



2016 Annual Report to Community



In All Things Kindness



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 centered 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 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 501 students who represent the multi-cultural, multi-faith and demographic composition of the region. Our indigenous students account for 2% of the student body.

Year range and enrolments in each year level

	Reception	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year7	Total
Boys	33	34	46	30	29	27	32	27	257
Girls	36	34	27	26	31	41	28	22	246
Total	67	68	73	56	60	68	60	49	503

Approximately 16% of the school population are eligible for a School card. The school has a highly regarded special and adaptive needs program and approximately 3.7% of the school benefit from this. ICSEA measure indicated that the school community is slightly higher than the National Average with a value of 1014. Within this figure 24% of our families are represented in the bottom quartile.

	Bottom quarter	Middle quarters	Top quarter	
School Distribution	24%	30%	27%	19%
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. 2016 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.



As a school we respect the dignity of each person within our community. As a collective, the staff at St Joseph's have endeavored 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 2016 we have endeavored 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 2016 was 93%.

This is broken down by year groups as follows:

% ATTENDANCE 2016							
Reception	Year1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Year5	Year6	Year 7
93%	92%	93%	94%	93%	92%	90%	94%

Process for Non – Attendance

Non-attendance is monitored daily and absences are followed up by a phone call to parents. 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%	91%
5	95%	93%	97%	97%	98%	93%
7	94%	96%	98%	94%	96%	100%

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

Year	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
3	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%
5	95%	97%	97%	98%	93%
7	96%	98%	94%	96%	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>	416	426	409
<i>Grammar/Punctuation</i>	447	436	423
<i>Writing</i>	420	421	415
<i>Reading</i>	405	426	414
<i>Numeracy</i>	395	391	402
Year 5	School	National	Similar Schools
<i>Spelling</i>	483	483	493
<i>Grammar/Punctuation</i>	493	493	494
<i>Writing</i>	471	471	463
<i>Reading</i>	483	483	502
<i>Numeracy</i>	464	482	493



Year 7	School	National	Similar Schools
Spelling	539	543	541
Grammar/Punctuation	534	540	534
Writing	510	515	512
Reading	528	541	535
Numeracy	543	550	548

Post St. Joseph's Pathways

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	6%
Murray Bridge High School	92%
Unity College	2%

Staff profile

There are 31 teaching staff with an FTE (Full Time Equivalent) of 27.3. There are 15 non-teaching staff colleagues who equate to a FTE of 9.2. There are no staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

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 2016, we had a number of staff continue with Units of the Graduate Certificate in Religious Education and study for their Masters Degrees*



Student, parent and staff satisfaction

Students

To gain a student perspective on a variety of areas in the school, the Principal sat and spoke to the School Leaders in Year 7. Those children indicated the following:

- St. Joseph's Murray Bridge is a safe, welcoming and friendly environment;
- staff are always willing to help;
- everyone is caring and respectful of others;
- great community spirit;
- fantastic performing arts and PE programs;

Staff

Satisfaction of the teaching and support staff was determined from informal and formal meetings. The following was reported:

- a strong sense of school community spirit;
- always striving for continuous improvement in their practice;
- they have access to relevant professional learning;
- pastoral care and focus on the wellbeing of students and staff is important.

Parent

In 2016 a parent survey was conducted amongst a number of parents in the school, the following was revealed:

- pastoral care and supportive, caring and safe learning environment
- a safe, caring and supportive environment for our children affected by trauma
- resources in the classrooms
- strong community spirit about the school
- a strong sense of inclusivity and there is a 'welcoming feel about the school'
- every child is encouraged to do their best in all they do
- continued commitment to maintain and upgrading the School's facilities and resources; dedication of the teachers
- front desk staff continue to deliver a high level of customer service and satisfaction

Finance

School income by Funding		
Source	\$	%
Australian Government Funding	3,224,129-00	56
State Government Funding	1,053,299-00	18
Other	1,452,443-00	26



School Improvement

Self-assessment process

During 2016, 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).

