

# Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School Forestville

## 2007 Annual Report



Principal: Mr Mark Bateman

Address: 11 Currie Road  
FORESTVILLE NSW 2087

Phone: (02) 9972 7311

Fax: (02) 9451 1240

Web: [www.olgc.dbb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.olgc.dbb.catholic.edu.au)



## 1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community

### 1.1 Message from the Principal

Our annual school report provides information to the community about the progress of our school during 2007. The report is referenced to our annual goals which were formed as a result of consultation with the school community.

In April of 2007 Our Lady of Good Counsel Forestville Parish and St Martin de Porres Davidson became the one Parish of Frenchs Forest. Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School is committed to working with our Parish Priest and Pastoral Council to implement the Pastoral Plan of our new Parish.

The past year has seen the culmination of a major building project and the official blessing and opening of our new school. In addition to this historic occasion, we have begun a process of review which has engaged the community. The resulting data will help us form our direction for the next five years. These are exciting times for us as we continue to build and strengthen our Catholic community.

We trust you find the report informative and a celebration of our working together during the past year. We welcome your feedback.

### 1.2 Message from the Parent Body

The Our Lady of Good Counsel Parents' and Friends' Association (P&F) provided significant support for the school in the achievement of its annual goals during 2007.

The P&F was able to provide significant funding to the school which will be used to renovate the school oval and provide information technology resources to the school. In addition this funding assisted us to complete an Australian Government sponsored project, *Investing in Our Schools*, to provide shade cloth over our basketball court.

Parents were involved in the evaluation of the school as part of the Catholic Schools Office Tier Two process. Data collected was very positive in relation to the new school facilities, the value for our Catholic community and high standard of care for our children and families.

The P&F worked very hard to ensure our families had plenty of opportunity for involvement within the school at a social level. We organised many events during the year such as Mother's Day stall, Entertainment Book fundraiser, Easter raffle, a school fete, and two children's discos, all of which were well attended. These events helped to create a sense of fun and community at the school.

Parents provided pastoral support for many families through the Cook-a-dinner program. This provides families experiencing difficulty with meals. Each class has class parent helpers who liaised with the P&F and encouraged parents to be involved in activities at the class and grade level.

Our school was represented on the Parish Council by two parents. We also had representation on the Diocesan Parent Council. Our representative played a significant role in sharing expertise with parents of other schools by co-presenting the Parent Factor course, which focuses on parents assisting with developing literacy with their child.

Parents have worked cooperatively and with a great sense of teamwork to act effectively as partners with our school Principal and staff in the education of our children and the strengthening of our school community. We feel that 2007 has been a very successful year.

### 1.3 Message from the Student Body

Our Year 6 children were significantly involved in leadership initiatives during the year.

We were appointed to Student Representative Council positions in the areas



of Environment, Social and Liturgy. The Environmental team encouraged the students to act responsibly by introducing a rewards scheme and roster for clean up of our school. They reported each week at assembly before giving awards.

Our social group organised a crazy sock day, a talent quest, a Christmas hamper drive and celebrations for end of term events for the school colour houses (Tasman, Bass, Dampier and Flinders). Money raised was given to Alas In East Timor and St Vincent De Paul for the Winter and Christmas Appeals.

Students in Year 6 were trained in leadership skills at their Term 1 camp at The Anglican Youth Camp, Port Hacking. They were trained in identifying and using leadership skills by the Rising Generations group and a leadership program built on these skills back at school. A similar camp is organised for 2008.

Children in our senior classes contributed to our Open Mornings by organising events for the visiting children to participate in, by welcoming our guests and acting as tour guides.

Our Year 5 and 6 students continued to provide support for our Kindergarten children through the Our Lady of Good Counsel Buddy Program. Buddies cared for one another on the playground and in learning activities such as reading to each other, partner writing and sport skill development. Feedback shows that this program helps both the Kindergarten children and their buddies to think confidently about school.

The children contributed to the school's anti-bullying policy through our Peer Support Program. Our senior students led groups of children from Kindergarten to Year 4 in the Peer Support Program which focussed on anti-bullying strategies.

In another initiative, our Year 4 class volunteered to act as buddies for a class of

autistic children hosted at our school. The classes met regularly with the focus being on pastoral care.

Our House Captains helped to raise spirits by encouraging children to participate fully in sports carnivals and at assemblies. Children in all grades participated enthusiastically in whole school events throughout the year.

The children particularly enjoyed the school fete which was held in October and contributed to the success of the day through performance as part of the school band, martial arts demonstrations as well as in song.

