



St Leo's Catholic College Wahroonga

2007 Annual Report



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1. Message from Key Groups in Our School Community



1.1 Message from the Principal

2007 saw St Leo's further embracing the digital world that our young people are growing up in.

We explored how we could take out our classrooms into the 22nd Century, how we could take our teaching strategies into the future and how we could address learning issues of boys and girls to improve their learning outcomes.

We further challenged our young people to spread the Word of God in their life after school and to examine how they could truly be 'Catholic young men and women of conscience' and disciples of Jesus.

1.2 Message from the Parent Body

The year 2007 saw the Board consolidate into a cohesive and enthusiastic representative parent body to advance the objectives of the College under its 2007-2010 Strategic Plan.

The Board formalised its relevance within the College community by defining a Charter which records its governance role within the College community.

Significant work was undertaken on developing and implementing the Strategic Plan in consultation with the College

Leadership. Various sub-committees were formed to research, identify trends and formulate policy in marketing/promotion, sustainability and parental involvement. These activities enabled the Board to seek wider community opinion and expertise in each of these areas.

The College undertook a number of improvements throughout the year to which the Board and parents gave wholehearted support. The most notable was being awarded Federal Government funding to install water tanks to gather and use recycled water.

Throughout the year, support was provided to the P&F committee in determining its future direction. The Board and College Leadership encouraged feedback on this issue by conducting a survey to measure parental involvement within the College community.

A feature of the year's activities was to regularly inform and engage with the College community on Board activities. This was achieved by regular updates in the College newsletter and establishing a presence on the College website.

The consensus shared by the Board representatives and parents is that during 2007 the College had met performance measures to achieve its goals.



1.3 Message from the Student Body



In 2007, students were once again called upon to play a dynamic role in the life of St Leo's College. In every aspect of their school experience, students were encouraged to achieve their personal best. There was a strong focus on creating a productive and engaging learning environment, where each student felt that their contribution was worthwhile. Lessons were tailored to student needs, and responded to student feedback, so that the learning process was as effective, and enjoyable, as possible.

Outside of the classroom there were numerous other opportunities and challenges for the student body. From sport to debating, to musical groups of leadership roles, every student had the chance to foster and develop their gifts.

The student body also considered those outside the local community. There were a number of highly successful fundraisers throughout the year, including collections for an Aboriginal community, for the international charity Caritas Australia, and for the Solomon Islands. A range of other social justice initiatives throughout the year gave the student body a broadened perspective on the world and another avenue for personal development.

Over the course of 2007, the students of St Leo's experienced so many opportunities, obstacles and enjoyable times that everyone was pushed to learn more about themselves and to realise their true potential.





2. School Profile

2.1 Introduction

St Leo's Catholic College is a co-educational Years 7 to 12 College that exists on the North Shore of Sydney in the suburb of Wahroonga.

The College enjoys a fine reputation in the local community and is often commended on the friendliness and the cooperation of its student body. Students of the College are renowned for wearing the College uniform with pride.

The main feeder parishes are Asquith, Berowra, Normanhurst, Pymble, West Pymble, St Ives, Wahroonga, Waitara and Pennant Hills. While its main feeder Catholic primary schools are Our Lady of the Rosary, St Patrick's, St Bernard's, St Agatha's and Prouille, a considerable number of students come from the local Government schools at Normanhurst, Hornsby, Wahroonga and Waitara.

2007 has been the fifth year of the College being involved in its Quality School Project, the aim of which is to provide quality outcomes for all its students.



2.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2007:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Indigenous	Total
374	582	144	2	956

*Language background other than English

2.3 Enrolment Policy

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

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

St Leo's Enrolment Committee consists of the Principal, the College Chaplain, and parish priests from Waitara and Normanhurst.

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

2.4 Staff Profile

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

- a) have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines
- b) have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications
- c) do not have qualifications as described in (a) or (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context. Such teachers must have been employed:
 - to 'teach' in NSW before 1 October 2004 (either on a permanent, casual or temporary basis), and
 - as a 'teacher' during the last five (5) years in a permanent, casual or temporary capacity.

a	b	c	Total
77	2	2	81



Leadership Structure

As St Leo's is a large secondary college there needs to be a dense leadership structure to cater for all areas of responsibility.

There are nine Year Coordinators and Assistant Year Coordinators who meet as the Pastoral Team led by the Student Welfare Coordinator.

There are fourteen Key Learning Area Coordinators and assistants, along with the Librarian, the Learning Support Coordinator, the Careers/Vocational Education Coordinator and the Information Technology Coordinator who meet as the Curriculum Team led by the Curriculum Coordinator and the Deputy Principal.

