About this report

St Joseph’s School Alstonville 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 02 66281009 or by visiting the website at http://www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au

Principal’s Message

The primary purpose of St Joseph’s 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. St Joseph’s School Alstonville 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 web pages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies and in Newsletters. Our focus was to continue
to build on the reputation that St Joseph's School Alstonville has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- Students participated in ICAS testing in Science, Computer Studies, English, Spelling, Writing, and Mathematics and in the Australian Mathematics Competition.

- Students competed in many competitions relating to ANZAC Day, CWA, and Art and Writing competitions.

- There is a strong focus on improvement within the school culture with students constantly attempting to gain improved results in all academic work.

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:

- Our students participated at ANZAC Day activities in Alstonville with a large contingent marching.

- Students took a key role in the opening of the Alstonville Bypass and competed in the Lismore Eisteddfod.

- We hosted Postcards from the Lab and invited family participation.

- We celebrated St Joseph’s Day, the Feast of Mary of the Cross, and a Family Day with beautiful and engaging liturgies.

- We held week-long festivities for NAIDOC including assisting another school in their celebration.

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

- Students participated in AFL, rugby union, netball and rugby league carnivals.

- Individual students were successful at zone, Diocesan, Polding and PSSA level in swimming, cross country, athletics, AFL, touch football and rugby union.

- The school participated in Dance Fever for Stage 2 & 3 in Term 4. This was a great success.

- Students in Stage 2 & 3 had the opportunity to participate in organised lunch time sport programs in oztag and korfball.

- Students were given many opportunities to develop skills in a variety of clinics held at the school. These included hockey, AFL and cricket.

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. St Joseph’s School Alstonville is indeed blessed to have such
dedicated and enthusiastic people.

Therese Seymour
Principal

A Parent Message

St Joseph’s is fortunate to have an active parent body and 2011 was once again
filled with activities that included parents, grandparents, children, staff, parishioners
and the wider community.

The School’s Parish School Forum (PSF) Groups were active and co-ordinated
various events to facilitate learning and a sense of community. These were well
attended and successful due to the efforts of parents and teachers. Examples of the
variety of events included a disco, Gift of the Gab, Postcards from The Lab, a
massive garage sale, a talent quest, Dance Fever, an art exhibition and a
Celebration of Family day.

The major fundraiser for the year was the Garage Sale. The collection of the shop-a-
-dockets from supermarkets was a major success, along with the Art Exhibition which
raised money for our art supplies.

As has been the case in previous years, communication and consultation between
the school and the parent body was encouraged so that everyone had the
opportunity to provide input. As has been instituted in previous years, parents were
kept informed about the activities and discussions undertaken at PSF meetings via a
report in the school newsletter summarizing all discussions.

St Joseph’s enjoys a wonderful partnership with parents, families and the parish
community. It has been a pleasure to be involved with such a family-focused and
community-engaged school. We look forward to an exciting and bright 2012.

Jane Leeson
Co-ordinator
Parish School Forum

This Catholic School

St Joseph’s School is located in Alstonville and is part of the Our Lady of the Rosary
Parish which serves the communities of Alstonville, Wollongbar, Uralba, Wardell and
Meerschaum Vale. School families are drawn from the towns and communities of
Goonellabah, Wollongbar, Alstonvale, Alstonville, Meerschaum Vale, Uralba, Wardell
and West Ballina. Last year the school celebrated 92 years of Catholic education.

The Parish Priest Father Frank Mulcahy is involved in the life of the school.

St Joseph’s Alstonville 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
such activities such as:
- Family Week celebrations
- the Celebration of Family day
- parish-based Sacramental preparation for Confirmation and Eucharist;
- a very well supported Altar server training program;
- participation in Family Groups

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.

St Joseph’s Alstonville caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<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></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>138</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE (Language background other than English)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are currently 245 students enrolled in 10 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.

Our school has a focus on the whole child. We look at how we can support students in their academic success as well as ensuring that we are catering for growth in social skills, their emotional needs and physical health. This means we facilitate a number of programs to support students including Drumbeat, Rock & Water, a Gifted & Talented program, a choir and a chess club. The Technology room and Library are accessible for students at lunchtimes. All staff work as a team to support our students.

Our curriculum focus in 2011 was to develop numeracy skills. To support this staff have participated in training and discussion. The use of available data to monitor student progress has also been important.

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, 34 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 28 students.

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.

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.

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 St Joseph’s Alstonville 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 St Joseph’s Alstonville 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>29.0</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>BAND 8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Overview

In Years 3 and 5 at St Joseph's, at least 80% of our students achieved the national minimum standard or higher across all elements tested in both literacy and numeracy. Students who did not achieve this standard had all been previously identified as requiring Individual Education Plans for specific learning difficulties.

### Points of interest:

#### Year 3

More than 75% of our Year Three students sit in the top three Reading bands – a very good result. The challenge for us is to move the almost 60% of students in Bands 4 and 5 into the top band by Year 5. As the results above indicate, the Year 3 cohort will require concentration on spelling and mathematics. Curriculum differentiation and a determination to develop in students a love of mathematics will continue to be vital to student development in these areas.