The children play a significant role in liturgies. The choir provided music for Sunday masses, school celebrations and special celebrations throughout the year. Children in Year 6 ensured that words for the music were displayed appropriately during celebrations and the children took an active part in assisting with liturgy.

2007 was an exciting year during which we were given many opportunities to contribute to the life of our school.



## 2. School Profile

### 2.1 Introduction

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School Forestville is a co-educational primary school catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6. The school is part of the Parish of Frenchs Forest and enjoys a very positive relationship with the parish and within the local community. It is known for its excellent teaching and learning, dedicated staff, its welcoming, family-like atmosphere and its pastoral care.

During 2007 we had a school population of 292, which grew by 20 pupils from the previous year.

### 2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2007:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
145	147	22	0	292

\*Language background other than English

The school has added an extra Kindergarten class in each of the past five years. We began 2007 with two classes in every grade except for our senior grades where we had one Year 6 class and one composite Year 5/6 class.

We continue to support a class of children with autism through mutual agreement with ASPECT and the Vern Barnett School in Cook Road, Forestville. The Catholic Schools Office provided support for the class by funding the salary of a full-time Learning Support Assistant.

### 2.3 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an [Enrolment Policy](#)<sup>†</sup> which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

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

Our school's enrolment committee consisting of the Principal, Parish Priest and a parishioner has implemented the Diocesan Enrolment Policy. Priority in enrolment has been in accordance with the Diocesan policy.

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

### 2.4 Staff Profile

The school leadership team consists of the Principal, the Assistant Principal, Religious Education Co-ordinator and a Co-ordinator Two.

Teaching staff worked in teams on a range of educational projects tied to our annual goals. Of our three non-teaching staff, two are employed at Our Lady of Good Counsel working in administration and on Occupational Health and Safety matters and one, who has achieved a Certificate III Teaching Assistant qualification, assists with the implementation of learning support programs.

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

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



a	b	c	Total
18	0	0	18

## 2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2007 was 96.8%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2006 to 2007 was 100%.

One of our teachers left our school at the end of 2007 to take up a teaching position on the North Coast and we will be adding an extra teacher to our staff in 2008 to cater for a further increase in enrolment. Otherwise our 2007 staff will be returning in 2008.

## 2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

On an end-of-year survey of teaching staff, it was noted that the teachers felt that there were many opportunities provided for them to be involved in leadership activities and with professional development. Our annual goals aimed at providing teachers with greater opportunity for leaderships and involvement.

Every teacher was provided with release time for planning teaching, especially in the areas of Religious Education, introducing ICLT into Maths lessons, and developing inquiry units of work with literacy planning.

Other staff participated in action research projects using Commonwealth Government funding. These projects included Success for Boys and a Quality Teaching Project.

The school introduced the Rock and Water program for boys. The program aimed to raise self awareness, dealing with conflict, resilience and create friendships.

The school was engaged in a series of meetings and a staff development day designed to evaluate the life of the school in relation to our Strategic Plan 2002-2006.

Staff played a significant role in this evaluation and identified dedication to teaching and learning and working together as a Catholic community as key strengths of our school achievements.

Staff members of Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School were involved in a range of educational projects which attracted Commonwealth or diocesan support. As a result the staff felt valued in their roles as teachers and motivated in their daily work.

## 2.7 Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate for 2007 was 94.6%.

## 2.8 Student Satisfaction

Students took part in the process of school evaluation which will lead to review in 2008. The students saw the school as an important part of their lives and especially valued the relationships they formed with their friends and with their teachers.

The children reported through teacher feedback that they enjoyed the opportunity to show their parents their classroom and their work in Terms 1 and Term 3. They indicated great pride in their new school and liked the opportunity to be more involved in showing parents their work.

Two students attended Kids Congress as representatives of our school. They joined with children Year 5 children from schools across the diocese to discuss global issues and devise strategies for implementation at the school level.



### 3. Catholic Life and Mission

#### 3.1 Catholic Heritage

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School has a rich heritage. The Forest area was first cared for by the Augustinian Fathers before being established as a parish under the leadership of Father Clement Gailey in 1958. Father Gailey organised parishioners into teams to actually build the school, which opened in 1962 under the administration of the Brigidine sisters. Today's grandparents still speak with pride of this achievement and the friendships formed in those times. Their grandchildren who now attend the school keep that community spirit alive.

