

St Mary's College GUNNEDAH  
Annual School Report to the Community

2017



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**Principal**

Mr Max Quirk

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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St Mary's College is registered by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA). The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The *Annual School Report to the Community* provides parents and the wider College community with fair, reliable and objective information about College performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education. The *Report* also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the College's Annual Improvement Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the College community and the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale. This *Report* has been approved by the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale in consultation with the School Consultant who monitors that the College has appropriate processes in place to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to College newsletters and other regular communications. Further information about the College may be obtained by contacting the College or by visiting the College's website.

### **Principal's Message**

St Mary's College Gunnedah, is a Catholic co-educational secondary school serving the Gunnedah region in North-West NSW. With a population of approximately 370 students, St Mary's provides a holistic Catholic education in a caring and stimulating environment following the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy who founded the College in 1879.

St Mary's College has always had a strong academic focus with many students progressing to university studies. An active Vocational Educational and Training program has also provided students with a successful pathway into apprenticeships and traineeships.

Cultural pursuits have always been a part of St Mary's College and the College band and choir prove very popular with students and parents. A comprehensive sporting program provides students with an opportunity to excel, representing the College at CCC and State levels.

### **Parent Body Message**

The 2017 school year for St Mary's College saw many great achievements, academic, sporting and great success with student social development and engagement

Parent participation on the School Advisory Board was very much appreciated and provided valuable advice and feedback to the College Executive Leadership Team. Parents were also active in the Combined St Xavier's, St Mary's Parents and Friends Association and a number of

profitable fundraisers were held during the year to raise valuable funds to improve student facilities on both sites.

Parent volunteer help on the College Canteen was much appreciated and provided a unique opportunity for parents to be actively involved in College life.

### **Student Body Message**

Students were actively involved in the life of the College through the various committees and leadership groups on offer.

From Year 12 there were two Captains and two Vice Captains as well as a Senior Council to assist in the leading of student affairs. Each of the other year levels had two representatives on the

SRC. This group meet regularly to discuss student issues and to organise various activities such as College Socials every term and fund raising events for a number of charities.

From Year 11 House Captains are chosen to lead each of the four houses at the major sports carnivals. The school spirit and enthusiasm on display at these events was very pleasing and showed that students of St Mary's are very proud of their school and enjoy helping to make it a great place for students to grow and prosper.

College Captains 2017

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## SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

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St Mary's College is a Catholic systemic Co-educational College located in GUNNEDAH.

With a population of 357 students, St Mary's provides a holistic Catholic education in a caring and stimulating environment following the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy who founded the College in 1879. St Mary's College Gunnedah has always had a strong academic focus with many students progressing to university studies. An active Vocational Educational and Training program has also provided students with a successful pathway into apprenticeships and traineeships. Cultural pursuits have always been a part of St Mary's College and the band and

choir prove very popular with students and parents. A comprehensive sporting program provides students with an opportunity to excel, representing the College at CCC and State levels.

### Mission Statement

The members of the community of St Mary's College will strive to provide a caring and stimulating environment for a holistic education of high quality for all of the College's students, in the Catholic and Mercy traditions.

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## SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

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### Student Enrolment

The College caters for students in Year 7 to Year 12. Students attending this College come from a variety of backgrounds. The following information describes the student profile for 2017:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
192	165	8	357

\* Language Background Other than English

### Student Retention

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2015, 59% completed Year 12 in 2017.

### Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale'. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This school does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishop's Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the Armidale Catholic Schools Office website at;

<http://www.arm.catholic.edu.au>

### Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2017 was 88.67%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<b>Attendance rates by Year group</b>	
Year 7	90.00%
Year 8	89.00%
Year 9	85.00%
Year 10	88.00%
Year 11	88.00%
Year 12	92.00%

### **Managing Student Non-Attendance**

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The College, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, College staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

College staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community;
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/carer involvement;
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed the Principal and the School Consultant will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies, if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.

### **Senior Secondary Outcomes**

The table below sets out the percentages of students undertaking vocational training in their senior years as well as those attaining the award of Higher School Certificate (or equivalent vocational education and training qualifications).

Senior Secondary Outcomes. Year 12 2013	
% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling.	20%
% of students attaining the award of <i>Higher School Certificate</i> or equivalent vocational education and training qualification.	100%

### Student Post School Destinations

Each year the College collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort. The table below sets out the percentages of students for the various categories.