The Year Coordinators meet with their Homeroom Teams whilst the Key Learning Area Coordinators meet with their Faculty Teams.

Day-to-day smooth running of the College is the responsibility of the Administration Coordinator.

The Management Team focuses on policy development, system development and procedures. It is comprised of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Pastoral Care Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and the Administration Coordinator as well as a representative of the Year Coordinators and the Key Learning Area Coordinators.

The Leadership Team focuses on strategic leadership and the mission and vision of the College and consists of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Pastoral Care Coordinator, Student Welfare Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and the Administration Coordinator.

Support Staff

The College has sixteen support staff in the Library, Front Office, Finances, Book Shop, Uniform Shop, Science Laboratories and Hospitality Kitchen in a combination of full-time and part-time basis.

In addition, the College has a Business Manager who manages the support staff as

well as overseeing the finances, tradespeople and contractors.

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention Rates

The average teacher attendance rate during 2007 was 95.9%. This figure does not include teachers on planned leave.

The teacher retention rate from 2006 to 2007 was 98.7%.



The teaching staff of the College focus on their role as teachers in the classroom and, as such, do not seek to miss their classes by engaging in professional development during the College day. Extensive professional development occurs within meeting times that are scheduled mainly outside teaching times of the school day. There are times, however, when staff are committed to taking students on sporting gala days and excursions that assist in enriching their work in the classroom.

There has been such a significant reduction in teacher movement at the end of the school year that at the end of 2006, only three out of 83 teaching staff sought employment in other schools.

2.6 Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher feedback is sought on a regular basis at faculty, staff and middle managers meetings during the year as well as in our annual evaluation of our Quality School Project and during our internal faculty appraisal process.

Each of these groups is consulted about new initiatives, asked for their feedback on current procedures and policies as well as



formulates the directions for the Annual Strategic Management Plans.



2.7 Student Attendance and Retention Rates

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2005, 81% completed Year 12 in 2007 at this College.

St Leo's data on retention rates is of interest due to the fact that the College is in an area that includes at least six independent single sex schools as well as two selective high schools and five Department of Education comprehensive schools. This results in movement to and from our College on a regular basis in a variety of year groups.

In addition, parents who come from professional backgrounds move in and out of the area depending on their job requirements as the North Shore is seen as an attractive area of Sydney in which to live.



2.8 Student Satisfaction

Our active student leadership programs provide an effective means of consulting our student body on new initiatives as well as our students having the opportunity to put forward areas of concern and to send out initiatives they would like to have discussed

by the College's Leadership Team. Students are also consulted in our Internal Faculty appraisal process where they have the opportunity to consult on the teaching strategies they experience that are most effective for their learning.

2.9 Student Destinations

Approximately 50% of our 2007 Year 12 applied for, and gained, a place at one of many universities – Sydney, NSW, UTS, Macquarie, Western Sydney, Sturt in a variety of courses. The remaining 50% either took up a TAFE course, traineeship or worked full-time. This appears to be the trend for St Leo's students.



3. Catholic Life and Mission



3.1 Catholic Heritage

St Leo's Catholic College was founded by the Christian Brothers in 1955 to provide quality Catholic education for boys in the tradition of Edmund Rice. The foundation Principal was Brother Leo Crohan. The brothers remained until 1982 with a transfer to a lay Principal, Mr Alan Brady.

The College was transferred to the Trustees of the Archdiocese of Sydney in 1983 as well as becoming co-educational with girls entering Year 11. The College is now part of the Broken Bay Diocese.

The school aims to provide quality Catholic education.

3.2 Liturgical Life

The school year began with our opening College Mass where we welcomed our Year 7 students, new students from other years and new members of staff. At each of our whole school masses we involve the students and staff to model what it means to belong to a Catholic community.

A myriad of opportunities to be fully involved in the liturgical life of the College is provided for students during the twice weekly masses that are held in our College chapel, to the whole year group, and whole College

liturgies. The liturgical life of the College reflects the Liturgical Seasons of the Church as well as moving ANZAC and Remembrance Day liturgies.

St Leo's is fortunate to have a College Chaplain who is actively involved in the liturgical life of the College as well as working closely with staff in providing opportunities for them to develop their faith through our Staff Retreat Program and assisting in the pastoral care of students as required.

On various feast days and significant days in the life of the school, the College community also comes together for the celebration of the Eucharist.