The Brigidine Sisters brought with them a sense of hospitality, love for creation, devotion to the scriptures and a value for simplicity. These ideals have been incorporated into a future vision for the school and will form part of future planning processes. We look forward to celebrating the bicentenary of the Brigidine Sisters in 2008.

The school foyer carries an image of Our Lady of Good Counsel and a smaller framed image is located in each classroom. The foyer image stands between the two foundation stones – one marking the original opening of the school and the other the blessing and opening of the new school facilities. Catholic Worldview statements are also displayed in the school foyer and each classroom has a small altar established as the centre for class prayer which is celebrated daily by the students.

The concept of discipleship is encouraged in a number of ways at Our Lady of Good Counsel. Putting faith into action is a key aim. The children were provided with a conceptual focus each term. During 2007 these concepts were compassion, discipleship, respect and responsibility. Each concept was explored in relation to school expectations and rules. Each was also put into action through initiatives which included:

- contribution to Project Compassion;
- participation in events which supported community need – Crazy Sock Day, SVDP Winter and Christmas Appeals
- role-plays about how to display various qualities to each other
- participation in peer support programs which emphasised anti-bullying
- activities organised by the school mini vinnies group
- attendance of Year 6 students at the end of year reflection day with St Martins Davidson led by our Parish Youth Minister.

Our Lady of Good Counsel sees the time of enrolment as an opportunity to begin a dialogue with parents about the significance of faith in the life of their child and family. The enrolment committee discussed this issue with new parents to the school and invited them to create a meaningful connection with their local Parish as part of a committed faith relationship. The Parish Priest attended the enrolment meetings with new parents who completed enrolment application forms.

Families from the school were invited to attend mass with the Parish on the first Sunday of each month. Parents and children from the school assisted with the liturgy through music, as readers or presenting the gifts. Parents also provide hospitality at the end of the mass.

The school has established a World Youth Day Committee to promote the event and to assist in preparing our school and Parish for pilgrims who will attend the event. The committee consists of staff, parents and students.

The school and Parish continue to work together. The Frenchs Forest Pastoral Council plays a major role in ensuring this relationship remains strong.



### 3.2 Liturgical Life

The school continued to seek to provide each student with the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to liturgical life.

Each class regularly attended mass with the parish on a Friday on a rostered basis. Children who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation had an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament each term and each class was involved in preparing parts of the mass and liturgies. Special community liturgies included the celebration of Mother's Day, Anzac and Remembrance Days, Holy Week and Advent.

During the year parents took greater responsibility for the organisation of family masses with the parish once a month. Parents, teachers and students worked together to help with Sunday liturgies as a means of developing stronger links with the parish. Each of these liturgies was followed by a morning tea provided by the P&F for the community.

The school celebrated beginning and end-of-term masses during which the special gifts and talents of the children were shared.

### 3.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese

The school remains a valuable member of the parish and diocesan community. During the year, our children participated in liturgy in the broader life of the Parish. We attended the Year 6 Cluster Mass and we attended the Diocesan Mission Mass at the Cathedral at Corpus Christi St Ives.

The Principal is an ex-officio member of the Parish Pastoral Council. The Parish Pastoral Plan has been embedded in the annual school goals. The plan seeks to nurture and strengthen the relationship between school and parish and to provide an environment which encourages the involvement of youth, reaches out to those disengaged with the Church and nurtures the various ministries which have been established. The school worked toward these goals by supporting the

parish sacramental program, establishing a parent hospitality team to provide morning tea after mass once per month, attending masses with the parish, assisting with music in the Advent liturgy, and by supporting the activities of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

### 3.4 Religious Education Curriculum

2007 has seen the continued implementation of the Diocesan K to 12 Religious Education curriculum. The curriculum has three components: the Foundations section which explores the context of religious education and the call to Catholic discipleship, the syllabus and the modules which are resource packages assisting teachers in the development of units of work.

Teaching staff have been involved with sequencing the modules to be taught throughout the year with teaching programs written and based on the new curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum is consistent with other Key Learning Areas in that it is outcomes-based.

Religious Education is assessed and parents receive a report on pupil progress as part of the school reporting process. Samples of student work are collected to demonstrate the various levels of achievement.

Our Lady of Good Counsel staff have identified a process teaching Religious Education which is consistent with practice in other Key Learning Areas. This approach brings consistency to the way in which Religious Education is experienced by the children at our school no matter what grade they are in.

