



2015

**Annual Report to
School Community**



St Joseph's, Murray Bridge

School features

St Joseph's School, Murray Bridge is an R-7 Catholic primary school serves the rural city of Murray Bridge and the surrounding area. The school was founded in 1925 and remains true to its Josephite charism, ethos and values and is built on the land of the Ngarrindjeri people. We are a multi-cultural school providing a safe, inclusive and positive learning environment. We have a rich heritage and we work closely in partnership with all of our families, parish and wider community. Our holistic and child centred approach focused by the Gospel values proudly continues our Josephite tradition which is enshrined in our motto - In All Things Kindness. Our Religious Education programs complement and facilitate student led social justice activities, which aim to form our children to become responsible global citizens of the 21st century. Academic excellence is delivered through a comprehensive curriculum which caters for each individual's needs as a learner, so that every child with timely support, intervention, extension and challenge will meet their full potential. Our Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts programs are key components in enriching and enhancing every child's learning experience at St Joseph's. Our outstanding new school facilities, including our purpose built Performing Arts Centre and Learning Resource Centre help us to provide a dynamic teaching and learning environment that is focused towards developing each child to their full potential. St Joseph's Murray Bridge is a school where every child counts and every child matters. The school currently has an enrolment of 484 students who represent the multi-cultural, multi-faith and demographic composition of the region. Our indigenous students account for 4% of the student body.

Year range and enrolments in each year level

	Reception	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7	Total
Boys	33	44	32	29	25	32	26	26	247
Girls	36	30	26	30	42	28	24	21	237
Total	69	74	58	59	67	60	50	47	484

Approximately 16% of the school population are eligible for a School card. The school has a highly regarded special and adaptive needs programme and approximately 3.7% of the school benefit from this. ICSEA measure indicated that the school community is on parity with the National Average with a value of 1000. Within this figure 27% of our families are represented in the bottom quartile.

	Bottom quarter	Middle quarters	Top quarter	
School Distribution	26%	36%	27%	11%
Australian Distribution	25%	25%	25%	25%

St Joseph's Murray Bridge is a school that demands innovation, accountability and a clear vision. Our students deserve the best we can provide which can only be achieved by continually improving. 2015 has seen our school improve in many ways.

At St Joseph's our mission has always been to promote the Catholic faith and instil the charism of the Josephite Sisters, within a partnership of our families and community which in turn creates opportunities for our students to encounter wonderful educational experiences.



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As a school we respect the dignity of each person within our community. As a collective, the staff at St Joseph's have endeavoured a commitment to employ processes of learning that are formative, challenging, engaging, inclusive, sensitive to the needs of each child, in a fashion that espouses a just and compassionate manner.

Throughout 2015 we have endeavoured to maintain and further create an educational environment which matters to students and their families.

We have continued to recognise the importance our Catholic identity. Prayer is one aspect of our Catholic identity and is an important part of everyday life at St Joseph's Murray Bridge. Within our school we strive to ensure that the Catholic social teaching is evident within the classrooms and throughout the whole school.

Student attendance

The average student attendance rate for our school in 2015 was 93%.

This is broken down by year groups as follows:

% ATTENDANCE 2015							
Reception	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year 7
94%	93%	94%	91%	94%	92%	95%	92%

Process for Non – Attendance

Non- attendance is monitored daily and absences are followed up by phone. The number of absences and late arrivals for each class are reported to parents each week in the newsletter. Student Individual absence and punctuality are reported on in mid and end of year reports. Repeated or persistent absence that have an identified pattern are addressed by the Principal and/or Student Well Being team with parents. The school has engaged with the local Attendance Officer; CAHMS and Families SA in the cases of chronic non-attendance. The school also uses the DECD process of completing ED171 and ED175 forms.

Student learning outcomes

- In May, Year 3, 5 and 7 students participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests. The aim of these tests is to provide information that adds to the comprehensive picture of student achievement that is developed by teachers using a broad range of assessment tools throughout the year.



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- Table 1 below shows the participation rate and percentage of the student body that attained the National Benchmark in each component of Literacy and Numeracy.