Prayer features strongly in the daily life of the College initiated by staff and students at the commencement of the school day and at the beginning of lessons.

Social justice issues are shared with the College community at year assemblies and whole College assemblies with an active Edmund Social Justice group liaising with the Year 12 Social Justice Council, the Year 12 Liturgy Council and with the St Vincent de Paul night patrol duties.



3.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese

As St Leo's College has nine feeder parishes we are often challenged as to how to become more involved in these parishes especially in light of physical distance and the fact the school has more students from some parishes than others.



However, students from the College are involved with Our Lady of the Rosary, Waitara, due to its physical proximity by assisting with their sporting events and debating as well as leading their younger students in developing their values and in understanding themselves better. In addition, the students from Our Lady of the Rosary use our bottom oval at lunch times as they are short of space. We are keen to support any parish events that require the use of our ovals.

The parish priest at Waitara is a member of our College Board.

Each of the parish priests and assistant parish priests are always welcome at our College liturgical events and do participate when they are available.

3.4 Religious Education Curriculum

The Religious Education program is taught with the same academic focus as all other subject areas with assessment for and of learning tasks set to ensure that students are achieving the outcomes that are set out in the syllabus.

The continued challenge is for our staff to bring significance to the content so that our students see relevance in their everyday lives. It is through engagement with content that students are able to make what they learn meaningful. A sound content basis allows for an informed learner and this is important for fully understanding our Catholic religion.

The strands of Prayer and Liturgy, Catholic Discipleship and Scripture bring a faith dimension to the learning.

Our reflection days in Years 7-10 is one way that we relate what is being taught in the RE program to the lives of our young people. Our Senior Retreat program has as its focus the continued discipleship of our young people after they leave their school environment. Our evaluations of these programs in 2007 demonstrated that the link was clear and was of assistance to our young people in preparing for life after school.

3.5 Catholic Worldview

As a Catholic school, St Leo's sees quality education as an expression of the Catholic worldview which is a little like examining everything we do through "Catholic-tinted glasses".

We therefore seek to offer opportunities to apply that worldview to all aspects of school life, both inside and outside the school. It is for this reason that each policy that is developed, each project that we consider, every aspect of student management, has a reference point which is our Catholic worldview.

We continued the focus and integrate our values into College life by ensuring all our policies articulated one or more of our values as well as focusing on one of our values at any major liturgical event.



Each Year 7 student received our values band as well as making their values cloth that they will take with them until they leave in Year 12. This cloth is a visible reminder of the integral part our College values play in College life.



In 2007 our teaching staff again participated in a two day Staff Retreat where they examined their own spirituality by participating in workshops, prayer and the Eucharist. Each year we take our staff through another two modules of the Adult Faith formation program. In addition, staff were given the opportunity to attend a Twilight Retreat which focused on the spiritual dimensions of life and reflection as presented by guest speakers.

In addition, Years 11 and 12 students attended two day retreats where they examined their own spiritual journey and prepared for the challenge to take their Catholic beliefs into the world after school.

Every College Assembly, Year meeting and Staff Development Day begins with a prayer or reflection led by staff or students.

3.6 Parent Participation in Catholic Life and Mission

Our College Parent Newsletter involves parents in the religious life of the College by keeping them abreast of our liturgical calendar and giving them information about Papal documents such as 'Catholic Schools at the Crossroads'.

Parents are also involved in our prayers at the beginning of each parent meeting which is held for all year groups in the College as well as in the Sharing Wisdom format that directs the operation of our College Board.

Parents are always welcome to each College assembly and every whole College Mass.

Each year our College Board attends a Board Retreat at the Mary McKillop Centre in North Sydney to provide an opportunity for further faith development as well as setting our goals for the following year.

3.7 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

In 2007 at our Staff Retreat we focussed on familiarising staff with how we do and can further integrate our Catholic Worldview and College values into our day-to-day life at the College.

Our College Chaplain is also a valuable resource for our RE teachers when they are teaching RE units such as the Sacraments and familiarising our younger students with our rituals found in the Mass.

With the release of 'Catholic Schools at the Crossroads', a number of staff meetings focussed on the details of this document.

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a policy on the [Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education](#) which is implemented by all systemic schools in the Diocese.



4. Pastoral Care

4.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established [Pastoral Care](#) and [Student Discipline](#) Policies which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

4.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

Our Pastoral Care Policy encompasses the areas of teaching and learning; Catholic faith; school organisation and culture and community, all underpinned by our values of integrity, hope, dignity, respect and justice, surrounded by our School Vision and Mission, the Catholic Worldview and the Diocesan Vision and Mission.

