Annual School Report
2011 School Year

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School

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South Lismore

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About this report

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Education Office (CEO), as the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report to the Parish School Community for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school’s Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Education Office. This Report has been approved by the CEO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2012 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

The contents of this Report are able to be discussed at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 0266215490 or by visiting the website at www.lisslism.catholic.edu.au.
Principal’s Message

The primary purpose of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School offers students a Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the faith and spiritual growth of the students as well as opportunities to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school’s mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students’ achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2011. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards, in the school office and on class webpages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- The average student growth in Spelling in NAPLAN was well above both the State average and the average of NSW systemic Catholic schools. This result corresponded with a specific focus made on spelling acquisition throughout the school preceding the NAPLAN test.
- Year 6 students performed above the Diocesan average in the Religious Education test.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school’s cultural program and community involvement:

- This year the school supported the local ANZAC march with over one hundred students participating.
- The school presented the tableau at the parish Christmas Carnival which is a focus for the entire community.
- The school participated in the Lismore Musical Festival Eisteddfod with group entries in the dance category for which we achieved second place and won the inaugural award for best behaved school.
- The school participated in a number of community environmental projects such as establishing a bush Tucker garden through Richmond Landcare and helping to build a water analysis profile of our local creek system through Rous Water.

Students performed well at various sporting events during the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights:

- A series of afternoon self-defence classes were offered to our students this year with a number of students continuing to learn the discipline of Karate at Success Martial Arts.
- All students were involved in the School Athletics Carnival and from this a school squad was chosen to progress to the Zone carnival. A number of students successfully went on to represent the school at Diocesan level.
- Students from Year 2 to Year 6 participated in the School Swimming Carnival and a squad was chosen to represent the school at Zone level. A number of students progressed to Diocesan level with one then competing at the Polding Carnival.
- Students participated in the School Cross Country which was held during second term. A squad of students then went on to represent the school at Zone level with one student competing at the Polding Carnival.
- Students from Years 5 and 6 participated in diocesan-wide netball and soccer (the Paul Wilson Memorial Cup) competitions.

There were many people who assisted in the school’s quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people.

Daniel Gubby  
(Acting) Principal

**A Parent Message**

The Parents and Friends (P&F) Association of the school had a very busy and fulfilling year in providing a range of social and fundraising activities. These included an outdoor cinema night, a pie drive and a Bunning’s BBQ. These events contributed to strengthening the bonds between the school, parents and the wider community. The funds raised from these events enabled the P & F to establish the operation of a school-based uniform store which offers the school uniforms and accessories at a much more affordable price than the previous commercial supplier and with more accessibility than was originally available. This project has resulted in an increase in the number of students wearing the complete correct school uniform. We always encourage more members of the school community to join the association thereby helping to strengthen and diversify the efforts of the group.

Tanya Harris-Bateman  
President  
Our Lady Help of Christians P & F Association

**This Catholic School**

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School is located in South Lismore and is part of the Our Lady Help of Christians Parish which serves the communities of South Lismore, Lismore and surrounding districts. School families are drawn from the towns and communities of the Lismore area.

Last year the school celebrated 95 years of Catholic education.

The Parish Priest, Fr Peter Karam is involved in the life of the school.
Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School is a Parish School with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through activities such as:

- support for the Altar serving ministry;
- participation in the parish music ministry through the school choir;
- involvement by parents and teachers in various roles within parish ministry;
- support for the Sacramental Programs;
- involvement in various parish liturgical celebrations such as Christmas and Easter Masses.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text “To Know, Worship & Love”. Catholic life and culture permeates school life with 2.5 hours of religious education taught formally each week. The implementation of the Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines supports the school’s prayer life. The purposes of this parish school are centred on Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate this statement into all aspects of parish school life. Religious Education is always given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School, South Lismore caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:
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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>TOTAL 2011</th>
<th>TOTAL 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are currently 239 students enrolled in 9 classes.