### 3.5 Catholic Worldview

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School has a particular task of presenting quality education as an expression of the Catholic Worldview. Therefore, the school seeks to offer opportunities to apply that worldview to all aspects of school life and those outside the school.



In keeping with the school's Vision Statement emphasis on the values of respect, dignity, equity and inclusion, the school community participated in numerous opportunities engaging in social justice issues in the wider community. Specifically, activities included collecting for the St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas appeals and working with our Mini Vinnies student group under the leadership of a member of staff to drive social justice implementation within our school.

Teachers are required to embed activities into their curriculum plans which cause exploration of the Catholic Worldview.

### 3.6 Parent Participation

Parents are acknowledged as the first educators of their children and the weekly newsletter is used as a vehicle by both the Principal and the Religious Education Co-ordinator to communicate with parents about various aspects of Catholic life and mission within the school.

In 2007 a Parent Advisory Group was formed to explore The Holy See's Teaching on the Catholic School. The group used this statement as a means of assessing the Catholic life of the school in their experience. The group then made suggestions about ways to action Catholic life more fully amongst the parent body.

The work of the Advisory Group has been included in information collected for school review planned for 2008.

### 3.7 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a policy on the [Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

The school staff regularly engaged in planning sessions involving the new Religious Education modules and guidance from the Education Officer-Mission Services.

All staff took part in a professional learning day, which focused on faith formation. The staff studied The Holy Spirit and Discipleship at these sessions.

While opportunity was provided to staff to participate in the Ministry for Teachers course run by Bishop David Walker on the Central Coast, the dates for the course clashed with school review and involvement in the course is postponed until 2008.





## 4. Pastoral Care

### 4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Student Discipline](#) Policies 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

Derived from the diocesan policies, Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School has a Pastoral Care, Anti-bullying and Anti-harassment policy. Copies are available from the school office.

Within the Pastoral Care policy, disciplinary sanctions are outlined. The staff reviewed our Student Management Guidelines during 2007 and a more detailed system for dealing with challenging behaviour was adopted. The system used a concept of buddy classes and time away to support students needing assistance in this area.

### 4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Many support structures exist for families within the school community. The class teachers, special needs team and school executive all work closely with parents during the year to provide appropriate support in relation to issues concerning their child. Families were provided access to local health and counselling agencies for professional support.

As part of their leadership role, the Year 6 students were paired up with the Kindergarten students in the Kinder Buddy program. This program allows the Year 6 students to act as mentors for the Kindergarten children throughout the year.

The Cook-a-Dinner program continued to support families in need. Our Parent Buddy group has been a very successful initiative, providing support for new families. A picnic day and phone roster were in place for 2007

to ensure these families are kept in touch with the life of the school.

### 4.4 2007 Initiatives

The staff implemented an anti-bullying program during the year through the school Peer Support program. All classes were involved. A special workshop was organised for all classes in 2007 through a visiting group from Mater Maria Catholic College, Warriewood. This event provided opportunity for a whole school focus on aspects of anti-bullying.

The Seasons for Growth Program continued. Two parishioners were trained as facilitators and a teacher volunteered to coordinate the program. Seasons for Growth is designed to support children suffering from loss through death, separation or divorce. The program will be offered again in 2007.

The school continued to implement restorative justice into our school. This philosophy aims to nurture a school culture that values peace, resilience, positive and supportive relationships, forgiveness and responsibility.

The school supported road and pedestrian safety education. Year 5 and 6 attended the CARES road safety program. Work supported the school's Street Sense program in the PDHPE syllabus. A whole school focus was organised so that strategies were concentrated across grades for the week.

### 4.5 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a [Complaints Handling Policy](#) which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

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



## 5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

### 5.1 Curriculum Overview

The curriculum for primary school is mandated and there are six Key Learning Areas: English, Mathematics, Human Society in its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative and Practical Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. As a Catholic primary school, Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School includes Religious Education as a Key Learning Area.



Our special needs program continued to provide excellent support. Individual education plans were developed for each child receiving Commonwealth Government assistance and parents were included as part of a team to develop learning goals for each child. The school submitted, and was successful in receiving support for, a proposal to run special language and pragmatic groups with a speech pathologist for Terms 1 and 2 of 2007.

A specialist reading program continued with parent assistance and an in-school relationship continued with a speech pathologist and occupational therapist. The special needs team continued to support teachers in catering for children with special needs within their classrooms.

The school reviewed our numeracy and literacy plans and incorporated changes into our annual goals for 2007.