The implementation of the National Safe Schools Framework was implemented in 2006 so that we are confident that we are certainly a safe school according to Federal Government requirements.

The College has again delivered programs to students to support studying in a safe environment. For example, anti-bullying plays and workshops; anti-drug and alcohol presentations and workshops; Raising Responsibility Program; U Turn the Wheel (safe driving program); ongoing study skills and motivational program; Safe Partying Behaviour Program and Elevate Education which is a motivational presentation for students in the senior years of schooling.

Annually, our staff undergo a refresher course in Child Protection as well as focussing on aspects of the OH & S Policy.

4.3 Pastoral Care of Families

Our pastoral team, which comprises the Pastoral Care Coordinator, the College Counsellor, the Youth Minister, the College Chaplain, representative of the Year Coordinators and Key Learning Area Coordinators, works closely with students and their families on an ongoing basis. Each member of the team is trained in Choice

Theory and Reality Therapy whilst the other members of the team bring a variety of expertise to assist families in our combined work with the young people in our College.

Parent evenings are held to assist parents in dealing with teenage issues, for example, understanding the psychology of their teenager, safe partying, safe driving, understanding alcohol and drugs in the life of teenagers, cyber bullying, and the potential impact of the internet on family life. At these evenings and depending on the nature of the issue, families are put in touch with outside agencies to work with them and the school in supporting their children as they overcome difficulties.



Our Youth Minister, as well as our College Chaplain, works with small groups of students to help them develop strategies to gain confidence at school.

Our Pastoral Care Coordinator has undertaken the Peaceful Parenting course, and Rock and Water Course. Opportunities for parents to learn peaceful parenting techniques are provided by the College as well as opportunities for parents to learn more about Choice Theory and Raising Responsibility.

Our Careers Advisor also assists students in finding an appropriate vocation and arranges work experience on a one-off or regular basis for students at risk. Many of our students have taken part in TAFE courses that prepare them for part-time or full-time work.

There is open and clear communication with parents in our community so that we can work together for the benefit of our young people.



4.4 2007 Initiatives

In 2007 the College took steps to embed our College values into our teaching and learning as well as being a focus in our Tutor Lessons. The Tutor Lessons took a new format with a focus on goal setting, evaluation of academic performance, academic resilience, study skills and note-taking which enable a young person to perform with academic integrity.

Our teaching staff experienced additional exposure to apply Choice Theory in the classroom as well as being more familiar with the restitution in dealing with issues in and out of the classroom.



In addition, as part of our Middle schooling philosophy which focuses on the importance of students being connected to their school, we planned for Year 7 having their own base classroom in 2008 as well as all Year 7 having focused lessons on Choice Theory.

Pastoral Care is now seen at our College as involving faith, teaching and learning, policies and procedures and community in a broad approach that encompasses all walks of College life.

We adopted online booking by parents for their interviews on parent/teacher nights as

well as parents collecting their child's report on the parent/teacher night so that more parents took advantage of spending time with their child's teacher.

4.5 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Broken Bay has established a [Complaints Handling Policy](#) which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese.

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



5. Excellence in Teaching and Learning



5.1 Curriculum Overview

St Leo's College offers a broad range of subject choices for students.

As St Leo's is a Catholic college, students must study Religious Education from Years 7 to 12. In Stages 4 and 5 students study the Broken Bay Diocese Religious Education Program while in Stage 6 they can choose between the Broken Bay Diocese program or the Board of Studies Syllabus.

The Stage 4 curriculum choice consists of the mandatory courses across the eight Key Learning Areas with students choosing between German, Italian, French and Japanese in Languages.



The Stage 5 curriculum consists of the mandatory courses as well as two elective subjects from within the TAS, Creative Arts, Languages and HSIE Key Learning Areas (KLAs).

In Stage 6, students are able to construct their HSC programs around Religion and English by selecting from approximately thirty subjects across each of the Key Learning Areas, including Vocational Education and Training courses that can be

studied either at school or TAFE. Students are also able to put together a selection of subjects that enable them to complete a traineeship as part of their HSC.

In Stage 5 and 6 St Leo's also offers the Life Skills range of subjects for applicable students.

5.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning

The staff at St Leo's have adopted the Quality Teaching Framework which gives a clear, succinct and easily adopted approach to achieving quality teaching and learning. When quality teaching enables students to achieve outcomes in their learning it is given the title in this document of 'productive pedagogy'. Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching so when students achieve outcomes that are successful then the teaching has been successful.

