St Brendan's Catholic Primary School
Lake Munmorah

2013 Annual Report
1. Message from Our School Community

1.1 Message from the Principal

St Brendan’s Catholic Primary School is situated in Lake Munmorah within the Diocese of Broken Bay. The well maintained, extensive grounds, modern facilities and the focus on sustainability and stewardship all enhance the dynamic learning experiences on offer at St Brendan’s. In 2013 there were sixteen classes across Kindergarten to Year 6.

Our aim at St. Brendan’s is to support and supplement the efforts of parents in providing a well-rounded education for the children. Staff and the parents, united together, encourage all students to live out the Christian values embedded in the School’s Vision Statement.

Our School Motto, ‘Alive in Christ’, is evident in all we strive to achieve at St Brendan’s.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

This year saw a resurgence of parent involvement and engagement of the parent community focused on fostering the wonderful community spirit for which St Brendan’s is renowned.

Our community events successfully drew the community together and a moderate amount of fundraising was achieved.

Highlights for the year included: the Walkathon; air-conditioning in the Hall; fashion parade and the enormous success of the disco.

P and F President

In addition, the achievements of the School’s Enrichment Board included: a review of the School’s Pastoral Care Policy and the publication of a prayer card to commemorate the foundation year of St Brigid’s Catholic Secondary College.

Member of the Enrichment Board

1.3 Message from the Student Body

St Brendan’s school has a wonderful learning environment and focuses on KidsMatter to try to make sure that all students have a positive experience at school.

This year the Mini Vinnies team worked really hard to support those in our community who are needy.

Year 5 went to Camp Toukley and Year 6 to Canberra. A great time was had on both trips.

The highlights for the year included the Year 6 Leadership forum, the spirituality day at the beach, the school disco, the walkathon, the Year 6 fun day and the Aboriginal presenter.

School Captains 2013
2. School Profile

2.1 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>LBOTE*</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>183</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background other than English

2.2 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an Enrolment Policy† which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

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

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

2.3 Staff Profile

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

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

b) 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;

c) 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Further information about the staff profile can be found in the School Facts section of the school’s profile page on the My School website.

2.4 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2013 was 95%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2012 to 2013 was 96%.
2.5 Teacher Satisfaction

In 2013 staff enthusiastically participated in a strategic initiative to lift the learning gains of all students in reading. All staff engaged in professional learning, supported by the CSO Education Officer, to become experts in Guided Reading. The success of this initiative was overwhelming with significant growth in reading levels displayed across K-3. Via survey data 87% of staff reported that this learning was particularly valuable in furthering their skills to support student’s acquisition of reading strategies.

2.6 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average student attendance rate (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average student attendance rate for 2013 was 93%.

Management of non-attendance: In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents’ legal responsibility under the Education Act to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so the school, under the leadership of the Principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging;
- maintains accurate records of student attendance;
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise;
- communicates to parents and students, the school’s expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations; and
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the Catholic Schools Office and the relevant Department of Education and Training officer where appropriate.
Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the school in collaboration with parents provides resources to contribute to the student’s continuum of learning where possible.

The Catholic Schools Office monitors each school’s compliance with student attendance and management of non attendance on an annual basis as a minimum, as part of the system’s School Review and Development processes.

2.7 Student Satisfaction

A heightened awareness of mental health and wellbeing permeated the opportunities provided to students. A yoga teacher was employed to support students and staff to develop deep breathing techniques and strategies to implement when feeling anxious. After three terms of yoga lessons, a selection of students across K-6 along with parents and staff were interviewed using iPads. This data indicated that the yoga classes were a valuable tool in assisting students with anxiety and supporting them to grow in confidence and application towards their learning.
3. Catholic Life and Mission

3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Brendan’s Catholic Primary School belongs to the Parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Toukley and Lake Munmorah. The students and their families are offered regular opportunities to worship both at Mass and class liturgies. Sacramental programs are facilitated from both Toukley and Lake Munmorah sites. Our Catholic identity is visible in the symbols and posters that are found in prominent places throughout the school. The school’s motto, ‘Alive in Christ’, is found in our school prayer, song and logo. In December of 2013 all staff participated in professional learning centring on prayer and collaboratively decided to introduce the praying of an Examen on a daily basis in 2014. The school’s Mission Statement and Prayer are on the school’s website at http://www.sblmdbb.catholic.edu.au.

