Introduction

About the Annual School Report

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School is registered by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority, NESA, as a member of the Catholic system of schools in the Diocese of Parramatta.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider school community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development priorities in 2018 and gives information about the 2019 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act, 2008 and the Education Amendment Act 2004.

The information in this Report is complemented by the school website where other school publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained from the school.
Key Messages

Principal

I am pleased to present to you the 2018 Annual School Report for St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, Springwood. At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we believe that a holistic education which develops the intellectual, spiritual, physical, social and emotional aspects of each child is critical in empowering students with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable all students to reach their personal goals and contribute to the betterment of society.

Through daily interactions with students, our Catholic faith is modelled and explicitly taught, and spirituality is nurtured. The staff, in partnership with families and our parish priest, is committed to providing a school where children feel happy, safe, cared for, and are always actively engaged in their learning.

In 2018 our school focused on the implementation of our learning goals:
- formation — for all students to use the Three Senses Framework to deepen their understanding of Christian Scripture
- numeracy — for all students to improve their problem-solving and use efficient reasoning skills
- literacy — for all students to improve the quality of their writing with a focus on text cohesion

Significant initiatives that enriched the educational purpose of the school were:
- drama literacy where Stage 2 benefited enormously from weekly drama lessons from a trained actor and a performance as part of the Parramatta Diocesan Creative Arts initiative known as Captivate
- as part of the Captivate program a concert band continued to show development and growth in numbers
- our senior and junior school choirs’ participation in school, community, and diocesan events during the year, including the Captive Showcase
- Holy Week liturgies where students led the school in retracing the passion and resurrection of Christ
- Grandparents Day encompassing a special liturgy, shared picnic, concert and open classrooms
- the continuation of the language program which enabled students to develop their proficiency in Italian

Parent

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, we welcome the involvement of parents, as the first educators of their children, in many aspects of school life.

There are a number of activities in which parents participated including:
- planning and assisting with the school-wide Mullen Mini Olympics
- other fundraising initiatives such as Mothers Day stall, Fathers Day, Sports Day barbecue
- Trivia Night
- Ice Block Day
- school excursions
- sporting events - school, zone, diocesan
- school library, book club and book fair
- community tutors in the Reading Support program
- clothing pool
- social justice appeals
- parent-focused learning meetings
- Mathematics groups in classes
- performing arts initiatives
- chess club
- community morning and afternoon teas
ongoing liaison with the home-school liaison minister

We believe education is the joint responsibility of parents, teachers and children and that by working together we can provide the best possible learning environment for students.

Student

The Student Representative Council (SRC) was made up of students from each class in Years 5 and 6. The representatives were nominated and elected by their class peers. Nominated students were asked to prepare a short address to their class outlining their vision and goals. The speeches were prepared at school and composed solely by the nominated students.

The work of the SRC included:
- being responsible for the daily raising and lowering of the national flag and assisting with the weekly assembly
- meeting with the assistant principal each week - opinions sought about school issues and initiatives
- working with the assistant principal and principal in presenting social skills, anti-bullying strategies, behavioural expectations and school pride at assemblies
- being responsible for meeting and greeting official visitors to our school
- being called upon, at times, to represent the school at other special events such as ANZAC Day march and wreath-laying ceremony, Springwood Foundation Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and school tours for prospective families

The other area of student leadership was through the Mini Vinnies and Nature Minions group which comprised students from Years 4 to 6 who proposed and enacted social justice and environmental initiatives. These groups were facilitated and supported by the school's Religious Education coordinator.

The school has a proud tradition of servant leadership. All students were actively encouraged to strive to model respect, kindness, wisdom and charity to fellow students and the broader community.
Who we are

History of the school

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, was opened in 1921 with a total school enrolment of 24 students in the old church building located on the corner of Hawkesbury Road and Macquarie Road, Springwood. By 1962, enrolment had increased to 187 students and a new school building was erected on the Hawkesbury Road frontage.

The Sisters of St Joseph taught at the school until 1976, when the first lay principal was appointed.