The teaching staff implemented Mathematics continuums for each child. These continuums track pupil progress against syllabus

outcomes as each child moves through the school. A similar initiative was introduced and implemented for English.

Teachers continued to rewrite some of our integrated units of study focusing on strengthening inquiry skills with the children. The school has a curriculum development cycle in place.

The staff continued work on the Quality Teaching Framework. A team was formed to guide professional development, and training was provided through a partnership with the University of Newcastle and the Catholic Schools Office. A grant of money was used to support this initiative. The framework acknowledges that students achieve at their best when teaching and learning is focused on creating intellectual quality, creating a quality learning environment and learning which has an impact on student life outside of school. Staff members engaged in an action research project to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach.

### 5.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning

At Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic school staff believe that teaching and learning occurs within a challenging and supportive environment, which nurtures each person's gifts.

Teaching and learning occur through a continuous cycle, which includes the identification of needs, learning through meaningful experiences, monitoring, and continuous and varied assessment practice. Assessment focuses on the extent to which each child is able to achieve syllabus outcomes in relation to their ability and stage of schooling.

The school included parents and children in this cycle through the use of classroom visits, written reports and three-way reporting. We invited parents to visit classrooms in Terms 1 and 3. Written reports were sent home Term 2 and Term 4 and interviews were offered on both occasions.



### 5.3 Significant Initiatives

We received Commonwealth Government funding to continue work in the Success for Boys Program and introduced the Rock and Water Program into the school. In addition the school introduced Father's Friday. Guests of boys and girls were invited into school for the morning and to work together on a project to create a short film on life cycles using clay figures. The project provided an opportunity for the adults and children to experience school life and working together. Feedback from the morning was very positive.

We contributed to the Diocesan ICLT Conference on the central coast. One of our teachers gave a presentation to teachers from across the county on the integration of ICLT into the classroom. The presentation included work from teachers and children in each of our grades.

We introduced an electronic whiteboard into the school and explored its use as a learning tool by engaging staff in professional development, sharing the use of the whiteboard and working with other schools to develop lesson plans and formats. Professional development will continue in 2008.

The Catholic Schools Office provided funding for our learning support teacher to work with a speech pathologist to implement a program focused on developing language and social skills with a small group of Stage 1 children. Teachers reported improvements in social skills and decreased issues with behaviour difficulties as a result of the program. We aim to expand this program in 2008.

### 5.4 Student Achievement

Children in our Year 5 and Year 3 classes participated in the Basic Skills Test (BST) in literacy, numeracy and writing. A summary of their results in literacy and numeracy is presented below.

#### Literacy

The information below compares the Our Lady of Good Counsel percentage in skill bands in overall literacy in **Year 5** 2007 with the state percentage in skill bands.

	School	State
Band 6	<b>33</b>	27
Band 5	<b>30</b>	26
Band 4	<b>26</b>	26
Band 3	<b>5</b>	14
Band 2	<b>0</b>	5
Band 1	<b>0</b>	1

The information below compares the Our Lady of Good Counsel percentage in skill bands in overall literacy in **Year 3** 2007 with the state percentage in skill bands:

	School	State
Band 5	<b>34</b>	19
Band 4	<b>32</b>	28
Band 3	<b>26</b>	26
Band 2	<b>6</b>	15
Band 1	<b>2</b>	11

#### Numeracy

The information below compares the Our Lady of Good Counsel percentage in skill bands in overall numeracy in **Year 5** 2007 with the state percentage in skill bands.

	School	State
Band 6	<b>30</b>	33
Band 5	<b>33</b>	22
Band 4	<b>23</b>	24
Band 3	<b>10</b>	15
Band 2	<b>3</b>	6
Band 1	<b>3</b>	1

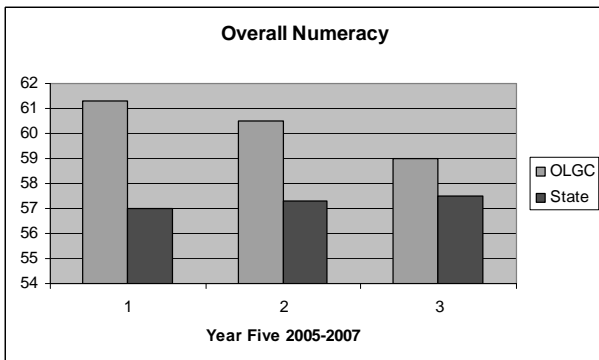
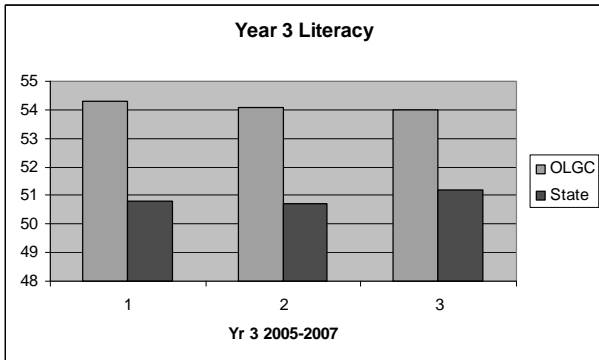
The information below compares the Our Lady of Good Counsel percentage in skill bands in overall numeracy in **Year 3** 2007 with the state percentage in skill bands.