**School Curriculum**

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

The school continues to work at implementing and practising contemporary pedagogies. As the new millennium continues to unfold, the challenge is to prepare our students for leadership roles in an ever-changing and challenging world. Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School responds to this challenge by delivering programs that provide our students with tools to communicate and to become lifelong learners. We use teaching strategies that promote co-operative learning, build thinking and problem solving skills, and move children towards independence. We provide all of our students with up-to-date ICT resources and contemporary pedagogies that encourage successful participation in inquiry-based learning activities. Our teachers are committed to providing opportunities for enhanced curricular activities for our students such as computer programming and competition dance practice.

**Student Performance in National Testing Programs**

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 37 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 28 students.
In both Year 3 and Year 5 there were six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, and space and geometry.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

In Year 3, students who achieved Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieved at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

At Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School, school and student performance is closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Education Office-led information sessions on NAPLAN and SMART Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School students in each band compared to the state percentage.
Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of students in bands 1 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Year 5 NAPLAN results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in bands 3 to 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our Year 3 and Year 5 NAPLAN Literacy results have been analysed by a team of staff members to identify strengths and challenges for our school.

The Student Growth for the Test Aspect of Spelling data shows that our Year 5 cohort had a much greater average growth scale score than both State and NSW CEC. This data is most significant as Spelling had been a focus area based on our school’s 2010 NAPLAN results.

Writing was also a focus area in the lead up to NAPLAN 2011, being the only area in the previous NAPLAN results that saw our school placed below the State mean score. Both the Year 3 and Year 5 cohorts for 2011 achieved mean scores for Writing above those of the State.

School summary data for 2011 showed appreciable differences of between State and school scores in the following areas:
- Year 3 boys (16 students) are 43 scale scores below the State average in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation.
- Year 5 girls (15 students) have shown a decrease of 58 scale scores from the 2010 data in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation.
- Year 5 boys (13 students) are 14 scale scores below the State average growth in the test aspect of Grammar & Punctuation.
Grammar & Punctuation has been identified as a specific target area for whole-school attention based on the 2011 NAPLAN results. This is an area of concern requiring investigation and action. As a result, staff meeting time has been set aside to review the teaching strategies being implemented in this area and to access the teaching strategies provided through the NAPLAN site.

School trends based on the data from 2009 to 2011 also indicate that Year 3 has increased the percentage of students in Band 6 for Reading from 16.7% to 29.7%. This is a positive result for our school and needs to be built upon. Year 3 Spelling results highlight the limited number of students who are achieving in Band 6 with only 5.4% of students falling in this band. This result is also reflected in Numeracy with only 3% of students falling in Band 6. Year 5 data over this period has shown a concerning drop in the number of students achieving in the top band in the areas of Reading (25% to 10.7%), Grammar & Punctuation (21.4% to 7.1%) and Numeracy (25% to 3.6%).

In addressing the concerns presented by the NAPLAN data, attention must be given to the following:
- Grammar and Punctuation - a focus area, particularly in the early years to develop strong foundations in the language skills associated with grammar and punctuation within formal contexts.
- Spelling - a continued whole-school approach to the teaching of spelling to strengthen the current program across the Stages;
- Reading – interpretation of factual information from a range of multimedia;
- Writing – engaging the reader with descriptive vocabulary, complex sentence structure and literary techniques;
- Numeracy – based on item analysis, a focus on foundation skills in all areas of numeracy. Whilst emphasis should be placed on improvement in the early years, it will be necessary to make this a whole school focus until the standard improves throughout the Stages.
- Numeracy – more opportunities for inquiry learning in the development of problem solving strategies.

Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Total number of non-teaching staff employed in the school. 6

All teachers have been involved in professional development activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole- staff development day professional learning activities in 2011 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Days</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School NAPLAN Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>School Exec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of School Annual Plan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Joy Ryan / Exec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality Day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>School Exec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpacking The Australian Curriculum</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>various including Wendy Engliss</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>from ACARA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

- Mathematics Inservice – Charles Lovitt
- Reading Recovery Training days
- NZ Professional Experience
- Best Start Teacher Training
- CORT and Microskills Training
- Principal and Assistant Principal Meetings, Conference and Inservice Days
- Religious Education Co-ordinator Inservice Days
- Additional Needs / Enrichment Support Days

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $3237.91 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by CEO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average teacher attendance figure is 97.43%. This figure is provided to the school by the CEO.