The first stage of the new St Thomas Aquinas Primary School was opened on its current site in 1982.

Seven new classrooms, an administration block and library were completed in 2001. A covered learning area was constructed in 2006 with funds raised by the school community. A new multi-purpose learning and performance space (Bishop Manning Learning Centre) was completed in 2011 together with other school upgrades as part of the federal government's Building the Education Revolution (BER) program.

Location/drawing area

The school is located on a most picturesque site with ample playing areas and views of the surrounding bush land and national park. The school is in close proximity to the parish church, pastoral centre and the neighbouring St Columba’s Catholic College.

As part of the parish of Springwood, the school draws most of its enrolments from families living within the parish area. This area includes the townships of Linden, Faulconbridge, Springwood, Winmalee, Yellow Rock, Hawkesbury Heights and Warrimoo. Additionally, some students come from the greater Blue Mountains area.
## Workforce Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers who hold teaching qualification from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers who have a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or within AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher qualifications</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers accredited to teach Religious Education</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers currently undertaking accreditation to teach Religious Education</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of non-teaching staff (includes teachers’ aides)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of teachers who are indigenous</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The average teacher attendance for 2018</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of 2018 teaching staff who were retained from 2017</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Catholic Identity and Religious Education

Prayer, Liturgical Life and Faith Experiences

Our school community has a meaningful and vibrant liturgical and prayer life which follows the seasons and feasts of the church and celebrates significant events in the life of the school.

In 2018 these included weekly parish mass attendance by various classes, Opening School Mass, Year 6 Graduation Mass, End of Year Mass, Student Representative Council induction liturgy, Reconciliation, staff prayer, daily class prayer, daily whole-school peace prayer and the Angelus, Lenten and Holy Week liturgies, Easter, Pentecost, Advent; and Christmas Concert. Additionally, we held ceremonies and prayers for current events in the world including Mission Week and Grandparents Day. Together with the parish, we provided opportunities for children to receive the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation.

We placed great importance on the contribution of the visual and performing arts to the liturgical life of our school. This, together with the ambience, the sense of reverence and occasion, and the preparation of the children to participate in liturgies meaningfully, contributed to our communal worship. Special attention was paid to the centrality of Word and Sacrament. Live music, singing, drama, symbols, visual art works, gestures and liturgical movement were incorporated into all celebrations.

Social Justice

Our school works actively towards a variety of initiatives that strive to share faith and extend kindness and compassion for those in our community who are in need.

In 2018 these included:
- a student led Mini Vinnies group - assisted in leading social justice initiatives in the school
- a student led Nature Minions group - assisted in leading environmental initiatives in the school
- school/home liaison minister (a Sister of the Good Samaritan Order) - visited homes and pastorally supported families
- school-wide focus on prayer and scripture
- school counsellor supported students and families

As part of the school's social justice outreach the following fundraising took place, focused on supporting the work of Caritas, St Vincent de Paul and the local community:
- Mission Week
- St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal
- Grandparents Day
- mission work with St Columba's Catholic College students
- Project Compassion
- Cancer Council Appeal
- Westmead Children's Hospital Hero Day
- knitting blankets for local families

School home and parish partnerships

The school had close links with its parish. Students attended the weekly parish mass on a rostered basis. The school supported the Sacramental program of the parish in practical and spiritual ways such as praying for, and acknowledging the candidates, and providing live music for the Sacramental liturgies and masses.

The school joined with the community in hosting a Grandparents Day. Grandparents and other significant family members were welcomed to the school for a liturgy, picnic, concert and open classrooms.

The home/school liaison minister's role was most important in supporting families practically and extending hospitality to them. The home/school liaison minister (a Sister of the Good Samaritan Order) visited many homes during the year, assisting to build relationships between home and school.

Parents were involved in the pastoral and sacred life of the school in a variety of ways such as:
- attending weekly parish mass with their children
- attending and participating in the rich liturgical life of the school
- nominating students for Love One Another awards for living out the school motto
collaborating with the school in assisting the parish Sacramental program
charitable works for other families eg supply of meals and pastoral care
ongoing practical support for families in need

Religious Education

Students and staff at St Thomas Aquinas Primary School have always had a strong sense of being part of a Catholic school and this was translated into an authentic culture of religious practice.