This document states that, in order for successful teaching and hence learning, to take place, teaching must be of intellectual quality, it must take place in an environment where intellectual quality is valued and what is being taught must be significant to the world of the student. Hence, the staff at St Leo's have developed what we call a Teaching and Learning Protocol which incorporates the quality teaching philosophy into our program, unit and assessment task development.

The staff at St Leo's differentiates the curriculum for the students who are at each end of the learning spectrum, so students who are gifted and those who have learning disabilities, are able to be catered for in the mainstream classroom.





We have continued to work in this manner in 2007 with further development and refinement taking place in our teaching, learning and assessment program so that our students experience the full range of intellectual challenge.

5.3 Significant Initiatives

Our focus in 2007 has been again on evaluating our assessment tasks to ensure that they not only follow our quality teaching philosophy but also are clear and explicit for our students and are focussed on the outcomes that have been taught in the unit of work. This is ongoing work that is essential for quality learning.

We also continued to embrace the Board of Studies requirement that within a unit of work there needs to be ongoing assessment for learning so that the teacher knows how far the learning has progressed and whether the students are ready to be successful in the assessment of learning approach.

To assist in planning, students and the families of St Leo's received an Assessment Handbook for Years 7 - 12 which clearly set out when tasks were due, what type of task it was and the outcomes that were being assessed. In addition, the break-up of marks for the semester reports was clearly defined.

Reporting to parents is based on the A-E reporting as required by the Federal Government.

5.4 Student Achievement

Overall the students at St Leo's Catholic College are maintaining their above average standard when compared to the state average of NSW. Again, there has been an increase in the standard of results in the School Certificate. However, there is still a need to address student motivation and commitment if these results are to improve further and for all students to reach their academic personal best.

Literacy

In Years 7 and 8 students at St Leo's sat for ELLA (English Language and Literacy Assessment), a state-wide literacy test for all

students in NSW government and non-government schools.

We not only receive the results of our students but are able to compare them with others in the state and in the Broken Bay system of schools. In addition we receive results of performance gains from Year 7 to Year 8.

	School	State
2004	91.3	88.7
2005	90.4	88.7
2006	90.4	88.8
2007	90.6	89.0

**Literacy, average scaled scores, Year 7
2004-2007**

	School	State
2004	92.0	90.4
2005	93.3	90.5
2006	92.3	90.4
2007	92.6	90.9

**Literacy, average scaled scores, Year 8
2004-2007**





Our Year 8 students improved their results in all areas when compared with the results they gained in Year 7.

93.5% of Year 7 students achieved the national benchmark for writing. 90.3% of Year 7 students achieved the national benchmark for reading.

Numeracy

In Years 7 and 8 students at St Leo's sat for SNAP (Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program), a state-wide numeracy test for all students in NSW government and non-government schools.

We not only receive the results of our students but are able to compare them with others in the state and in the Broken Bay system of schools. In addition we receive results of performance gains from Year 7 to Year 8.

Our Year 7 and 8 students in 2007 scored above state and system level in all areas of the test: numeracy, number, measurement, space, data and problem solving.

	School	State
2003	86.4	84.7
2004	88.4	85.1
2005	87.4	85.0
2006	86.9	84.7
2007	87.9	85.1

Numeracy, average scaled scores, Year 7 2003-2007

	School	State
2003	89.8	87.4
2004	90.8	87.8
2005	92.2	87.7
2006	90.6	87.2
2007	91.3	87.8

Numeracy, average scaled scores, Year 8 2003-2007

The performance gain of St Leo's students from Year 7 to Year 8 was greater than is expected as has been the case for the past two years.

80.5% of students in Year 7 2007 at St Leo's achieved the national numeracy benchmark.

School Certificate

Students at St Leo's College sat for English Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Australian History and Australian Geography in the School Certificate external tests, and CST10.

It was observed that 45 students (approximately 28% of the 160 students) gained 90 performances at the highest state benchmark across the six School Certificate tests.