Year	Participation rate	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
3	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%
5	95%	93%	95%	95%	95%	98%
7	94%	93%	98%	93%	93%	93%

Table 2 below shows the percentage of students achieving National minimum standards

Year	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
3	96%	100%	94%	98%	98%
5	98%	97%	95%	97%	98%
7	100%	100%	98%	91%	100%

Table 3 below shows the mean scores attained by St Joseph's students compared with similar schools and National averages in all schools.

Year 3			
	School	National	Similar Schools
<i>Spelling</i>	410	409	398
<i>Grammar/Punctuation</i>	432	433	424
<i>Writing</i>	421	416	415
<i>Reading</i>	408	426	413
<i>Numeracy</i>	392	398	388
Year 5			
	School	National	Similar Schools
<i>Spelling</i>	481	498	491
<i>Grammar/Punctuation</i>	497	503	492
<i>Writing</i>	469	478	474
<i>Reading</i>	491	499	486



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Numeracy	491	493	480
Year 7			
	School	National	Similar Schools
Spelling	546	547	542
Grammar/Punctuation	545	541	532
Writing	530	511	500
Reading	537	546	533
Numeracy	534	543	528

Since 2010 we are able to also track improvements of students against National averages over the previous two years. (Note that Year 3's are not included as they had not been tested two years prior).

Table 4

Estimated standardised student progress between 2013 and 2015 Literacy and Numeracy Tests %				
Year 5	Reading: National Average	Reading: St. Joseph's	Numeracy: National Average	Numeracy: St. Joseph's
Low progress	25	12	25	30
Medium progress	50	60	50	55
High progress	25	28	25	15
Year 7				
Low progress	25	26	25	23
Medium progress	50	55	50	42
High progress	25	29	25	35
<i>Low: Student progress between tests is low when compared to students of similar ability</i>				
<i>Med: Student progress between tests is average when compared to students of similar ability</i>				
<i>High: Student progress between tests is high when compared to students of similar ability</i>				

Post St Joseph's Schooling



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- At St Joseph's the Year 7 cohort choose many different education setting for their Secondary Schooling. The table below outline the percentages of students moving to particular Secondary School settings:

Secondary School Preference	Percentage of Students moving to this setting
St Francis de Sales College, Mt Barker	19%
Murray Bridge High School	66%
Unity College	0%
Pembroke College, Kensington	2%
Other schools	13%

Staff profile

There are 26 teaching staff with an FTE (Full Time Equivalent) of 18.5. There are 14 non-teaching staff colleagues who equate to a FTE of 8.6. There are no staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. We had *professional learning undertaken during 2015*

Teaching staff qualifications at St Joseph's School

- In our school, we are fortunate to have teachers committed to lifelong learning. The breakdown of the qualifications of the teaching staff are:

Masters Degree	11%
Bachelor of Education Degree	77%
Diploma of Education/Advanced Diploma	23%
Graduate Certificates	54%
Bachelor of Arts	21%

- *During 2015, we had a number of staff continue with Units of the Graduate Certificate in Religious Education, Doctorates and study for their Masters Degrees*



Student, parent and staff satisfaction

In 2015 we surveyed parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school via a Kids Matter Survey. This was conducted for parents, staff and students. On average there is a 96% satisfaction rate, a 1. Below are some questions from the parent survey:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know	Agree	Strongly Agree
The school respects and values my families beliefs and wishes			1	51	48
The school provides a safe and caring environment for my child				25	75
I feel that I can participate in decisions that affect my child at school		3	14	48	35
I am satisfied with the way that the school communicates with me		1	3	45	51
I feel welcome when visiting my child's school	1		1	29	69
I feel that my child's teacher cares about my child			5	35	60
I am comfortable talking to my child's teacher about my child			5	35	60
The school sets clear, high expectations for student behaviour	1	1	1	44	52
I feel comfortable asking staff about parenting and child development	1	3	38	26	32
School staff are supportive of parents who may be experiencing particular challenges in their life		1	25	34	39
School staff are respectful and sensitive to children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties		3	17	41	39
Children at the school have someone they can talk to if they need help or advice			27	39	34

In addition, we conducted a separate survey asking families what methods were used to access information from the school particularly the Newsletter. 61% of families replied. 15% preferred the Schools website, 54 % preferred Email, while 45% preferred the school app. While 30% responded that they regularly read the school newsletter.