Students were involved in Religious Education (RE) in the classroom through the Parramatta Diocesan syllabus, *Sharing Our Story*, and the gospel message was reflected in a number of other ways, including regular parish mass attendance, Reconciliation, prayer, pastoral care programs, charitable works, religious music and art.

The school also actively supported the parish-based Sacramental program.

During 2018 students from Stage 3 were actively involved in the Faith in Action initiative. Over 20 students were part of this faith building opportunity jointly facilitated by the Religious Education Coordinator and two members of the school teaching team. The Faith in Action Team (FIAT) team met after school regularly and were also involved in attending a number of Diocesan sponsored events, focused on faith formation.

Professional Learning of staff in Religious Education

During 2018 staff undertook the following professional learning in Religious Education:

- deepening their theological understanding of Scripture through professional reading, images and dialogue with a focus on the Gospel of Matthew (Year A)
- implementing the three senses approach to student Scriptural understanding (literal, spiritual and applied)
- using a RE program template that identified common pedagogical practices, eg learning intentions and success criteria, senses of Scripture, key vocabulary, warm-up activities and assessment rubrics
- drawing on a variety of strategies and resources to enhance students’ scriptural understanding eg *Exploring Scripture* scripts; embodied cognition; *To Know Worship and Love* texts; *Understanding Faith* and *Liturgy Help* websites
- providing Scripture word walls and images as scaffolds for student understanding
- implementing pre, mid and post unit assessment of student Scripture knowledge to guide planning and delivery of teaching and learning activities
- incorporating a Scripture passage as one of the learning focuses in class assembly presentation
- a number of staff were part in the Faith and Action Team.
Learning and Teaching

National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

Students in Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9 across Australia participated in National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) in May 2018. The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. The test provides a measure of the student’s performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching and learning with a view to improving student performance.

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum acceptable standards for literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling at particular ages. These are referred to as national minimum standards. Student performance in NAPLAN in our school is compared to these standards. The percentages of students achieving at or above these national minimum standards, and the percentages of students in the top three bands are reported in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN RESULTS 2018</th>
<th>% of students at or above national minimum standard</th>
<th>% of students in top three bands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAPLAN RESULTS 2018</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>99</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school’s NAPLAN highlights were:

Literacy Year 3:
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in literacy was 9% above the national percentage.
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in grammar and punctuation was 7% above the national percentage.
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in writing was 9% above the national percentage.
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in reading was 17% above the national percentage.
The trend in NAPLAN reading remained well above the national percentage.

**Literacy Year 5:**
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in Literacy was 21% above the national percentage.
- The percentage of students of students in the top three bands in grammar and punctuation was 21% above the national percentage.
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in writing was 24% above the national percentage.
- The percentage of students of students in the top three bands in reading was 22% above the national percentage.

**Numeracy Year 3:**
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in Numeracy was 10% above the national percentage.
- Of our students, 100% were at, or above, the national minimum standards.

**Numeracy Year 5:**
- The percentage of students in the top three bands in Numeracy was 23% above the national percentage.
- Of our students, 99% were at, or above, the national minimum standards.

**Areas for Development:**

**Literacy:**
Data for writing, particularly in Year 3, confirmed that writing is an area where students require additional learning. Our school goal in this area is strategically focused on strategies to support this development: students improving the quality of their writing with a focus on cohesion and vocabulary.

**Numeracy:**
NAPLAN data and teacher data analysis indicated that students needed to develop their ability to apply their knowledge of multiplicative thinking to tasks that required problem-solving and reasoning. Our school goal and professional learning continues to focus on these areas.

**School curriculum**
We believe in an educational environment which provides a rigorous, balanced and relevant curriculum focused on the unique needs of each child so that every individual is valued, nurtured, cared for and respected, while also being challenged to achieve his or her best in all aspects of learning.