	English	Maths	Science	History	Geog	Comp
2001	75.46 (71.8)	74.39 (72.8)	71.82 (71.2)	n/a	n/a	n/a
2002	77.38 (74.1)	75.86 (72.2)	74.98 (72.5)	75.02 (67.2)	75.02 (68.6)	
2003	75.35 (72.7)	73.32 (71.9)	77.35 (74.3)	71.15 (69.1)	75.73 (70.5)	
2004	77.09 (73.9)	74.15 (71.1)	78.74 (74.1)	72.68 (70.8)	75.23 (72.6)	
2005	75.73 (73.1)	71.52 (71.0)	76.55 (74.6)	73.63 (73.6)	74.14 (72.8)	
2006	77.47 (74.1)	69.53 (67.9)	75.44 (72.8)	70.60 (71.0)	77.31 (74.4)	82.04 (80.5)
2007	78.37 (74.76)	72.19 (69.38)	78.67 (73.48)	75.20 (72.14)	77.87 (74.60)	81.78 (80.28)

School Certificate results, 2001-2007 (state means in brackets)

This compares favourably to the 2006 College cohort results where 27 students (15.3% of 176 students) gained 48 performances at the highest benchmark across the five School Certificate subjects.

The school will continue to challenge our students to improve the results.

Higher School Certificate

The 2007 Higher School Certificate results were not as strong as those of 2006.

Despite these circumstances, there were 28 entries in the Distinguished Achievers' list and more than 30 students achieved a UAI of 80 or more with the highest UAI being 97.85 with 14 students gaining a UAI over 90.

Distinguished Achiever's List:

2001	17
2002	49
2003	52
2004	43
2005	49
2006	72
2007	28

The College cohort's mean was higher than the State mean in the following subjects:

- Community & Family Studies
- Economics
- English (Standard)
- Food Technology
- Information Processes & Technology
- Legal Studies
- General Mathematics
- Music 1
- Physics
- Studies of Religion (2 Unit)
- Visual Arts
- Japanese Continuers
- Hospitality Examination
- IT Examination

5.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

2007 saw St Leo's College embracing technology in a more robust way with a movement to embracing Apple Macs for the teaching and learning environment so that St Leo's is truly a cross platform school catering for a windows and Mac environment.

With the Principal participating in an International IT tour with other Australian

educators, the platform of Apples was demonstrated as being the platform that best supports teaching and learning. In all countries visited the ease with which the software is integrated allows for teachers to utilise IT to improve student IT skills, academic achievement and student engagement and motivation. Consequently, each member of staff was given a laptop as their 'tool of trade' with high level of professional learning provided for all staff to bring them up to a base level of use.



Staff were divided into levels of ability that allowed for their professional learning by the Apple Mac team to be individualised. Professional learning was provided by Apple, our IT Coordinator and our own team of experts within our College.

Training focussed initially on 'getting to know your Mac', how to use the parallels desktop and then becoming familiar with the integrated software package.

In 2007 more data projectors were installed in classrooms resulting in 75% of classrooms having data projectors. This is our approach rather than installing Smart Boards.

We also purchased PC and Macbooks for student use. These are housed on trolleys which can be moved from classroom to classroom.

There was also a refurbishment of the IT Centre to reflect a learning space approach rather than a lab approach to the use of IT in this centre.

5.6 Professional Learning

All teachers participated in a range of professional learning activities in 2007.

On a Diocesan level, staff were engaged in such experiences as: Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program, KLA Network meetings and KLA focus days; Child Protection training; Pastoral Care workshops; Special Needs and Gifted and Talented workshops; Literacy and Numeracy training, and the Broken Bay Pedagogy Initiative.

School-based professional learning was centred around: Control Theory/Reality Therapy Basic four day and practicum courses; small group work on applying Choice Theory in the classroom; Twilight Pedagogy Workshops metalanguage and substantive communication; literacy training by presenters of the 'Stepping Out' Literacy program and the introduction of Professional Learning teams. Each staff member nominated to be part of a professional learning team. These teams included Boys Education, Peel, Middle School, Literacy and Mac computer expert.

Our staff development days focussed on explicit Literacy teaching, Boys' Education, the integration of IT into teaching strategies, the further application of Choice Theory in the classroom, Restitution and aspects of the Quality Teaching Framework. The average expenditure on professional learning per teacher in 2007 was \$1,367.

5.7 Students with Special Needs

Our mainstream approach to the delivery of education for students with special needs saw us in 2007 trialling what we called 'blended' classes meaning that students with a designated learning disability and those who were behind their cohort in literacy and

numeracy were in the one class with two teachers to cater for their learning needs. One teacher was a Special Needs teacher and the other a mainstream teacher.

This approach has been an overwhelming success for all students who can truly be learning from a differentiated curriculum and thus achieving at their personal best. We have found that the learning gain, on the whole, has surpassed what we believe it would have been in a mixed ability class where all levels of ability had to be catered for by one teacher.

Our mainstream teachers have benefited from the teaching strategies employed by Special needs teachers and vice versa.



6. Extracurricular Program

Outdoor Education Program

Students in Years 7 to 10 participated in a Developmental Outdoor Education Program which saw students increasing their outdoor skills.