3.2 Religious Life of the School

St Brendan’s Catholic School exists to form disciples of Christ. The community strives to attain this through: worship, Sacramental programs, daily prayer, mission outreach and promotion of Christ-like ways to view the world and to treat each other (Positive Behaviour for Learning)(PBL). Significant events and Liturgical seasons are highlighted through Liturgy and symbol and the Religious Education curriculum. The Family Liaison Officer (FLO) offers pastoral care to all families and is a point of liaison between families in need and the school staff. The school supports the work of the Parish by assisting with some family Masses. Our school participated in the Year 6 Cluster Mass, the Diocesan Schools Staff Mass, the Mission Mass and associated activities.

3.3 Catholic Worldview

One of the ways in which the Catholic Worldview is reflected is through the school’s Mini Vinnies group co-ordinating a number of social justice activities, raising over $800 to support the local branch of St Vincent de Paul.

The Year 6 students participated in a spirituality retreat which was designed to nurture and deepen their awareness of how the principles of the Catholic Worldview can be expressed in everyday life.

3.4 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established an Accreditation Policy for Staff in the Diocesan School System in respect to the Mission of the Church which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.

Throughout 2013, eight staff members were enrolled in post graduate Theology/Religious Education studies.

All staff engaged in professional learning, centring on curriculum development and delivery, facilitated by the CSO Education Officer.

Two staff attended the Ministry For Teachers course.

Three staff participated in the spirituality/prayer morning facilitated by external providers.

All staff participated in the staff development day focusing on daily prayer, the Examen.
4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policies including Student Welfare and Anti-Bullying, 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

The Pastoral Care policy has the ROSE principles as central to the behaviour management approach of the school (Respecting Others, Self and the Environment). This policy was unpacked with the School’s Enrichment Board throughout 2013 resulting in minor but valuable amendments to the policy. The PBL framework has been very successful in assisting students, staff and parents in addressing issues of behaviour management in a consistent and respectful manner. All staff members have been trained, a committee meets regularly and lessons are taught across the whole school. The Peer Support program was offered along with the Seasons for Growth program, the Learning Assistance Program (LAP), Yoga lessons, the Let’s Do Lunch program and the Lunchtime Activities program. A parent wellbeing ‘fair’ was held in Term 2.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Parents at the school organise a series of “Munch n Crunch” mornings where funds are raised to support families in crisis. The school’s Family Liaison Officer works with the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator from the Parents & Friends to identify families in crisis and assist them in managing their pastoral needs. The local branch of CatholicCare has a base at the school and has been available to community members for support and participation in various courses in 2013. The CSO school counsellor assigned to the school works with individual students and their families on a needs basis.

4.4 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

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

4.5 Work Health and Safety

Each school is required to implement and comply with the Diocesan School System Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS). This system reflects the current statutory requirements for WHS and complies with the Australian Standard for WHS Management Systems. The WHSMS adopted by the CSO for Broken Bay Systemic Schools has been designed to address general health, safety and welfare matters and also to take account of specific issues that apply to school communities. The management system supports the provision of a ‘safe and supportive’ environment for all students as well as taking into account the health, safety and welfare of staff, visitors and contractors to the school site.