Additional teaching and learning programs in place for students included:
- Italian Language and Culture program
- small group music lessons in conjunction with Springwood School of Music
- chess club
- school musical productions - Captivate Showcase, Drama-Literacy Showcase
- transition programs (ie Kindergarten and High School Transition)
- sport (inter-school and intra-school)
- choir and musical performances
- author visits
- visits from musical and drama groups eg Musica Viva, Anti-bullying & Camp Quality
- Premier’s Reading Challenge
- excursions
- theatre performances
- Captivate Drama and Literacy program
- Concert Band program (brass, wind, bass and percussion instruments)
The school provided the following learning support programs for students including:

- **St Thomas Aquinas Rich Support (STARS)** - inclusive learning support
- Reading Recovery teachers (two trained teachers) intervention for vulnerable students in reading
- **Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU)** specialist intervention teacher for vulnerable students in numeracy
- Autism Satellite Class (K6A) staffed by Autism NSW - integration and transition of students both academically and socially
- **School Wide Literacy Intervention program** - catered for remediation and extension in literacy, with students in needs-based groups
- speech and occupational therapies where therapists visited the school
- school counsellor provided through Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP)
- social skills and anti-bullying programs

**Initiatives to promote respect and responsibility**

The school sets high expectations regarding respectful behaviour, grooming, manners and interaction with others. Processes and expectations are set out in our *Pastoral Care and Student Management* policy.

We worked in partnership with parents to ensure that these expectations were met through visual reminders, explicit modelling and reinforcement.

As a result, the school developed a culture of hospitality and welcome. Through explicit articulation of expectations, our students consistently demonstrated appropriate reverence, respect and participation in a variety of settings including liturgies and assemblies.

The school used the restorative justice approach in student management which was based on taking responsibility for one’s own actions and being respectful of the rights of others, as well as restoring positive relationships.

The school participated in many civic activities including:

- ANZAC day march and wreath laying ceremony
- Springwood Vietnam Veterans Day
- Springwood Foundation Day
- Grandparents Day
- works of social justice initiated and led by Mini Vinnies
- Springwood Christmas Tree Decorating Ceremony
- Springwood Chamber of Commerce Christmas choir performance

**Professional Learning**

We undertook professional development to:

- deepen theological understanding of Scripture through professional reading, images and dialogue
- implement the three senses approach to student scriptural understanding - literal, spiritual and applied
- implement a common Religious Education programming template
- Project Based Learning pedagogies

Professional Learning in this area included a Professional Development Day on utilising Project Based Learning

**Numeracy**

We undertook professional development to:

- administer the Mathematical Assessment Interview (MAI) to all students
- conduct the analysis of MAI data
- administer school-based diagnostic problem solving questions
- collect student sample problem-solving tasks for analysis
- track, monitor and support students based on growth point assessment
increase knowledge of Mathematics continuums, assessment data, data analysis and high yield strategies
focus on common problem-solving tasks incorporating multiplicative thinking
focus on multiplicative thinking (Stage 2 teachers) through CEDP also involved all teachers K-6
develop questions that drive multiplicative thinking and reasoning
understand syllabus outcomes better

Literacy

We undertook professional development to:
ensure agreed practice across the school as to what constitutes shared, modelled and guided writing
work with teachers to ensure that writing samples are analysed with common understanding
deepen teacher knowledge on the elements of purpose, audience, sentence structure and vocabulary as related to the writing process
provide specific, quality feedback and feed forward to students about ways to improve their writing
develop a common understanding of the literacy continuum
develop teacher use of mentor texts
develop teacher use of 'I can' statements in classroom practice

Professional learning in this area included the continuation of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) with two neighbouring schools. Four PLC professional learning sessions were held over the year focused on literacy.
## School Improvement