2016 School Improvement Plan

During 2016 the School Improvement focused specifically on:

- High quality teaching and learning
- Partnerships and Relationships
- Enhancing Catholic Identity

Progress towards achievement of 2016 goals

The school continues to strengthen in these areas. Growth has been made in developing a curriculum that prepares students for life long learning in an environment that is safe and rich in Catholicity.

2016 Improvements

The school cohort was introduced to community prayer which was held every three weeks under the auditorium. The children continued with the garden project picking up on the Popes Encyclical Laudato Si. This learning gave substance to children having a greater understanding of the world they need to care for now and into the future.

St. Joseph's Murray Bridge showed significant NAPLAN gains in the Year 3 reading results and was one of only 17 Catholic schools across the state to be recognised for its significant gains. Literacy was another focus and considerable work was undertaken in moving our approach to running records to an online format.

A lot of work was undertaken during the 2016 period on Assessment and developing our understanding of assessing to the achievement standards as stated in the Australian Curriculum. Teachers developed portfolio's in a move to get a collective understanding of assessment across the school. Late 2016 saw the planning and developing of a new online reporting frame work which will be rolled out for midyear reports 2017.

In 2016, Carclew embarked on an exciting new partnership with Catholic Education South Australia to deliver the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artist Development Pilot. Working in selected CESA schools across SA, the pilot aims to establish a sustainable artist in residence program within cluster based school environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and cultural workers.

A major piece of work for the entire staff of the school involved our partnership with the Australian Childhood Foundation to develop and implement practices using the Trauma Sensitive Schools Framework. Using a whole school approach Teachers initially participated in two days of professional learning developing creative strategies to enhance trauma sensitive learning environments for vulnerable students. The format of the program follows the Making Space for Learning Guide developed and published by the Australian Childhood Foundation. This whole school approach enables teachers and support staff to engage at risk students and support their integration into school life at St. Joseph's Murray Bridge. This work continues into 2017.

In Term 3 2016, in conjunction with CESA and Carclew we engaged Ngarrindjeri artists to work with students and teachers. The artists have introduced students to visual art mediums such as weaving, feathered flowers and performing arts through cultural songs and dreaming stories to make, create and learn about local Ngarrindjeri culture. The initiative is continuing throughout the 2017 calendar year.

Other initiatives that continue to flourish and are intertwined in the work with Culturally Sensitive Schools project is a whole school approach to inclusion and being culturally sensitive. This in partnership with our ongoing work on KidsMatter and our Social Justice networks is vitally important in our approach to holistic education practices.



Teacher Performance and Development Framework

All teachers have a set of documented and regularly reviewed goals related to both performance and development. This ensures a way of measuring progress towards that are agreed with the principal or delegate.

All teachers are supported in working towards their goals through access to review meetings, using both internal and external sources.

All teachers receive regular formal and informal feedback on their performance. This includes a formal annual review against their performance and development goals. Verbal and written feedback is provided to the teacher.

Evidence used to reflect on and evaluate teacher performance came from multiple sources and included data showing impact on student outcomes; information based on direct observation of teaching in the learning space and evidence of collaboration with colleagues.



Principals Report 2016

Fr. John, Mrs. Julie Bates, Chairperson of the School Board, Ms. Lisa Trewren, President of the P&F Association, school board members staff and parents/caregivers of St Joseph's School community, it gives me immense pleasure to present to you this annual report of the 2016 school year.

The school has experienced many successes as it continues the catholic journey started by the Josephite Sisters some 93 years ago. Throughout 2016 we have continued to maintain and build an educational environment where we can truly live up to the mantra of St. Mary MacKillop of 'never see a need without doing something about it', we see the need every day to hold every child in the palm of our hand and facilitate their education in the catholic tradition.

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2016

In a world that often focuses on all the things that are going wrong in life, this report is one when we can acknowledge all the good things that are happening here at St Joseph's Murray Bridge. 2016, was an extremely busy and productive year. Many objectives have been achieved.

2016 saw the Federal Government continue to implement changes to the Australian Curriculum to make it more manageable and deliverable in the classroom setting. There are several changes that we will continue to implement during 2017 as we work with the latest version of the curriculum including revisions to our Assessment and Reporting structures.