	School	State
Band 5	14	19
Band 4	36	27
Band 3	34	26
Band 2	16	20
Band 1	0	9

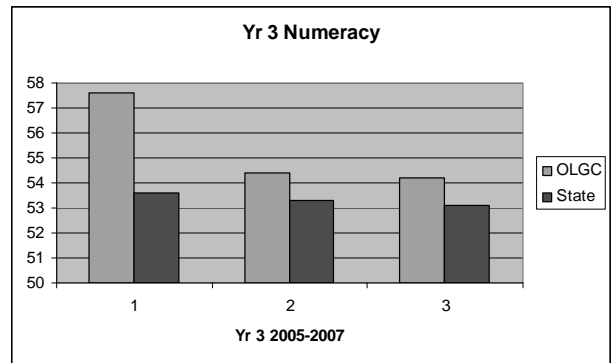
Analysis of the results revealed a need for a stronger focus in the area of Numeracy in to 2008 with a particular emphasis on developing stronger understandings in the area of space, geometry and measurement.

Presented below is a graph showing trend data since 2000.



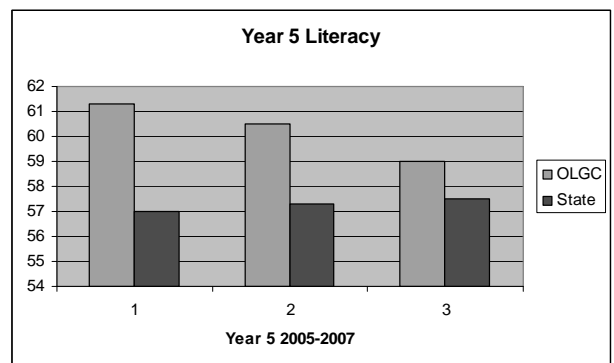
The bar on the left represents Our Lady of Good Counsel and indicates our Year 3 and Year 5 students have maintained levels consistently above the state in numeracy. There are students who do need extra support and we have received funding from the diocese to target specific areas of need in numeracy.

In Year 3, 100% of our students reached the national benchmarks for numeracy while 99% achieved this target in reading and writing.



Our school will be participating in National Testing in May of 2008. As we have not experienced this form of testing we will set targets for 2009 based on our results in 2008. We found our 2007 targets to be ambitious given the broad range of abilities in our classes.

Our professional development in 2008 will focus on strengthening our ability to cater for a broad range of difference. Our Lady of Good Counsel will be a participant in the Community of Schools Maths extension programs being offered from Kindergarten to Year 6. Our Year 5 and 6 pupils will have an opportunity to work at advanced levels of Mathematics within the school, with children from other Catholic schools and with cooperating local Catholic high schools. Children from Kindergarten to Year 4 will have an opportunity to participate in the *Come on Kids* online Maths program as part of their class program, taking part in problem solving, skill application and projects which will be the subject of assessment and reporting.



Our Lady of Good Counsel is represented by the light coloured bar. The above graphs show that Our Lady of Good Counsel



students are consistently achieving above the state average in literacy.

In Year 5 in reading and numeracy 99% of our students achieved the national benchmark while 100% of our Year 5 students achieved this goal in writing.

In literacy we are using diocesan literacy and numeracy initiative funding to address the needs of children who do not reach this benchmark and the needs of those at-risk students. Funding will be used to track and monitor student progress in literacy and numeracy.

Data indicated that over the past two years 70.6% of our Year 5 students gained above or equal to one skill band in literacy. In Numeracy 59% of our Year 5 children gained one skill band or more. 76% gained one skill band or more in writing.

## 5.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School continued its implementation of CEnet (CASTnet), an internet delivery system, and "myinternet", an online learning environment, which were introduced in late 2003.