### Annual school priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 1</th>
<th>That all students would use the three senses of Scripture model to deepen their understanding of Christian Scripture, as measured by Kindergarten to Year 6 (K-6) classroom assessment and Religious Literacy Assessment (RLA) data - engaging with Scripture texts at literal, spiritual and applied levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for priority 1</td>
<td>This is the continuation of the Religious Education focus commenced in 2017. Staff feedback and student assessment data indicates this focus has emerging benefits for both teacher and student knowledge. The Religious Education teaching and learning strategies developed through common school emphasis were consolidated and extended with the scaffold of the three senses of Scripture.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Steps taken to achieve priority 1 | In 2018 teachers:  
- collaboratively developed classroom scaffolds to support Scripture learning  
- were involved in professional learning meetings to consolidate school practice of interpreting Scripture at literal, spiritual and applied levels  
- collaboratively developed assessment rubrics  
- modelled the use of three senses questions at staff prayer  
- used Scripture assessment data to inform planning  
- facilitated the use of home Scripture kits for families  
- use pre, mid, and post assessments to guide teaching |
<p>| Status of priority 1 | Achieved |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 2</th>
<th>That all students would improve the quality of their writing with a focus on text cohesion and spelling as measured by the English Syllabus outcomes, Department of Education and Communities (DEC) literacy continuum (aspects of writing), classroom assessments and a comparison of 2017/2018 NAPLAN data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for priority 2</td>
<td>Although teacher assessment and evaluation of student writing in relation to syllabus expectations showed improvement, the 2017/18 NAPLAN data showed that, in order to increase the percentage of students in the top three bands, students required additional learning, particularly in the areas of text cohesion and spelling.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Steps taken to achieve priority 2 | In 2018 students:  
| | ■ engaged in daily modelled, shared, guided and independent writing  
| | ■ utilised the the 'I Can' statements to develop self-assessment  
| | ■ deconstructed writing, using mentor texts, shared and student texts  
| | ■ spelt words considering their etymology, morphology, phonology and orthography  
| | ■ provided writing samples that were collected and analysed  
| | Teachers provided regular quality feedback and feed forward to students about ways they could improve their writing. |
| Status of priority 2 | Ongoing |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 3</th>
<th>For all students to improve in problem solving and to use efficient reasoning skills, as well as to make progress of a minimum of one growth point in multiplication and division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for priority 3</td>
<td>Data gathered on instructional walks, staff feedback as well as quantitative student data indicated that students had difficulty in being able to express their reasoning skills when using multiplicative and problem-solving strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Steps taken to achieve priority 3 | In 2018 teachers:  
| | ■ administered the Mathematical Assessment Interview (MAI) at the beginning of term 1  
| | ■ analysed and evaluated MAI data and used findings to inform learning and teaching  
| | ■ identified vulnerable students from this data  
| | ■ participated in the diocesan multiplicative thinking modules to refine their pedagogy  
| | ■ focused on the syllabus and assessment processes  
| | ■ collaboratively analysed data walls and NAPLAN data |
| Status of priority 3 | Ongoing |
## Projected School Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 1</th>
<th>All students will use experiential and inquiry based pedagogy to deepen their understanding of Christian scripture, using the three senses of Scripture model, as measured by K-6 classroom assessment, teacher and student surveys.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for Priority 1</strong></td>
<td>We wanted to help build teacher capacity in the use of the three senses model, whilst applying experiential and inquiry based pedagogies in trialling the new Catholic Education, Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) Religious Education Framework 2020, during phase 2 of the process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Steps to be taken to achieve Priority 1** | Teachers will  
- use theological understanding to build core understandings of Biblical context, language and narrative  
- develop an inquiry approach to core concepts from the Religious Education Syllabus to engage students in the Big Idea, including anticipated 'Know and Needs to Know' for each learning module and assessment rubrics  
- use student friendly learning intentions based on the Big Idea  
- co-construct success criteria with students |
| Priority 2 | All students will improve the quality of their imaginative writing with a focus on connecting ideas in a logical and sequential manner. |
| **Reason for Priority 2** | Whole-school data indicates that our students are continuing to progress with persuasive and informative writing skills. Student data highlights the need to maintain our focus on text cohesion and vocabulary in imaginative writing in order for students to meet benchmark and demonstrate additional growth. |
| **Steps to be taken to achieve Priority 2** | In 2019:  
- Students will be engaged in daily modelled, shared, guided and independent writing.  
- Teachers will provide explicit quality feedback and feed forward in order for students to improve their fluency and vocabulary choices in the imaginative genre.  
- Teachers will provide explicit opportunities for students to deconstruct writing, including mentor texts, shared and student texts.  
- Teachers will use the Literacy Progressions as a common assessment and tracking tool. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority 3</th>
<th>For all students to improve their problem solving and use efficient reasoning skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Priority 3</td>
<td>We wanted to continue to build teacher learning and understanding of multiplicative structures and move students towards reasoning through rich tasks, effective questioning and problem solving, in order to improve student outcomes in numeracy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Steps to be taken to achieve Priority 3 | In 2019 teachers will:  
  ■ administer, analyse and validate the Mathematical Assessment Interview  
  ■ use data to differentiate learning and identify students requiring intervention  
  ■ collaboratively plan challenging numeracy tasks with enabling and extending questions  
  ■ establish and maintain a classroom culture that promotes a growth mindset and persistence on challenging tasks  
  ■ participate in research based professional learning on sequenced numeracy tasks (Kindergarten to Year 2 teachers) |
Community Satisfaction