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.

The religious life at St Joseph's School, Murray Bridge has continued to be a foundation of which students develop their spirituality. This has been supported greatly by Mrs. Deb Holland in her ongoing role as APRIM, Father John Herd and his assistant Father John Vildzius. Father John has participated in many aspects of school life, in his role of Parish Priest. Father John continues to connect with families who are participating in the sacramental program and plays a significant role in supporting the school in the celebration of our faith including significant religious occasions. Our staff also continues to study and to have a rich understanding of the importance that our collective role has on the spiritual development of the young children in our care.

The school improvement plan for 2016 highlighted 3 mains areas for development, these included:

- **Catholic Identity**



- **Teaching and Learning**
- **Partnerships and Relationships**

Catholic Identity

2016 was declared by Pope Francis as the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. Its theme was “be merciful, just as your father was merciful”. Its call was to renew and deepen our understanding and actions of mercy. The tradition of Jubilee Years began 700 years ago and 26 Jubilee years have been celebrated since. Of those only 3 have ever been ‘extraordinary’, which included 2016’s ‘Year of Mercy’. Pope Francis’ invitation to the Year of Mercy is a call to renew and deepen our understanding and actions of mercy. The theme has a pivotal role in helping to articulate further our Catholic Social Teachings and shape our practices.

Catholic social teaching is based upon the fact that we are made in the likeness and image of God. This message aimed to inspire us to love one another more deeply.

Mercy is.....

Human – an instinctive reaction to others suffering

A basic attitude to alleviate the suffering and distress of another

A language of heart

Given or received – can transform people

Is sometimes considered a soft response; however, it may in fact be challenging.

- So, 2016 was the Year of Mercy and the school cohort was introduced to community prayer held every 3 weeks under the auditorium. We continued with the garden project and picked up
- on the Popes Encyclical Laudato Si. Not only did the children experience the learning associated with growing and harvesting fresh produce but they gained a greater
- understanding of caring for the world in which God has provided. Staff, also continued their faith journey and went on a retreat entitled Wonder Awe and Prayer. They also participated in the program:

Like a Mustard Seed which was about

Exploring our traditions as a Josephite School in the 150th Year and how we can emphasise the Catholic Faith and Josephite Traditions in our school’s climate in 2016.



During the year, much work was also undertaken by the Kidsmatter action team, the learning support team and the social justice group on developing the Catholic school values of Respect, Compassion, Inclusion, Community, Kindness and Co-operation across the school.

Teaching and Learning

St. Joseph's Murray Bridge showed significant NAPLAN gains in the Year 3 reading results and was one of only 17 Catholic schools across the state to be recognised for its significant gains.

Literacy was another focus and considerable work was undertaken in moving our approach to running records to an online format.

A lot of work was undertaken during the 2016 period on Assessment and developing our understanding of assessing to the achievement standards as stated in the Australian Curriculum. Teachers developed portfolio's in a move to get a collective understanding of assessment across the school. Late 2016 saw the planning and developing of a new online reporting frame work which will be rolled out for midyear reports 2017.

In 2016, Carclew embarked on an exciting new partnership with Catholic Education South Australia to deliver the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artist Development Pilot. Working in selected CESA schools across SA, the pilot aims to establish a sustainable artist in residence program within cluster based school environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and cultural workers.

The pilot aims to enable further opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to receive the training, professional development and essential knowledge required to empower the artists and give them the confidence to be able to go into a school, educational or organisational environment and facilitate cultural learning.

Kath O'Neill and Sue Christian undertook a graduate certificate study on a Whole School Approach to Autism. It is no secret that the numbers of Autistic children are growing in mixed ability school settings. Sue and Kath have now developed a Learning Support Team and a Parent Support team to help support these complex children with their learning and social and emotional needs. Positive Partnerships through Autism SA have also been engaged as part of Sue and Kath's work.