Finance

School income by Funding		
Source	\$	%
Australian Government Funding	3,382,856-00	58
State Government Funding	989,330-00	17
Other	1,373,645-00	25



School Improvement

Self-assessment process

During 2015, the school engaged in a self-assessment process that led to development of a School Improvement Plan, based on the domains specified in the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools (CESA).

2015 School Improvement Plan

During 2015 the School Improvement focussed specifically on:

- High quality teaching and learning
- Orderly and safe learning environments
- Enhancing Catholic Identity

Progress towards achievement of 2015 goals

The school continues to strengthen in these areas. Growth has been made in developing a curriculum that prepares students for the 21st century in an environment that is safe and rich in Catholicity.

2015 Improvements

St Joseph's School, Murray Bridge has been grounded by fantastic moments and experiences in 2015. St Joseph's continues to be creative as continues to develop upon our rich 90 year history.

The school has experienced many successes as it continues to progress as a Catholic School in the charism of the Josephite Sisters. Throughout 2015 we have endeavoured to maintain and further create an educational environment which matters to students and their families.

Parents have had many opportunities to involve themselves and become active participants in their child's schooling. Parental attendance at major school events including Mass, liturgies, sporting events, school excursions, information and parent evenings, interviews, meetings and performances – have been of the highest standard.

St Joseph's has a very strong community. There is a real sense of appreciation for staff and their efforts that have been made, planned and considered so the school can be central to the educative process. The school environment is a place where everyone is valued. There is a real sense of this amongst staff where there is a great deal of mutual trust, respect and moral obligation. The school continues developing an agenda for continuous improvement including a Strategic Plan which outlines a school-wide strategic approach to improvement. The Annual School Improvement Plan reflects the school's mission and vision.

At St Joseph's there is a strong commitment across the school community to the school's vision and mission with opportunities to engage in activities that develop the Catholic identity of the school. The school's Catholic identity is continually strengthened by doing theology – a process that takes action after reflecting on issues, policies, decisions and relationships in the light of Catholic faith.

Our school community is focused on improving learning outcomes and life opportunities for our students. Structures, programs and practices are in place to meet the needs of all students and to encourage them to be successful learners. Our students deserve the best we can provide which can only be achieved by continually improving.

There are highly effective structures for the leadership, organisation, accountability and delivery of quality teaching and learning in Religious Education. Staff understand the Religious Education curriculum and have a growing grasp of Catholic theology, supported by high quality resources and ongoing professional learning. This year there has been rich learning to enhance our Catholic Teachings.

School policies, decision making and practices are just and equitable expressing the beliefs and values of Catholic Faith. The pastoral care and relationships within the school community reflect a deep appreciation of the dignity of



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the human person. The principles and practice of Catholic social teaching are essential elements of the school curriculum and underpin all social justice activities undertaken.

A commitment to ecological conversion permeates all school policies and programs. It has been evident the past two years especially, however the new appeal from Pope Francis addressed to "every person living on this planet" called 'LAUDATO SI', mi' Signore" – "Praise be to you, my Lord", has generated great dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. Pope Francis calls the Church and the world to acknowledge the urgency of our environmental challenges and to join him in embarking on a new path. This encyclical is written with both hope and resolve, looking to our common future. Bi-projects for this theme have included many environmentally sustainable projects such as, nude food and our market garden.

Staff understand the improvement goals and are finding ways to improve student learning outcomes and overall school performance. Professional learning priorities are established and reflect the school's improvement goals.

At St. Joseph's we are committed to providing the best learning opportunities that we can offer, for both students and staff to develop beyond their capacity.

For students, often these involve excursions or incursions, which enhance or enrich the learning process. At other times they are learning experiences that challenge the children and bring them out of their comfort zone- proving to themselves that they can do it! These are carefully planned and timed to maximize their benefits. They are built into our curriculum planning rather than being bolted on. Many of these activities are simply not possible without the support of our parents.