#### Year 5

The highlight of our Year 5 results was the number of students in the top Reading band (Band 8) - almost double the State percentage. This is an excellent result, a
testament to the hard work of all parties – students, teachers and parents. The challenge is to move the Band 5 cohort into the top three bands. Whilst it is pleasing that two thirds of our Year 5 students sit in the top three bands for numeracy, an intensive focus on basic number facts throughout the school will make a significant difference to our numeracy results, especially in NAPLAN testing where limited completion time is a factor. The QuickSmart program adopted by St Joseph’s in 2011 has assisted many students to improve automatic recall, develop more sophisticated and efficient strategies and to focus on problem-solving strategies. This program will be implemented once again in 2012 for Stage 3 students with an identified numeracy weakness.

**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>17</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>-</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>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total number of non-teaching staff employed in the school.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>Understanding good pedagogy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Therese Seymour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using good pedagogy in Maths</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alan Foster, Don Whitelaw (SCU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish School Retreat Day</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>School Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Curriculum preparation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>CEO staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

- NAPLAN data analysis
- Improving Maths practice with Charles Lovitt
- ACARA consultation groups for the Australian Curriculum
- Anaphylaxis training
- Moodle training
- Inquiry Learning
- CPR update

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $3565 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 94.7%. This figure is provided to the school by the CEO.

This figure was impacted by an extended long service leave, carers leave and paternity leave. Another staff member resigned from her temporary position to travel with her family.

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 immediately 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 93.4%. 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>92.6%</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
<td>91.4%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>92.3%</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Policies

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

- The Pastoral Care Policy was reviewed in 2011 with particular reference to bullying. The Parish School Forum also worked on an accompanying brochure called Our Safe School Policy.
- Excursions Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Epilepsy Policy
- Road Safety Policy

Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at St Joseph’s Alstonville 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 30 June 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.

Pastoral Care Policy

St Joseph’s Alstonville has a Pastoral Care Policy that covers behaviour management and discipline in addition to wellbeing. St. Joseph’s Pastoral Care Policy aims to assist each member of the school community to develop their full potential with Jesus as model. To fulfil our vision of nurturing each person in a Christ-centred environment we aim to see the face of Jesus in every member of the community.

Thus we work towards:
- developing quality relationships within the school community which support the growth of the individual;
- helping everyone realise that it is the responsibility of all members of the school community to collaborate in the provision of a caring environment within the school;
- providing satisfying learning experiences;
- establishing effective care networks;
- developing self-discipline based on justice, self-esteem and reconciliation.

The principles of Restorative Practice are embedded in our Pastoral Care Policy. These principles include acknowledging the inevitability of conflict and hurt in relationships, working towards healing by repairing relationships, learning and growing from experience. The policy is regularly communicated to all members of the school community. Reminders are given at school assemblies as well as written advice in school newsletters. Students, staff and parents have a clear understanding of the expectations articulated through this policy and are supportive of the need to provide a safe and caring learning environment. The policy acknowledges teacher and student rights and responsibilities and is based on the Gospel teachings of love for self and others.

Complaints and Grievance Policy

The 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. The policy is available at the front office or 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 were:
Educational goals:

- to explore methods to increase student results coupled with an increase in staff expectations of students’ ability to achieve;
- to address the school needs in area of Wellbeing; to communicate what is occurring, to be consistent in approach and to regularly monitor all students.
- to further develop Restorative Practice within the school;
- to continue to research a tracking system for the students.

Cultural goals:

- to work towards consolidating the school Behaviour Code to create consistency across the school;
- to continue to develop the charism of both St Joseph and Mary of the Cross MacKillop in our school.

Interpersonal goals:

- to review the school leadership for Stage 3 to ensure best practice.;
- to monitor extra-curricular activities offered by the school to ensure overload does not occur for students or financially for parents.

Organisational goals:

- to prepare for School Review & Development. This will also involve preparation of a School Development plan for the next 5 years.
- to maintain consistency across the school in initiatives such as THRASS, Restorative Practice, purchasing of resources;
- to ensure there is a flow of information from planning meetings to Staff or Executive;
- to share all staff role descriptions with stakeholders.

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 through

- our Restorative Practices model;
- our manner in dealing with each other;
- the promotion of activities such as NAIDOC week, Mini Vinnies, Project Compassion;
- the weekly teaching of Social Skills which are also advertised in weekly Newsletters and demonstrated at Assembly;
- buddy activities with Year 6 acting as buddies to Kindergarten and Senior students to our Aspect satellite classes.
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:

- regular feedback requests in newsletters;
- Parish School Forum meetings;
- informal interviews with parents and students;
- interviews conducted with families leaving the school;
- surveys relating specifically to uniform satisfaction, the role of the School Chaplain and the School Review process.

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 EXPENSE - St Joseph’s Primary School - ALSTONVILLE

Salary & Related Expenditure 75%
Other Expenditure 21%
Capital Expenditure 4%