Partnerships and Relationships

A major piece of work for the entire staff of the school involved our partnership with the Australian Childhood Foundation to develop and implement practices using the Trauma Sensitive Schools Framework. Using a whole school approach Teachers initially participated in two days of professional learning developing creative strategies to enhance trauma sensitive learning environments for vulnerable students. The format of the



program follows the Making Space for Learning Guide developed and published by the Australian Childhood Foundation. This whole school approach enables teachers and support staff to engage at

risk students and support their integration into school life at St. Joseph's Murray Bridge. This work continues into 2017.

Here at St. Joseph's the project commenced in Term 3 2016, with CESA and Carclew engaging Ngarrindjeri artists Betty Sumner, Lena Rigney and Boandik artist Sonya Smith to work with students and teachers.

The artists have introduced students to visual art mediums such as weaving, feathered flowers and performing arts through cultural songs and dreaming stories to make, create and learn about local Ngarrindjeri culture. The initiative is continuing throughout the 2017 calendar year.

Other initiatives that continue to flourish and are intertwined in the work with Culturally Sensitive Schools project is a whole school approach to inclusion and being culturally sensitive.

This in partnership with our ongoing work on KidsMatter and our Social Justice networks is vitally important in our approach to holistic education practices.

The School Board has met on eight occasions and continues to do important work under the guidance of the Board Chair, Mrs. Julie Bates. A number of key initiatives were undertaken this year which Julie will address in her report.

In the later part of the year we formulated the Annual Improvement Plan for 2017 based on the needs of the school. The reference point for this document is the continuous improvement framework developed by CESA. Now, that the Annual Improvement plan has been written it sets the stage in 2017 to construct a 3-5-year strategic plan.

I acknowledge the richness and wonderful work of the teachers and support staff. The teachers work hard to provide an exciting and relevant learning environment for all the students in their care. They are deeply concerned for the children, which is evident in their relationships and interactions. They are also committed to professional learning through the many projects undertaken this year as they work toward continuous school

improvement. The educational support officers are often our unsung heroes who play an important role in the background that enables the teachers to do their work.



I extend a special thanks to Michael Gates, Louise O'Neill and Sarah Stephens in the office, their work allows for the administration of the school to function efficiently and effectively.

I also thank John McLaren and Darren Piltz for their unending task of maintenance of the school grounds. I wish to acknowledge the efforts of Carol Rowland, apart from her daily fiscal management of the school I recognize her efforts in ensuring the last lot of building upgrades including the conversion of the computer room, moving the server and other ongoing projects and refurbishments were completed with minimal disruption to the students and families of this school.

I thank Deb Holland who I have worked very closely with, albeit for only a brief period being of time. Her assistance, leadership, competence and friendly nature has made my job that much easier, and it has been a pleasure to work with Deb.

A special thanks to Brady Stallard for his significant leadership of the school for the first three terms of the year as Acting Principal while remembering his contribution to the school as Deputy Principal over the last 4 years. The role of Acting Principal is never an easy job and the reports this evening testify the state in which the school has been handed over. A job well done Brady.

To the staff that left us, Susan Hennessey, John McLaren, Kylie Grivell, Rebecca Percival Kellie Baker, and, I extend my sincere thanks to them and for the contributions they made to the school and to the lives of the children within.

I wish to publicly acknowledge the work of parents and carers of St. Joseph's School because your involvement and support of our work is deepened by your presence. St. Joseph's School cannot achieve all that it does without help of the parent community.

Volunteers play such a vital role in this school daily in fact I cannot think of a day when some person is not volunteering to do some job. I sincerely thank you all for your continued efforts to this cause. I thank Lisa Trewren and her team for the work and commitment of the Parents and Friends. Without your help, school fees would most certainly be that much higher.

To members of the School Board, especially Graeme Rayson who officially finishes this evening after 17 years of association with the school, my sincerest gratitude is extended to you from the community for your support



2016

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throughout the year ensuring that this school continues to provide the best facilities for our children. I thank the President of the School Board, Fr. John and the chair of the school board Julie Bates for their guidance and leadership throughout the year.

Finally, as we move down the road of continual change, I look forward to working with each of you as we journey together and remember to acknowledge that God has been with us to this point and pray that God will continue to bless us in the years to come.

Adrian Brown
Principal
April 2017