All teachers are committed to high quality, ongoing professional learning and to the development of a school-wide culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning. This year our staff engaged in CESA Numeracy Projects, Master's level courses and Graduate Certificate courses.

The Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA 2008) recognises that in a digital age, and with rapid and continuing changes in the ways that people share, use, develop and communicate with ICT, young people need to be highly skilled in its use. To participate in a knowledge-based economy and to be empowered within a technologically sophisticated society now and into the future, students need the knowledge, skills and confidence to make ICT work for them at school, at home, and in their communities. This can only be achieved when students can access devices that move seamlessly through home, school and their community. It is with great delight that the 2nd and preparation for the final roll-out of the Year 5 to 7 1:1 iPad roll-out occurred in 2015.

In the Australian Curriculum, students develop ICT capability as they learn to use ICT effectively and appropriately to access, create and communicate information and ideas, solve problems and work collaboratively in all learning areas at school, and in their lives beyond school. The capability involves students in learning to make the most of the digital technologies available to them, adapting to new ways of doing things as technologies evolve and limiting the risks to themselves and others in a digital environment.

Data is used throughout the school to identify gaps in student learning, to monitor improvement over time and to monitor growth across the years of school. A high priority has been given to professional development aimed at building teachers' and leaders' data literacy skills. Staff conversations and language reflect a sophisticated understanding of student assessment and data concepts (e.g. value-added; growth; improvement; statistical significance).

The school implements highly effective processes for seeking and acting on the views of students to build a collaborative and safe teaching and learning environment. This has been a constant over the many years at St Joseph's. In 2015, staff began to formalise this under a Federal Government initiative called Kids Matter. Kids Matter brings together the social and emotional well-being, and the inclusive and safe initiatives we collectively do and places them under the one banner.



VALUE ADDED PROGRAMMES AT ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL

St Joseph's School offers many educational experiences and celebrations throughout the year that provide special opportunities for students, staff and wider community. These include;

Our Catholic Culture: throughout the year, Masses, Liturgies, Reconciliation Services, and Whole School Mission Efforts were hosted by class groups and units. All were done in consultation with the APRIM (Assitant Principal Religious Identity and Mission). The Parish Sacramental Program is also well supported by our parents and students.

St Joseph's Feast Day: Our annual celebration gives us the opportunity to celebrate our patron Saint's day with a whole school Mass and participate in house activities.

Student Leadership: Our Social Justice Representatives are the student voice at St. Joseph's. Opportunities for active student leadership have been a priority for St. Joseph's this year; not only do these have an obvious benefit for the school, and each individual involved, but they have also become enshrined as part of our Values Program. The role of leaders within the school is evolving. For example, this year they have contributed to student safety as crossing monitors and as individuals have made public commitments to service leadership.

Each class is represented by two SRC and two Mission Reps who attend weekly meetings and raise issues and concerns, offer new ideas and innovations to each group. Decisions and feedback is then brought back to the class by the representatives. Their enthusiasm, commitment and dedication is evidenced by the number of initiatives undertaken. Significant initiatives this year include Harmony Day; Joy Day; World Diabetes week.

Learning Programs: St Joseph's offers the following programs for the benefit of the students in our care;

- **Coordination-** a gross motor coordination program for all Reception students and other students as required.
- **Special Education** - an inclusive education program that provides funded support for students with identifiable learning disabilities in a 1:1 or small group setting.
- **Adaptive Education** - for students 'at risk' providing 1:1 support or small group support.
- **School Mentor-** working 1:1 with students on the social and emotional aspects of learning and to develop self-esteem, confidence and social skills.
- **Program Achieve-** our well-being learning program which promotes success and positive well-being through- confidence, persistence, organisation, the ability to get along and being resilient.
- **Integrated Services** – para-professionals work on site in collaboration with the school.
- **Seasons for Growth** – for students encountering grief and loss.

