic Education Week, special religious celebrations and fundraising activities.

I am very appreciative of our parent and carer community and the loyal support given to our school, you are the leaders and inspiration to our new families in their future involvement in their child’s schooling.

Many of the successes are only possible because of the tremendous commitment of our staff. I acknowledge the generosity of all staff to personally contribute significantly to the school in varied and numerous ways. They are dedicated, supportive and understanding, making our school such an outstanding place. The time and commitment the staff put into the school is valued and appreciated. A very big thank you to Mrs. Raelene Edwards, Rosemary Perre and Shaun Kelly for their extended support in being available to lead the school during the periods of time that I was absent from the school in 2015 for study leave in China and Santa Fe.
SUMMARY OF GOALS FOR 2016

As we move towards 2016 we aim to achieve the following:

- Promote the principles of our school vision and parent involvement in the drafting of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan
- Reinforce our whole school commitment to cybersafety and student well-being
- Further consolidate our English and teaching of Reading Pedagogy
- Establish a whole school Spelling focus underpinned by the School-Start Buddy
- Consolidate School Communication with the use of the Office 365 package
- Continue to develop OLOR curriculum and learning, in particular with the Australian Curriculum – Digital Technologies and HASS (Humanities and Social Sciences: Geography and History)
- Share and develop our pedagogy here at OLOR so that all children will be engaged, access the curriculum and be catered for using a differentiated curriculum approach in all classes.
- Continue to develop our understanding of an approach to learning that is student centred and engaging, throughout the school (inspired by Kathy Walker Learning Approach)
- Raise literacy and numeracy achievement levels as indicated in EYA, NAPLAN testing and school based assessments
- Develop our understanding, gathering, analysis and use of Data to inform the student's learning
- Audit Information Technology resources and develop long term plan for maintaining level of staff and student access
- Complete update of school website Update school profile, image and signage
- Continue building and grounds maintenance – review plan and prioritise projects for the next 5 years: upgrade furniture in classrooms and learning areas, painting of rooms
- Maintain and develop parent and parish involvement and support of our school community
- Maintain and develop early childhood presence at OLOR with B.O.P. and B.O.P.P.E.R.S.
- Conduct uniform review

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my gratitude to our children and our school families for their active participation in the life of Our Lady of the River School and the support given to me as the Principal of Our Lady of the River School. I trust that all community members value the opportunities provided by the school to develop and inspire each child to identify and reach their potential.

Each child at Our Lady of the River School is valued, and in partnership with our families, we celebrate their growth and enjoy watching them grow into wonderful human beings who display a love of God, a love of others, a love of learning and most importantly, a love of self.

Mrs Ros Oates
Principal