Principals, in consultation with the relevant CSO personnel, are responsible for monitoring the school’s compliance with WHS legislation and for the implementation of the management system in keeping with the Catholic Schools Office’s Annual WHS Plan. External WHS system audits are conducted across a sample of schools each year to validate the implementation of the management system.
5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

5.1 Quality Teaching and Learning

The ‘Leading Learning’ agenda permeated all dimensions of the curriculum in 2013 with a concentrated effort from all staff members on ‘closing the gap’. The 2013 SIP (School Improvement Plan) goal for Literacy focused on intensive professional learning around Guided Reading. This learning was for all teachers K-6 with an expectation that guided reading be a focus of the daily English Block. This initiative resulted in stunning improvement in reading levels, most especially for those who started the year as vulnerable. The 2013 SIP (School Improvement Plan) goal for Numeracy focused on the introduction and implementation of the EMU (Extending Mathematical Understanding) framework. This included the training and subsequent administration of the MAI (Mathematics Assessment Interview) across Years K-6. The Year 1 cohort was selected as a particular year group to be tracked with four intensive EMU groups running daily for twenty weeks. The percentage of vulnerable students fell significantly over the course of the year.

5.2 Student Achievement

Students in Years 3 and 5 undertook tests as part of the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Several points should be noted:

- **In Year 3**, students placed in Band 1 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 2 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 3 – 6 are performing at a standard deemed to be above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 and 6 are “at proficiency”.

- **In Year 5** students in Band 3 are achieving below the national minimum standard. Students in Band 4 are achieving at the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 5 – 8 are performing above the national minimum standard. Students in Bands 7 and 8 are “at proficiency”.

- Students who were exempted from any test were deemed not to have met the national minimum standard in that test area and are not included in band distributions.

- State data for Band distributions is sourced from the School Measurement and Reporting Toolkit (SMART2), developed by NSW Department of Education and Communities. All national data and state figures for the percentage at or above national minimum are sourced from the NAPLAN Summary Report (Preliminary Results for Achievement) published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). All school data is sourced from SMART2. Because figures are rounded and exempted students are not included in Band distributions, percentages may not add up to 100.

- In the 2013 cohort, there were 55 students in Year 3 and 46 students in Year 5.

Detail on school performance is provided in the following tables. Band distributions and percentages of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard are shown separately for Years 3 and 5. Additional information can also be accessed from the My School website (http://www.myschool.edu.au/).
Literacy: Year 3 results indicate greatest strength in proficiency levels for Grammar and Punctuation, followed by Spelling, Reading and Writing. Compared to national figures, a higher percentage of St Brendan’s students achieved at or above the national minimum standard in Writing and Grammar and Punctuation.

Numeracy: Year 3 results indicate that 96% of students achieved at or above the national minimum standard. 50% of the cohort achieved a Band 4 or higher.

Improving teaching practice and raising student achievement in both Literacy and Numeracy is a strategic priority for the St Brendan’s educational community.

**Band Distributions (%) – Year 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Band 3 (−)</th>
<th>Band 4</th>
<th>Band 5</th>
<th>Band 6</th>
<th>Band 7</th>
<th>Band 8 (+)</th>
<th>% at or above national minimum</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>9.4</td>
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<td>28.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>15.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9.9</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>10.9</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
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<td>State</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>93.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4.5</td>
<td>27.3</td>
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<td>29.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. &amp; Punct.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>10.5</td>
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<td>21.2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>38.6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Literacy: Year 5 results indicate greatest strength in proficiency levels for Reading followed by Grammar and Punctuation, Spelling, and Writing. In every test area, the percentage of students achieving at or above the national minimum standard, was higher than the state and national figures.

Numeracy: Year 5 results indicate that, compared with state and national figures, a significantly lower proportion of students were in the bottom two bands (Bands 3 and 4). 54.5% of students achieved a Band 6 or higher.
5.3 Extra Curricula Activities

In 2013 the whole school was involved in a Public Speaking event. Students showed great promise and enthusiasm in this event and two Year 6 students competed at the Cluster level.

A number of children completed the University of NSW Competitions in areas such as Spelling, Mathematics, Science, Computer Skills, Writing and Reading.

A large number of students participated in sporting programs and opportunities including representative sporting opportunities. A Band program was offered by Teaching Services, an external provider.