Parent satisfaction
Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta annually engages an external organisation to conduct a survey with key stakeholders in order to gain feedback from students, staff and parents.

The Tell Them From Me survey was conducted in all schools in Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta during 2018.

Areas of strength
Parents were positive about:
- teachers and leadership approachability
- school support of student learning
- school support of student behaviour
- teachers’ help for students who required additional assistance
- parents feeling welcome at school
- student safety at school
- the level and type of community outreach

Areas for development and strategies to achieve these included:
- parental information specifically through school reports through information sessions and communication
- scheduling of specific school activities at times more conducive to encourage parental involvement
- greater school/parent communication related to students' social and emotional development
- promoting greater parental understanding of educational programs/strategies through regular parent learning sessions in order for parents to support student learning

Student satisfaction
In 2018 every student in Years 5 and 6 was provided the opportunity to participate in the Tell Them From Me survey. This instrument provided the opportunity to acquire feedback from all students about their school experience.

The Tell Them From Me student survey data provided the following areas of strength and areas for development.

Strengths included:
- teacher empathy and positive relationships with teachers
- students having a positive sense of belonging to the school
- students having positive relationships with peers
- students valuing school/educational outcomes
- students trying hard to succeed with their learning
- students feeling that classroom instruction was purposeful, well organised
- students valuing the immediate feedback from teachers as they learn
- positive teacher-student relationships
- staff's high expectations for all students to succeed

Areas for development and strategies to achieve these:
- student (girls and boys) completion of homework with a positive attitude
- boys' motivation and interest in their learning compared to girls
- boys finding classroom instruction less relevant to their everyday lives compared to girls

Teacher satisfaction
Areas of strength identified through the Tell Them From Me survey by teachers included:
- supportive school leadership
- collaborative learning culture
- inclusivity of students with diverse needs
- well established team work processes
- focus on improvement and growth
- school help for teachers to understand their Catholic faith
- prayer and liturgy in school being engaging and relevant to teacher faith life

Areas for development and strategies to achieve these:
- ongoing focus on the use interactive technology to set challenging learning goals, track progress and provide feedback to students
- further development of processes to promote peer-to-peer feedback on professional learning
Student Profile

Enrolment Policy

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School follows the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) Enrolment Policy and Procedures. The full text or a link to the full text of the school’s enrolment policies, including all prerequisites for continuing enrolment can be obtained from the school office or can be accessed on the CEDP website showing the CEDP Enrolment Policy, Procedures and Guidelines.

Current and previous years' student enrolment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The enrolment trend for the school has decreased from 2017 to 2018 to a total enrolment of 540 students. In addition to this enrolment the school hosts an autism satellite class comprising 13 students (K-6). The trend in decreasing enrolments from a peak in 2016 is substantially owing to the demography of the Lower Blue Mountains and its lack of residential growth and development.