Year 7 went to Myuna Bay, Year 8 to Colo River where they camped out for three nights whilst Year 10 went to Elanora Heights where they combined outdoor activities with Leadership activities.



Duke of Edinburgh

In 2007, 28 students participated in preparing for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and 12 students for Silver Duke of Edinburgh.

Each group had to take part in a number of camping expeditions as well as participating in community services activities.

Debating and Public Speaking

Our students participated in the Catholic Secondary Schools Debating and Public Speaking competitions and won various individual rounds.

Mock Trial

Our students participated in the Mock Trial competition which allows students to gain

experience in court room procedures under the guidance of a practising magistrate or solicitor. They won 3 of the 4 rounds.

Music

Our Stage and Concert Bands and Chamber Ensemble performed in the Yamaha Music Festival as well as performing at numerous College events.

We have an extensive Music Tutor Program which enables students to learn to play a musical instrument during the school day.

In addition, each term a Musical Soiree is held to enable the parents and families of students who study music to see them perform.



Drama

The College provides opportunities for students who study Drama to perform for their families, including two major productions that have involved large numbers of students. These were 'Living with Lady Macbeth' and 'Mortal Needs'.

Drama students also perform at the musical soiree and participate in school liturgies dramatising the gospel.

HSC Drama students perform for their families and invited guests from the College in preparation for their HSC examinations.



Sport

St Leo's belongs to a number of sporting associations:

- Metropolitan Catholic Colleges (MCC) for boys
- Metropolitan Catholic College Sport (MCCS) for girls
- Broken Bay Sports Association
- NSW Combined Catholic Colleges Association.

Students participate in either representative sport of a Thursday afternoon or take part in our internal sport and activities program.



As usual, we are successful participants in all association events including gala days and take out numerous championships across a variety of sports.



Students have reached, and were successful at, the national level in gymnastics.



We are proud of the fact that over 40% of students represent the College in sport during the year.



Night Patrol

Our staff and senior students attend Night Patrol once a month, to assist in providing food and hot drinks to the homeless people of Sydney.

St Vincent de Paul

Our St Vincent de Paul group raised money for the homeless; collected Easter eggs to be given out; knitted rugs for those in need; collected winter clothes for distribution; and organised a junior dance and Christmas hampers.



7. Strategic Initiatives



7.1 2007 Priorities and Achievements

Our Strategic Plan which was developed in 2006 began to be implemented in 2007. Our Strategic Plan has three Priority Areas with a number of goals for each area. For each major goal we developed a project whose aim was to fulfil the goal and thus ensure the priority area was achieved.

Priority Area 1: Implementing Quality Learning Platforms

Indicators of the fulfilment of the goals is found in continued analysis of all external examination results with a view to improving those results by maintaining what had worked and putting in place additional strategies in other areas; the completion of our Student Tracking System which is a data base that contains all the external results of all our students with easy teacher access; the maintenance of our Internal Faculty Appraisal Program where faculties are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of teaching in the classrooms; our focus on learning and our adoption of the slogan of 'Year of the Classroom'; our continued professional development with our staff on all aspects of the Quality Teaching Framework; our focus on inservices for our staff on how to teach specific aspects of literacy; continued focus on providing our teachers with experiences on using Choice

Theory/Reality Therapy in the classroom; our focus on ensuring a safe and inclusive classroom and our focus on developing College Spirit further.

Priority Area 2: Authentic Catholic Faith

With the goals of Leadership Density, Embedding of Catholic Values; meaningful liturgical experiences; working in partnership with parents and the wider community and transition programs.

Indicators of the achievement of these goals was found in the active work of our College Prefects and Student Representative Council in all aspects of College life; our Staff Spirituality and Retreat Program; the success of our new Senior Retreat Program; parents participating in not only our Curriculum Nights but also in our Mothers' and Fathers' Day masses; our Board Retreat and our Career Talks to the senior students; our Year and whole school Masses and liturgical events; our students taking part in work experience as well as job placements and community outreach activities; our senior students taking part in primary school activities as well as ANZAC Day ceremonies, Seniors Week; the detailed communication with our primary schools regarding students coming into Year 7; our social justice activities through our Edmund Rice Social Justice group and our St Vincent de Paul chapter.