5.4 Professional Learning

Professional learning which supported deepening teacher knowledge, skills and understanding of Literacy was the focus of staff meetings throughout the year. These meetings were planned collaboratively with staff and were based on shaping the pedagogical content knowledge for the teaching of reading.

In addition, there was significant professional learning time allocated towards implementing the EMU initiative and providing opportunities for all staff to become more familiar with specialist strategies.

Deepening community knowledge and understanding of the importance of all students’ mental health and wellbeing was also a priority for professional learning. A well-known speaker on developing resilience in girls, gave an evening presentation for parents and staff.

Two staff participated in professional learning for New Scheme Teachers and five staff engaged with post graduate studies.
6. **Strategic Initiatives**

6.1 **2013 Priorities and Achievements**

Various sources of data indicate growth in both individual student’s and whole cohorts in reading progress and mathematics. Data gathered in November indicated that students across K-6 demonstrated significant improvement in both these areas.

Parent surveys designed to gather information about Pastoral Care overwhelmingly indicated that students have grown in their ability to identify the times when they are feeling vulnerable and to self-regulate during periods of angst.

As an incidental, the information gathered from student surveys around playground behaviour and PBL data demonstrate that instances of misdemeanour have decreased significantly. From this, the school makes the connection that more students have been empowered to act as disciples of Jesus in showing care and concern for their peers.

6.2 **2014 Priorities and Challenges**

Moving into 2014 the School’s priorities include:

**Catholic Life and Mission:** embedding the daily practice of The Examen. This prayer will be prayed after morning tea each day across the entire school. Of course, the challenge will be to ensure that competing initiatives and the pressure of a crowded curriculum do not deter staff from this practice.

**Learning and Teaching:** further expand the EMU initiative to include every student within the school and to use this data to bring about significant learning gains and to embed the practice of daily Guided Writing across all classes. The challenges will include ensuring that staff members are given quality professional learning opportunities to enable them to expertly conduct the teaching of both EMU strategies and Guided Writing.

**Pastoral Care:** continue to build resilience in all students and to proactively engage with families to ensure open communication about strategies to support growing resilience both at school and in the home.
7. Parent Participation

7.1 Introduction

St Brendan’s has an enthusiastic and committed School Enrichment Board and a wonderful Parents and Friends (P&F). These two parent bodies provide a strong building block for strengthening partnerships between family, school, Parish and the wider community. The parent body undertook many activities to support the families of our school. Highlights included many social, educational and fundraising activities throughout the year. Parents also involved themselves in the life of the school, through classroom help, Canteen support, reading and excursion support.

The successful and well received parent education continued to be offered by the school in 2013. Some of these workshops focused on: student wellbeing, strategies for supporting English and Mathematics at home, a Stage 3 leadership camp for parent and child, and a ‘Dad and Child’ project evening.

7.2 Parent Satisfaction

Parents were invited to complete a survey relating to the achievement of the 2013 School Improvement Plan goals. The results of the parents’ feedback gave strong indication of their satisfaction with the school and the plan for continued improvement.

100% of respondents felt that the school promotes opportunities for others to be involved in Masses and Liturgies and 100% also thought that the school encourages all students to act as a disciple of Jesus.

For the Improvement Goal relating to Teaching and Learning, 88% of parents indicated they received feedback about their child’s Mathematical Assessment Interview and 82% felt they know the areas of Mathematics where their child needs additional support.

For the school’s Pastoral Care goal of implementing the KidsMatter framework to support student wellbeing, 100% of parents who attended the school’s launch of the framework found it to be valuable. Almost 90% of parents have seen their child grow in resilience during the year and 95% of respondents believe the school promotes good mental health and wellbeing across the community.

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below. More detailed financial data is available on the "myschool" website at http://www.myschool.edu.au. Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the Diocesan school system Annual Report, which will be available at http://www.csodbb.catholic.edu.au

The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School’s consultant, Frances Reynolds.