Destination Data	University	TAFE / Other institutions	Workforce entry	Destination not reported
Year 12, 2017 Graduating Class	56%	7%	30%	7%



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## SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

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The following information describes the staffing profile for 2017:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
40	15	55

\* This number includes 27 full-time teachers and 13 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	3%
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### Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office Armidale. The College takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

The College held the equivalent of five staff development days this year with areas of focus as follows:

Term 1	Literacy verb model
Term 2	Numeracy, and Effective Teacher Behavior Management
Term 3	Prayer
Term 4	First Aid/ CPV

### Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the categories determined by NESA:

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	40
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

St Mary's College follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

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#### LITURGICAL LIFE

There were four full school Masses held in the course of 2017, with the Opening School Mass

held in conjunction with St Xavier's. There were also Masses and opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation for particular year levels. Liturgies were held for special occasions. Each school assembly and each homeroom session began with a prayer. The graduation of Year 12 was celebrated by Mass followed by presentations in St Xavier's School Hall.

#### STAFF AND STUDENT FAITH FORMATION

Year 12 students attended a three-day Retreat on the theme of Servant Leadership with the Youth Mission Team in Wollongong. Year 11 students undertook a four-day Western Tour and Retreat to raise their awareness of Aboriginal spirituality and of social justice issues connected with Aboriginal people. The Staff Reflection Day held in August was facilitated by the Diocesan Renewal Team and was based around the scripture on the Prodigal Son. Student faith formation is a key component of their courses taught from Years 7 to 12. It is supported by the program of collection for charitable works, the Social Justice program, the program of Masses and liturgies and class visits by the Parish Priest and appropriate guest speakers. Staff, parents and students were all strongly encouraged to join the celebration of the Family Masses held in St Joseph's Church. Attendance of families was very pleasing.

#### SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice education within the RE program complemented the College's charitable fundraising activities, at least one of which was held per term. All school assemblies were

preceded by an Acknowledgement of Country.

#### PARISH LINKS

The Principal and Religious Education Coordinator worked closely with the Parish Priest on the school's liturgical program and class visits. The Parish Priest is a member of the School Advisory Committee and regularly attends meetings. The REC serves on the Parish Liturgy Committee. The Principal is a member of the Parish Pastoral Council.

The College Newsletter is regularly available in the Parish Church; Parish news is published in the College Newsletter and significant College news published in the Parish Bulletin. Parishioners are eligible to nominate for membership of the School Advisory Committee.

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## SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

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The College follows the NESA syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale.

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The College operated the mandatory NESA courses of English, Mathematics, Science, PDHPE, Creative Arts and Technology throughout Years 7 and 8. Each of History, Geography, Visual Arts and Music was run for each class for two terms per year. Students fulfilled the mandatory Languages requirements in Year 8 (Chinese). Students in Years 9 and 10 took the NESA courses in English, Mathematics, Science, Australian History and Geography, and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. The College offered two elective lines. In Years 11 and 12 there was a good range of electives, again enhanced by a small number of composite classes. Several VET courses were available to senior students, either within the College (Primary Industries) or in conjunction with TAFE Colleges. Assessment was conducted according to NESA Syllabus guidelines for all NESA courses and along similar lines for NESA - endorsed courses. Each course in Years 7 to 10 incorporated relevant aspects of Literacy, Numeracy, Indigenous Perspectives and Information and Communications Technology. All courses from Years 7 to 12 incorporate the Core Catholic Principles and Values, through which connections between syllabus content, attitudes and skills can be related to Catholic perspectives. Multicultural and environmental education are incorporated into RE, Science and HSIE courses. The student support staff provide mainly in-class assistance to students with diagnosed disabilities and/or literacy and numeracy difficulties. Transition programs were implemented at the end of 2017 for new students enrolled in 2018. Teaching staff received training in writing an Individual Education Plans for each funded student. An after-school Homework Centre was operated in the school library, with 2017 being its eighth year of operation.

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**SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS**

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The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists College planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The College results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2017		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 7	Reading	22.00%	29.00%	17.00%	16.20%
	Writing	10.00%	16.50%	39.00%	28.40%
	Spelling	31.00%	32.90%	23.00%	15.50%
	Grammar	20.00%	28.80%	30.00%	18.80%
	Numeracy	24.00%	33.10%	12.00%	13.90%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2017		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 9	Reading	15.00%	21.00%	23.00%	21.30%
	Writing	20.00%	15.40%	45.00%	36.80%
	Spelling	22.00%	22.20%	27.00%	21.70%
	Grammar	17.00%	19.00%	24.00%	25.40%
	Numeracy	12.00%	24.00%	11.00%	16.00%

### Higher School Certificate

The results of the College’s Higher School Certificate (HSC) candidature are reported for particular subjects. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top two bands and shows comparison with results from previous years.