Priority Area 3: A Responsive and Dynamic Resourced Environment

Indicators of the achievement of these goals is found in the increasing of the number of data projectors in our classrooms; the refurbishment of some of our IT labs into learning spaces; our teaching staff receiving an Apple Macbook with intensive professional development in the use of the laptops and the accompanying software to enhance teaching in the classroom; a detailed professional learning program in the form of professional learning teams where staff choose their areas of interest and develop a depth of knowledge in that area; refurbishment of the terrace steps as well as repainting classrooms and outdoor areas; the planning to introduce a Middle and Senior School in 2008 with accompanying structural changes.

7.2 2008 Priorities and Challenges

In 2008 we are aiming through the formation of our Middle and Senior School approach to address the issues of disengagement and lack of motivation of our students especially our junior boys. We are also aiming to trial a one-to-one laptop program with one Year 7 class and, through data collection, make a decision on whether learning outcomes and motivation has improved.



The continual upgrading of our teaching strategies so that they reflect the digital society that we live in is a goal for us in 2008. Another goal is to continue to develop our teachers' commitment to ongoing professional development that reflects the teaching and learning cycle, our Choice Theory approach and the Quality Teaching Framework.



The utilisation of the data that we have available to us about our students' academic ability so that they optimise their learning is a challenge for our teaching staff.

Ensuring that our young people are strong in their Catholic faith so that they continue to foster their faith long after leaving the College is another challenge and priority for us to continue to work on whilst they are at our school as well as increasing our students' participation in social justice activities and parish activities.

The reforming of our College Board so that more parents are involved in hospitality events in the College is a further priority.

8. Parent Participation



8.1 Introduction

St Leo's has a history of strong Parents' and Friends' (P&F) involvement in the life of the College.

Again, the Mother's Day and Father's Day Masses, Catholic Schools Week Mass and breakfast saw the Chapel filled with parents and children followed by hearty eating by all.

The College Board was active again this year and focussed its work on Board Sustainability, Hospitality and Marketing and College Values. In addition, at their annual retreat they analysed the new Strategic Plan data and developed Goals and Action Plans that focussed on communication with parents, parental involvement and marketing.

8.2 Parent Satisfaction

New and existing parents continue to speak with passion about our pastoral care program, of the value of school parent evenings and of the community spirit found in the College.

2007 saw a struggle for the P&F in attracting numbers to its meetings. At the AGM in November those present voted to disband the P&F as a group and for those interested in pursuing formal parental involvement, there was an open invitation by the Chair of the College Board to become part of the Parent Hospitality Group.

In addition, attendance at Board Meetings was encouraged for parents to become familiar with how the Board operates.

Year group dinners, hosted by a Parent Representative continued during 2007 which

provided opportunity for parents to network socially.

They continually express the view that they feel welcomed and invited to take an active role in the functioning of the school and its major events. They also feel that the College diary is an excellent means of communication between the College and the home. They were very supportive of the initiatives to distribute Student Reports on the night of the Parent/Teacher interviews and were thrilled at the new method of online booking of interviews on these nights as well as the SMS messaging when a student is absent from school. They feel that the College is utilising the latest technology in their child's schooling.





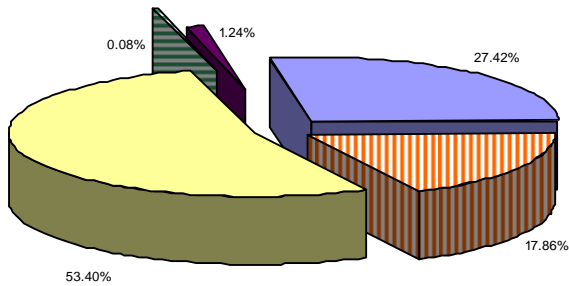
9. Financial Report

Consistent with Board of Studies requirements, financial income and expenditure for this school is shown in the graphs below.

Diocesan system financial reporting is found in the Diocese of Broken Bay Catholic Schools Office Annual Report.

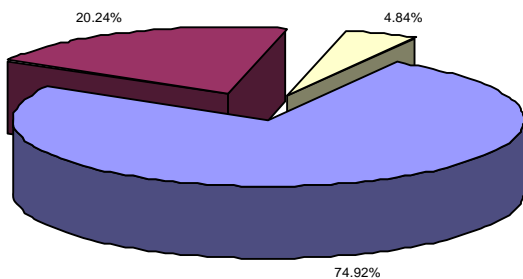
Income

- Fees and Other Private Income
- State Government Funds
- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants
- Government Capital Grants
- Other Capital Income



Expenditure

- Salaries, Allowances and Related Costs
- Non salary Expenses
- Capital Expenditure



The contents of this annual report have been validated by the School's consultant, Michael Slattery.