Our Acceptable ICLT Student Code of Conduct Agreement was implemented by staff and issued to students and teachers. Students from Year 3 to Year 6 were issued with internet accounts upon completing and returning their Code of Conduct Agreements.

With the help of our P&F we were able to purchase new IT hardware for each of our classes which included new computers and printers. We installed an interactive whiteboard into one classroom to explore how this technology can impact on learning and staff received professional development in this area. A purchasing program is in place to continue upgrading existing computers and to comply with new ICLT architecture being rolled out by the Catholic Schools Office.

Each classroom has access to networked computers. A bank of computers is available for group use in the school library and a new wireless network is being installed for use of laptop computers by staff and children.

## 5.6 Professional Learning

All teachers participated in a range of professional learning activities in 2007.

A key focus for us during 2007 was our involvement in preparation for Tier One and Tier Two accountability processes. These included review of school documentation relating to education and administration; the collection of evidence to prove the success of our work as an effective Catholic School and the engagement of staff, students and parents in providing data to inform the review processes. The end result of this work will be the formation of a new Strategic Management Plan for our school for the next five years.

Professional learning is most effective when it is meaningful, based on recognised need and there is a long-term commitment by those involved. The professional learning and development program at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School supports this process.

The staff participated in various learning opportunities throughout the year. Teaching staff were engaged in action research projects to identify effective strategies for teaching in the area of Multiple Intelligences; collecting reading data and using this to develop programs to assist children experiencing challenges with reading; the Quality Teaching Framework and the use of Technology which culminated with their work being shared at the Navcn2K7 IT Conference on the Central Coast.

They were also provided opportunities to work in teams on developing teaching programs for Religious Education and our focus units of study.

Where groups of teachers were involved in action research programs, opportunity was



provided for attendance at inservice days and group meetings. Our teachers participated in Observation Survey training and implementation to assist and track the progress of children in Year 1 with their reading skills.

On a diocesan level, teachers were engaged in experiences such as occupational health and safety training, child protection training, anaphylaxis training, first aid and various technology-related professional opportunities through network meetings and inservice days.

The average expenditure on professional learning per teacher in 2007 was \$1,300.



## 6. Extracurricular Program

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School is committed to offering a variety of opportunities to cater for children's needs and interests.

During the year the children were involved in the local chess competition and our teacher librarian ran a tutoring program at lunchtimes.

Musical keyboard lessons were offered before school and our school band program continued offering a program for training band and concert band. Senior band members attended a camp with St Martin's children at the Collaroy Centre in Term 4.

The Year 5 and 6 children took part in the independent schools debating competition.

The children participated in a variety of sporting activities at school, cluster and diocesan level. The school entered girls' and boys' teams in the Robbie Slater Soccer Cup.

Italian lessons were implemented after school in 2007 as an option. Our parents continued to work with our teachers to deliver our cultural awareness program in which parents with an interest or experience of another culture teach the children about cultural interests related to that country for eight sessions.

The learning support teachers continued to develop our Lunch Club Program, which provides opportunities for children to take part in a range of socially focused games. The games are purchased with the help of the P&F. Lunch Club is an excellent way for children to be encouraged to meet new friends and have some fun. New activities were added to the club including table tennis, table soccer and a range of new puzzles and games.

The school continued to receive funding from the Commonwealth Government's Sports Commission to run an active after school sport program two afternoons per week using outside providers. This initiative

proved very popular with children and parents.



## 7. Strategic Initiatives

### 7.1 2007 Priorities and Achievements

During 2007 the community was informed of priorities when each family received a copy of the annual goals.

The most significant achievements from these goals include:

- implementation of the new Religious Education Syllabus
- fuller engagement of families in supporting family masses with the parish each month
- further development of the Seasons for Growth Program for children experiencing loss or separation
- improvements to the new reporting procedures which incorporated Commonwealth Government requirements
- monitoring of tracking procedures in the area of Mathematics and English
- the blessing and opening of our new school
- continued work with the Quality Teaching Framework
- supportive implementation of the parish based sacramental program
- continued provision of opportunities for parent participation in the educational agenda of the school through the work of the school Advisory Team
- greater involvement in the Diocesan Parent Council
- implementation of Father's Friday which engaged dads in the school life of their child.