Higher School Certificate	<i>Percentage of students in top 2 bands (Bands 5 and 6)</i>					
	2015		2016		2017	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
Studies of Religion 1	30%	51%	59%	50%	56%	50%
English Standard	0%	8%	21%	13%	33%	16%
Mathematics	63%	53%	0%	53%	60%	54%

The Decourcy analysis of the 2017 HSC results showed an improvement in both the state average across all courses, and for the first time above state average. The learning gain between achieved and expected was also above the line, indicating an improvement in pedagogy.

In 2017 the number of students issued with a RoSA	4
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### **Student Welfare Policy**

No changes were made to this Policy this year.

The full text of the College's Pastoral Care Policy may be accessed on the College's website or at the administration office.

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### **Discipline Policy**

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this College. The College does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by College persons and non-College persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the College.

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The full text of the College's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the College's website or at the administration office.

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### **Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy**

The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale has established a *Student Anti-Bullying Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Diocese. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) monitors the implementation of this policy. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the *Anti-Bullying Policy* may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.



### **Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy**

The Diocese of Armidale has established a *Staff Grievance Policy* which is implemented by our school in the Diocese. Each school also has an individual Grievance Policy and Procedure for dealing with matters at a school level. The rationale for these policies is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policy. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the individual policies may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

### **Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**

Respect for all members of society was promoted on a whole school basis through the charitable works program, in which members of the Students' Representative Council took a leading role. The College continued its involvement in the Red Cross Blood Donor Program and in the Riding for the Disabled Program. Student involvement in civic events was encouraged. Students who volunteered such events were recognised by the presentation of certificates, usually at College assemblies. The College maintains active participation in town ANZAC Day and Remembrance

Day activities. Aspects of Civics and Citizenship were addressed through the History and Geography courses, especially in Years 9 and 10. Respect and Responsibility is also promoted through the College's Pastoral Care and Discipline Policies, which were reinforced by Year Supervisors at Year assemblies and by the Principal and Assistant Principal at the fortnightly College assemblies.

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## SECTION NINE: SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

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Each year, the College develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the College's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic School's Office Annual Improvement Plan. The College engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Schools Consultant.

### **Key Improvements Achieved in 2017**

1. To incorporate the Core Catholic Principles and Values into the curriculum.
2. To promote and celebrate the Jubilee Year of Mercy.
3. To enrich the prayer life of the College.
4. To strengthen the learning culture within the College by implementing an Action Research Project based on effective assessment and feedback.
5. To further develop teacher capacity through the establishment of Catholic Professional Learning Communities.
6. To increase the leadership density within the College staff by increasing opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles.
7. To enhance the pastoral teacher-student relationship through a review of the daily Mentor Groups time and the role of the Mentor Teacher.

### **Priority Key Improvements for 2018**

1. To embed the Core Catholic Principles and Values across all KLAs.
2. To enrich the prayer life in the College.

3. To further develop the learning culture of the school through developing collaborative teaching and learning.

4. To build the capacity of all staff in the College.

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the College has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the College from parents, students and teachers.

#### **Parent Satisfaction**

There were 122 responses to the parent survey. Parents responded to 38 statements covering the areas of Resources, Leadership, Teaching and Learning, Catholic Ethos, Improvement Processes and General Matters. The average overall satisfaction rating of parents was 73%, with a mean score of 3.64 out of 5. The highest satisfaction being with Leadership (3.80), followed by Resources (3.74), Teaching and Learning (3.62), Improvement Processes (3.49) and Catholic Ethos (3.58).

#### **Student Satisfaction**

There were 58 responses to the student survey. Students responded to 35 statements covering the areas of Resources, Leadership, Teaching and Learning, Catholic Ethos, Improvement Processes and General Matters. The average overall satisfaction rating of students was 75%, with a mean score of 3.75 out of 5. The highest satisfaction being with Teaching and Learning (3.84), followed by Catholic Ethos (3.65), Leadership (3.73) and Resources (3.74).

#### **Teacher Satisfaction**

There were 44 responses to the staff survey. Staff responded to 37 statements covering the areas of Resources, Leadership, Staff Engagement, Catholic Ethos, Improvement Processes and General Matters. The average overall satisfaction rating of students was 77%, with a mean score of 3.83 out of 5. The highest satisfaction being with Catholic Ethos (3.98), followed by Resources (3.98), Staff Engagement (3.87), Leadership (3.72), and Improvement Processes (3.71).

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**SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

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**Income**

**Expenditure**

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This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire. School Financial Information for the 2017 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME		RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$NDA	Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$NDA
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$NDA	Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$NDA
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$NDA	Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$NDA
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$NDA	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$NDA</b>
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$NDA		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$NDA</b>		

**Notes**

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Diocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.