The Arts Program is very prominent at St Joseph's and involves the following:

- **The Festival Choir**, consisting of Year 6 and Year 7 students, performed in the Catholic Schools Music Festival held in the Festival Theatre in September. The choir also performed at the local Senior Citizens Club.
- **Instrumental Recitals** for students were held in The Performing Arts Centre in December.
- **Instrumental Program** – 2 tutors worked throughout each week offering piano and drums lessons. Approximately 40 students were involved in the Instrumental Program during 2015.
- **Music** - every child have weekly music lessons with our specialist teacher. The focus of each series of lessons includes singing; percussion; music appreciation and movement to music. These build individual and group confidence and competence that allowed for our outstanding performances.
- **Performances / Shows** - every child had the opportunity to perform in front of an audience this year. Within the school we are blessed with the talent that was showcased, but also the talent of those who support it out of the spotlight. Through performances such as these, our children truly embrace the Program Achieve keys to success- confidence, persistence, organisation, the ability to get along and being resilient.
- **Nativity Play - Year 3 & 4**
- **Fairy tales Performance– Year 2**
- **Aladdin in Trouble – Year 6**



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These performances encapsulate the true meaning of Performing Arts, and there is always something special about children re-enacting a story; they bring their own sense of faith, dignity, awe, wonder and simplicity to the story.

Our Sports Program is another significant component of a broad range of opportunities for students at St Joseph's. In addition to the weekly lessons offered by our specialist PE teacher the school also participated in the following Carnivals and activities last year:

- **Catholic Primary School Sport (Yr 4-7)**, Swimming Carnival, Touch Football Carnival, Knockout Football, Netball Carnival & Athletics Carnival
- **SA Primary Schools Sports Association (Yr 6 & 7):** Knockout Basketball & Cricket Competitions, Swimming Carnival, AFL Carnival, Athletics Carnival,
- **Whole school activities**
Sports Day (Whole School), Footsteps Dance, PE Week.
- **Sport specific coaching clinics:**
NRL Tag Rugby; Port and Crows Clinic, Sporting Schools
- **School Teams include:**
Cricket, Basketball, Rugby, Swimming, AFL, Netball, Athletics, Pedal Prix.

Enhancement and Enrichment

Monarto Zoo; Adelaide Zoo; Cleland; FYI Drug Awareness– Richard Rowland; Catholic School's Music Festival; Various sporting competitions (detailed above); Year 7 Aquatics; Year 6 Camp; Sports Day; Bicycle Education & Road Safety' Pedal Prix; Murray Bridge Show; Christmas Pageant; visiting performers including- Camp Quality puppet performance and three others yearly, Curriculum focus weeks -Bookweek, Numeracy, Science, PE, Reconciliation, Harmony, Walk Safely to School, Road Safety, Andrew Chin and Fairy tales Performance – Rapunzel (Bullying).

Parental Involvement in school life

P & F: Our Parents & Friends Association has again been very active this year, not only with their regular meetings but also with their visible support for the school. Although the P & F committee is small in number their impact on the school has been tremendous. They have exceeded their financial targets this year and have been very successful in building a great community spirit. Testimony of their achievements are the visible smiles on the children's faces on Shrove Tuesday; the positive feedback from their support on Sports day; the large turn out of parents at Le Messurier Oval; the various fund raising activities.

Pedal Prix. This parent led and school supported group provides a fantastic model to all parents who wish to get involved in school. The core committee, now in its second year of operation, the team have secured major sponsorship and all pulled together to ensure that St. Joseph's is represented in the 2014 season and beyond.

School Board; The school board continues to be a challenging friend to the school by representing the parent body, P&F and Parish. The school board has focused on organizational, operational and strategic planning for the school incorporating prudent financial management, liaison and support from the parish, parent and wider community. I would like to acknowledge the support and wisdom that each board member has brought to bear this year.

Parents have had many opportunities to involve themselves and become active participants in their child's schooling. Parental attendance at major school events including Mass, liturgies, sporting events, school excursions, information and parent evenings, interviews, meetings and performances have been very good.

Policy Review

The following policies were reviewed; Reporting to parents; Uniform Policy, Grievance Policy, Child Protection Policy, Staff Induction and Handbook

Teacher Satisfaction

Teaching staff were surveyed in Term 1 and asked to reflect on their highlights, challenges and concerns for the 2015 academic year.



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The staff continue to work for improvements in learning outcomes for all students. In particular the staff will continue to develop their skills in meeting the needs of all students and providing a differentiated curriculum.