### 7.2 2008 Priorities and Challenges

During 2008 the following priorities and challenges have been identified from the

emerging school review data. We seek to have these directions validated in late February when an invited panel of educational experts will implement a process of review. Following review a Strategic Plan will be developed to direct the future of the school. Parents and the community will be invited to take part in the formation of the new plan. We believe that 2008 will see us:

- recognise the significant contribution of our Parish Priest as he moves to a new position in the diocese and welcome our new Parish Priest
- engage our community in supporting World Youth Day and participating in the planned events
- analyse and strengthen teaching and learning in the area of Numeracy
- implement strategies to add depth and stronger engagement of staff, students and parents in learning
- implement the Friendly Schools, Friendly Families program as an effective means of maintaining a safe and supportive environment
- celebrate the Investing in Our School Program with a function recognising the contribution of the Commonwealth Government to the school shade cloth and Community Water Grants Project
- further develop of the use of CENet as a tool of learning and communication for the whole school
- provide parent information and education sessions in relation to teaching and learning
- develop, communicate and implement a new Strategic Development Plan
- establish a Before and After School Care facility on the school site for the use of our families and investigate the possibility of a vacation care service at the school.





## 8. Parent Participation

### 8.1 Introduction

Parents continue to be included in the life of our school providing valuable support and input.

The P&F made a significant contribution to the life of the school and the parish during the year. Their work ensured that school goals were well supported.

The P&F worked especially hard to organise fundraising and social events. Proceeds from fundraising activities are being used to help fund improvements to our school field. These include levelling, adding irrigation and regrassing the field. A significant contribution was made to our computer technology resources.

The parents were involved in supporting teachers and children in classroom reading programs, sporting activities and with extracurricular activities. Parents are represented on the Parish Pastoral Council and the school Building Committee.

Parents were invited to take part in educational information sessions in literacy with new parents being invited to a series of mornings about how to assist children with reading and writing in the early years.

We introduced an advisory team which consisted of parents and staff who had broad understanding of our school, the community and the Parish. The group informed our processes of review by assisting with the analysis of data and with workshops at which parents were invited to discuss relevant issues in relation to school life. The group was a first step towards a more collaborative partnership with parents in the area of school vision and mission maintenance and development.

### 8.2 Parent Satisfaction

Parents were invited to evaluate the school annual goals. Data revealed:

- strong commitment to parish family masses
- satisfaction with the completion of the school building project
- satisfaction with open classrooms at the end of Terms 1 and 3
- appreciation of opportunities to be involved in classroom learning
- satisfaction with the establishment of a subscriber system by email for the school newsletter
- value for the sense of Catholic community at the school
- support and appreciation for the level of pastoral care shown at the school to all children.

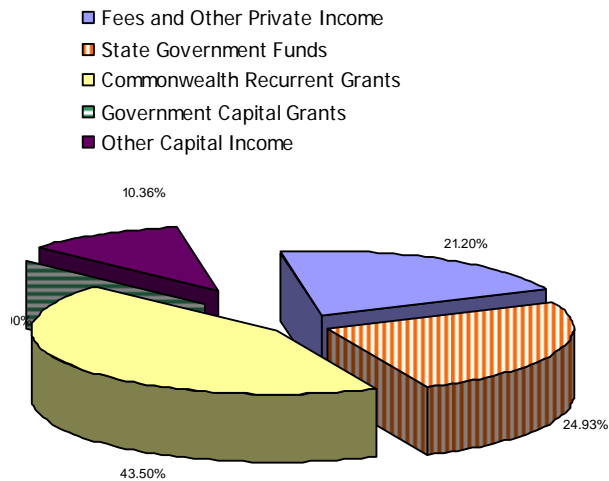


## 9. Financial Report

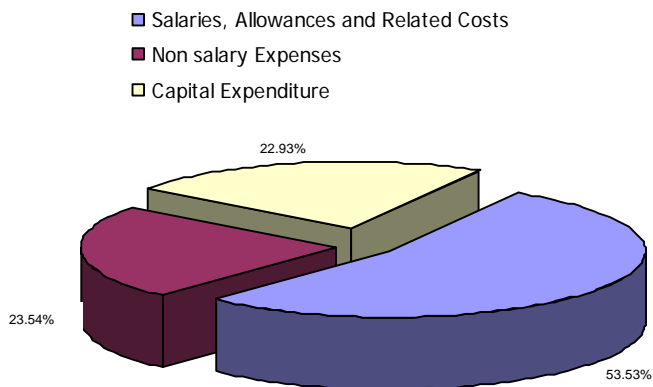
Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report.

### Income



### Expenditure



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School's consultant, Michelle Smith.