Two full-time temporary teachers did not have their contracts renewed for 2011. Although we saw a slight increase in enrolments for 2011, student year level placement dictated a change from ten classes to nine. This provided us with the capacity to employ a part-time music teacher and a part-time teacher-librarian as well as having additional classroom support. The resignation of the school Principal early in the year saw the placement of the Assistant Principal in the role of Acting Principal for 2011. An Acting Assistant Principal was subsequently appointed from the teaching staff. One staff member was engaged in a 12 month joint research venture with Southern Cross University on a part-time basis commencing in May.
Student Attendance
School attendance is always high. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher as soon as the child returns to school. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss their leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2011 was 94.8%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance rates by Year group</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Policies
School policies are reviewed regularly. In 2011 the following policies were reviewed, updated or newly created:

- Fire Evacuation Policy
- Lockdown Procedure Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy

Enrolment Policy
Every new enrolment at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.
Children who turn five by 31st July are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school’s website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

The school’s Welfare and Pastoral Care Policies are concerned with the fostering of students’ self-discipline. They aim to develop people who are responsible, inner-directed and capable of choosing freely in accordance with their conscience. These policies set out to help students recognise that their fundamental freedoms and rights are reciprocated by responsibilities.

Discipline Policy

This school policy is based on procedural fairness and ensures that school practices respect the dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms of individual students. The policy is discussed with students, staff and parents on a regular basis. Reminders about the policy are regularly included in school newsletters. This policy is available on the school website.

Complaints and Grievance Policy

This school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. This policy is available at the front office and from the school’s website.

School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five year Strategic Plan. 2011 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school’s main goals and priorities were to:

- build on existing RE resources and investigate further symbols for prayer spaces within the school;
- continue to build school / parish relationships through such activities as special monthly family masses, school / parish social events and more input into both newsletters;
- encourage environmental stewardship through class programs and ongoing school developments such as bush tucker gardens and studies of local freshwater systems;
- strengthen teaching pedagogy in Mathematics by investigating programs that are supported by current research into best practice in the teaching of Mathematics;
- further investigate opportunities for ongoing staff development;
- respond to the need for more staff stability by minimising contract positions and increasing the number of permanently appointed staff;
- further develop role descriptions for the various staff roles by clarifying expectations;
- refine the school newsletter to better engage and inform the parent community;
- further develop the accessibility of ICT resources by students and teachers to enhance the learning culture within our school.

**Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- the school Behaviour Management Policy
- the Bounce Back Program
- the student leadership structure
- the Making Jesus Real program

In re-evaluating our School Behaviour Management Policy in Term 4, the community of Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School commenced a process of determining which specific behaviours we expect our children to practise. This process resulted in the development of a set of seven clear behaviour expectations that promote respect and responsibility.

**Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction**

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:

- Parent satisfaction is gauged through Parents and Friends Association meetings.
- Parents are encouraged to attend periodic Parent Information sessions at which they can provide feedback and / or make enquiries about administrative procedures. Immediate feedback can be given to parents in these forums or via the school intranet class pages or school newsletter.
- Class meeting were held regularly in all classes and suggestions for school improvement was accommodated where possible.
- Periodic meetings were held with the school executive to obtain feedback from teachers in Stage groups about any classroom concerns.

**Financial Information**

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Education Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Education Office are audited annually.
The following graphs represent the income and expenditure for the year ending 31 December 2011 as aggregated from the annual report to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2011. Additional financial information is available on the MYSchool website.

**2011 INCOME - Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School - LISMORE SOUTH**

- Grants-State Govt 18%
- Grants-Commonwealth Govt 55%
- Other Capital 4%
- Fees 6%
- Other Private Income 4%
- Other Capital Grants 13%
- Govt.Capital Grants 13%

**2011 EXPENSE - Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School - LISMORE SOUTH**

- Salary & Related Expenditure 69%
- Other Expenditure 12%
- Capital Expenditure 19%