The school actively promotes itself in the local community through engagement with pre schools and community involvement. During 2018 the school established a social media presence to promote the high quality of learning and community within the school to the community.

Student attendance rates

The table below shows the percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Average</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Characteristics of the student body

The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

| Language background other than English (LBOTE) | 29 |
| Students with disabilities (SWD)             | 27 |
| Indigenous                                   | 12 |

Managing Student Non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools in partnership with parents and guardians, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The compulsory schooling age is 6-17. Parents and guardians are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, explaining the absences of their children in writing within several days to the school, and taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children. School staff as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

They maintain accurate records of students’ attendance, follow up unexplained absences through written and verbal communication, implement programs and practices to address...
through written and verbal communication, implement programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise, and provide clear information to students and parents regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance. The principal or their delegate, may grant permission for late arrival or early departure from school, leave or exemption from attendance only in individual cases, on written request from parents and guardians.

The principal/delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents promptly if an unexplained absence occurs. If truancy is suspected, the principal will contact the parents/guardians to ascertain the reason for the absence. If a satisfactory response is not received, the matter will be referred to the relevant staff at the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta who will follow up unexplained absences as per legislative requirements.
Student wellbeing

Student welfare, discipline and anti-bullying policies and pastoral care

A copy of the Pastoral Care and Student Management policy (revised 2017) is available in hard copy from the school office and from the school website. The policy includes details pertaining to Student Welfare and Procedural Fairness. The Discipline policy remained unchanged during this reporting period.

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, we believe that the idea of partnership is integral to fostering growth amongst members of the school community. It is about developing empathetic, reciprocal relationships which encourage and support the realisation of gifts within each person and a commitment to the wellbeing of the school community.

Procedural fairness and natural justice underpinned all issues that dealt with the management of students. Corporal punishment is expressly forbidden at the school.

Procedural fairness was based on the following two elements:

1. The right of each person to be heard, which included:
   - the right to know the issue/complaint/allegation related to a specific matter and any other information which would be taken into account in considering the matter
   - the right to know the process in which the matter would be considered
   - the right to have reasonable opportunity to respond to the issue/complaint/allegation
   - the right to know the reasons in support of any decision made

2. The right of a person to an impartial decision, which included:
   - the right to impartiality in the investigation and decision making process
   - the right to absence of bias in the decision maker

Complaints and grievances policy

The school followed formal protocols and procedures in place to address complaints and grievances in a timely and professional manner.

These protocols and procedures are in line with the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP), Compliant Handling policy and procedures (revised 2015). A copy of the policy is available on the CEDP website at: http://www.parra.catholic.edu.au/policy-central

There were no changes to the policy in 2018.
Section Eleven: Financial Statement

**Income**
- Commonwealth (64.5%)
- Capital (0%)
- State (18.9%)
- Fees (15.2%)
- Other (1.4%)

**Expenditure**
- Capital (6.5%)
- Salary (74.8%)
- Non-Salary (18.6%)

### RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Recurrent Grants</td>
<td>$4,387,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Capital Grants</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Recurrent Grants</td>
<td>$1,284,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees and Private Income</td>
<td>$1,035,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Capital Income</td>
<td>$93,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,800,944</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditure</td>
<td>$438,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and Related Expenses</td>
<td>$5,028,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Salary Expenses</td>
<td>$1,251,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,719,076</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Commonwealth** relates to Commonwealth Recurrent Grants including per capita funding and special purpose grants.
2. **Capital** relates to Government Capital Grants.
3. **State** relates to State Recurrent Grants including per capita funding, interest subsidy and special purpose grants.
4. **Fees** relates to diocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income from parents.
5. **Other** refers to Other Capital Income including drawdowns from the Diocesan School Building Fund to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. **Capital** refers to Capital Expenditure including School Buildings, Furniture and Equipment.
7. **Salaries** refers to the total of all Salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation, workers compensation and leave.
8. **Non-Salary** refers to all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenses.