

St Francis of Assisi Primary School

Calwell

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Principal: Mr Michael Nuttall



Annual Report for 2007

A Message from Key School Bodies

From the School Board

The School Board has continued its valued responsibility of supporting and guiding the work of the school community throughout 2007. This year brought a number of initiatives into the school and saw the further development of other programs which assist in providing a nurturing and caring educational environment for the students of St Francis of Assisi Primary School.

While the initiatives are covered in the Principal's Report I would like to highlight two aspects of the school's year which I believe will stand our school well in the years to come. The first is that at a financial level we have built a sound reserve base from which can grow improvements in the grounds, buildings and facilities of the school as well as the educational opportunities available through better classrooms, expanded IT facilities and new teaching resources. The other initiative is that of KidsMatter. The school's involvement was strongly supported and is expected to provide a good foundation for students in terms of their wellbeing and mental health.

Successes from a Board perspective included the fete where the work of the P&F ensured a successful evening; the financial viability of both BASCA and the canteen; the gaining of the Chaplaincy Grant; and, the living of the school's vision through environmental successes such as the Environment Club, NOWaste Award and building of the garden beds. We hope to support wherever possible such great work.

Finally, the Board wishes to thank the school executive, the staff and students for making St Francis such a wonderful place to be. Parents often comment on what is special about our school – its committed and welcoming staff, classrooms which are open to them and children who are well cared for and who enjoy each day there. I have every confidence in that continuing over the years to come.

Nicholas Kelly
Board Chair

From the School Principal

2007 at St Francis has been a year of consolidation and development. In the second year of principalship at St Francis of Assisi Primary School, the year was one of continuing to build strong foundations as we near the school's twentieth anniversary. One major task was in the area of school curriculum where the ACT's Every Chance to Learn document will now direct in a very practical way what happens in classrooms across the Territory. It will impact both on pedagogical practice and content. We hope this is a positive and achievable proposition.

Other events, programs and happenings give some picture of the year at St Francis.

- Our theme for 2007 was “Like a Good Samaritan”. This theme recognised the celebration of the school’s founding order of nuns celebrating their 150th year anniversary.
- Years 4 – 6 Literacy Blocks were introduced.
- Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Football Carnival on 2 April.
- Letterland and Home Reading Parent Inservices were again conducted.
- One beginning year Staff Day saw well known musician Andrew Chin led staff through a music and prayer day.
- The school worked closely with the Corpus Christi Parish to build connections and develop the sacramental programs.
- The Year Six and Year Five camps were very successful.
- The P&F, under the leadership of its president Tiffany Wallace, ran a very successful community fete.
- Student numbers at BASCA grew significantly which required greater staff numbers to provide what is an excellent program. BASCA participated in the Active After School Community Program.
- The computer room was dismantled with it being setup as a Studies of Asia and Indonesian Room. In this area our Languages teacher, Nicola Barkley and I attended the Engaging Young Australians with Asia in Australian Schools Conference. Nicola was also a recipient of the Endeavour Language Teacher Fellowship.
- Laptops which could be easily moved across classes were purchased.
- The school canteen, under a change of managers, introduced successful changes in terms of quality of food and promotion. The canteen returned to profitability.
- Significant progress occurred in sports organisation with teams entered into representative and archdiocesan carnivals including the Boorowa Touch and Netball Carnival, the Super 8 Cricket, and Catholic Schools Soccer Carnival.
- Our school was one of 100 schools across Australia to begin the primary school mental health KidsMatter initiative.
- The school received an ACT Government Health Promotion Grant of over \$8000.
- The school was awarded a NOWaste Bronze Award, the first school to have received an overall major prize award.
- A Health Expo for Years 3 – 6 was held.
- The school was successful in receiving a National School Chaplaincy Grant.
- A class-based awards program was introduced across all year levels.
- Various programs continued including Term Three Enrichment Program; Forward Together Program; Year Six Leadership Program; Australian Government Quality Teacher Program
- Activities included Wakakirri (ACT Grand finalists) ; Tournament of Minds; School Band; Grandparents Day; Sabbath Week; Book Week; Environment Club Disco; Walkathon; visiting performers; Working Bees; Trivia Night; Open Day; and Buddy Programs.
- The Environment Club continued its excellent work including the chickens in the chicken coop and vegetable garden.
- Religious Education programs and activities included Parish Feast Day; Sacramental Programs; Values Program; Class Masses at Sacred Heart Church; Easter Liturgies; Staff Masses (New Staff, Parish schools; Opening); ANZAC ceremony; Combined School Masses; Pray and Play at Holy Family Church; NAIDOC Week Mass.

Michael Nuttall
Principal

Vision Statement

St Francis of Assisi Primary School community strives to live its Vision to be a Christ-centred learning environment, which respects and nurtures the uniqueness of all. Through a community characterized by commitment, celebration, service, support, compassion and justice, each individual is challenged to reach his or her full potential and to develop an awareness of the sacredness and interconnectedness of all life.

The purpose and nature of our school can be summarised under the main focus areas:

Catholic Life and Mission

Inspiring Faith by providing the face of the Church in today's world, with Christ as centre, and St Francis of Assisi as our model.

We participate in regular school masses at a class, Year level, staff community, and parish community level.

Our Sacramental programs are focused on the combined parish, and recognise the vital role parents play in children's faith development through a comprehensive program of education and reflection.

Prayer is a daily occurrence, at a whole school level, and in every classroom, using community symbols and focus, which are renewed each year around current national and international themes.

Sharing Vision by remaining committed to our Catholicity, and our educative goals to provide quality education.

Our parents are involved at many levels in the formation, direction and implementation of our many programs.

Our school community actively supports parish programs and initiatives each year, focusing on local and international social justice, medical and missionary activities.

Building Community by involving all stakeholders in our school, Parish and school community towards our common vision.

Our Values program involves Kinder to Year Six, and our parent community, through the fortnightly focus on values that enhance life and learning.

Our school community participates in wider community events such as NAIDOC Mass and Mission Mass, maintaining links within the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

Our Sacramental programs and liturgical celebrations involve three parish primary schools of Holy Family Gowrie, St Clare of Assisi, Conder, and St Francis of Assisi, Calwell, within our combined Parish of Corpus Christi.

Our Parish priests have an active role within the school, in the celebration of class and year liturgies and masses, participation in the Sacramental programs Years 2, 3 and 6, and with Seasons For Growth Kindergarten to Year 6.

Tea and Tissues in February, our New Family Evening Barbecue in March, Open Day in May, Discos in June and September, Kinder Orientation Day in November, Thanksgiving Liturgy and Morning Tea in December, Year 6 Graduation, Mothers and Father's Day liturgies, grade assemblies and focus weeks such as National Safe Schools Week provided many opportunities for the community to join together, network, enjoy themselves and celebrate achievements.

St Francis of Assisi's Twilight Fete in November, coordinated by Parent's and Friend's President, Tiffany Wallace and ably supported by a hard working fete committee, was a wonderful community celebration. There were opportunities to enjoy food with an international flavour, accompanied by wonderful music provided by The Double-Back Band, and Gospel Folk Choir. The Haunted House, Face Painting, Hair Colouring, Tattoos, Show Bags, Chocolate Wheel, Cake Stall, Glow Stall, Tombola, Lucky Dip, and Mr Golf Stalls were enjoyed by all, while the Art Gallery showcased student skills within the main school corridor. The library was inundated by teddy bears from Kinder to Year Six, while the Year Six students coordinated a variety of mini games and competitions to cater for toddlers within the community.

Enriching Learning by fostering quality and innovative curriculum initiatives to enhance and maximize student learning outcomes.

Treasures New and Old continues to form the foundation of our Religious Education Curriculum, with ongoing support including shared units online, team programming and excellent resourcing through our Religious Education Coordinator and Teacher Librarian accessing varied resources across the archdiocese to enrich the current curriculum.

Staff were led by Andrew Chin in professional development that inspired a reinvigoration of liturgy, while Michael Mangan led staff and students through music. Regular opportunities were provided throughout the year for retreats and reflection days for members of staff, and the Leadership Team.

Managing Resources by valuing our most important resource, our people, and maintaining and building physical resources to maximize our teaching and learning environment.

Our ICT Strategic Management plan ensures our electronic resources, in computer labs, Interactive Smart board, laptops, digital camera and pods allow for inclusive and accessible access to all resources for all teachers and students, to maximize teaching and learning opportunities. In 2007, computers were updated to faster models with greater capacity. All students were provided with an email account, and internet access from home. In the senior Year levels, this allowed homework and assignments to be accessed from home.

Comprehensive timetables ensures equitable access to our many and varied resources including teaching and learning equipment, and access to rooms and facilities in our large and well resourced school.

Pedagogical Practices

Use of differentiated, multi-level practices occurred in Literacy and Numeracy. With St Francis of Assisi's success in the application for the ABEN Federal Grant, Success For Boys, pedagogical practices; particularly in the area of Literacy, Languages Other Than English and Information Technology were reviewed and updated. The Australian Government Quality Teaching Program provided ongoing support for Early Career Teachers and their mentors. Quality Teaching and Learning, facilitated by Dr. Jenny Gore, provided a springboard in Semester Two, 2007 for key personnel to plan whole staff professional development in pedagogical practices throughout 2008.

Key Curriculum Initiatives

Update and renewal of SOSE across the school was spearheaded by key personnel, and renewed whole school practices, programming and policy.

A review of Treasures New and Old was begun, and will continue throughout 2008 as part of school based and Archdiocesan renewal.

Years Five and Six staff and students participated in the Ice-Em trial in Mathematics, and this trial will continue throughout 2008.

The Success for Boys Project facilitated renewal of planning, programming, teaching and learning. The Federal Project resulted in significant increases in levels of student achievement, particularly in reading and writing. The levels of achievement were evident for both boys and girls.

Extra Curricular Programs

St Francis of Assisi School continued to offer a wide variety of Extra Curricular Activities. Musicorp offered weekly opportunities to participate in the school band, and to learn to play and perform using a wide variety of musical instruments. St Francis of Assisi was host to an inter-school Musicorp Band and String Workshop in November, and included both primary and secondary students. The senior students attended the Rock Eisteddfod dress rehearsal, Kokoda in June, Year

4-6 investigated Aboriginal culture in July facilitated by Nora Goodridge, and all year levels attended Cinderella, performed by Alphashows, in September. Enrichment was offered again in Term Three 2007 for all year levels from Kindergarten to Year 6, with many activities on offer to the students. Several teams competed in the Australian National University's Tournament of Minds, while students in Years 3-5 were offered the opportunity to participate in the Engineering Games at Questacon in August, and UNSW competitions throughout the year. St Francis of Assisi students participated in Gifted and Talented Days from 13-15 March.

Students represented the school in June for NAIDOC. Throughout the year the students were able to participate in the Environment Club, where recycling, the worm farm and the Environment Garden were areas of focus. With the arrival of the chickens, fresh eggs were collected and sold within the school community, and the children delighted in the new arrivals and actively participated in their care. Year 6 students were very successful in Wakakirri, and made it to the finals in 2007 with their presentation Moby-Dick, based on the 1851 novel by Herman Melville.

Book Week was a busy time for students and their families with our Book Parade and financially successful Jacaranda Book Fair. Grandparents Day was an opportunity to present music and history relevant across several generations and was heavily patronised. Seasons for Growth was offered throughout Terms 3 and 4, and continued to offer families within our school community valuable support.

The Six Camp in Wagga in February provided our senior students a wonderful opportunity to reflect on their roles as school leaders, while the Year Five Camp at Birrigai consolidated the Integrated Unit on Gold.

Sporting Programs

Saint Francis of Assisi students had many opportunities to participate in sporting programs at a class, school, parish, district and state level. Our Swimming Carnival in March, and Cross Country Carnival and Track Carnivals in May were organised by a hard working sports committee, ably coordinated by Greg Rick. There was fierce but friendly competition between the sports houses of McCormack, Morrison, Polding and Cunningham. The Catholic Schools Soccer Carnival in April, Catholic Schools Netball Carnival and Boorowa Netball and Touch Carnival in October were wonderful opportunities to compete with schools within the Archdiocese. Many opportunities for representative sport were offered in the following sports Soccer, AFL, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Touch football, Netball, Softball, Tennis, Basketball, Equestrian, Golf, Irish Dancing and Ice Skating

A Floorball program was offered to Years 5 and 6 in May, Years 3 and 4 enjoyed Sports Clinics at the MPowerdome throughout May and June, and programs in Gross Motor were run from February to December for Kindergarten and Year 1. Kindergarten to Year 3 also participated in a swimming program in Term 4, run through the Erindale Centre.

Student Performance

At Saint Francis of Assisi, a variety of assessments were used across Key Learning Areas throughout the year. These included diagnostic literacy and numeracy tests, teacher observations, work samples, pre and post testing, rubrics, Multi-Intelligence tasks, projects and presentations. The school also participated in Territory and National testing. Year 6 students were part of a trial for National Civics and Citizenship Test, 22 October. Opportunities were offered throughout the year to take part in UNSW Science Competition 8 May, UNSW Spelling and Writing Competition, 5 June, and UNSW English Competition, 19 June.

Years 3 and 5, participated in ACTAP from 6 to 14 August. The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in the Key Learning Areas of Literacy and Numeracy. The test provides a measure of students' performance compared with other students in the ACT and gives an indication of areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Each year the results are analysed to inform teaching practice with a view to improving student performance.

Literacy

Our Success for Boys project has allowed significant focus in planning, programming and pedagogy, with single sex literacy groupings in Years 4-6. This will continue throughout 2008.

Numeracy

ICE-Em Mathematics trials were undertaken in 2007 for Years 5 and 6, and will continue in 2008. In addition, Numeracy, combined with the QTL Frameworks, will be a whole school focus in 2008.

Percentages of Students in Profile Levels

Levels:	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Year Three					
Literacy	3	27	54	17	
Numeracy	1	28	58	12	
Year Five					
Literacy		3	22	58	16
Numeracy		1	26	65	6

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The results below are a comparison between two consecutive years as well as a comparison between school and system averages in percentages for both the Literacy and Numeracy Strands. The results refer to students in Year 3 who have attained the National Profile Level 3 and above, and the students in Year 5 who have attained the National Profile Level 4 and above.

2006

Strand	Year Three	Year Three	Year Five	Year Five
	School	System	School	System
Literacy	41	42	35	34
Numeracy	34	37	35	39

2007

Strand	Year Three	Year Three	Year Five	Year Five
	School	System	School	System
Literacy	35	37	37	36.5
Numeracy	35	39	35.5	40

Benchmark Information

In 2007 Year 3 ACTAP testing at least 95% of students attained the national benchmark for Literacy and 97.5% for Numeracy. In 2007 Year 5 ACTAP testing at least 97.2% attained the national benchmark for Literacy and 88.9% for Numeracy.

Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

All staff attended a number of professional days, sessions, workshops and seminars, including the CEO Primary Focus Day on Frameworks, facilitated by Di Kerr, Music in Religious Education, facilitated by Andrew Chin, Success for Boys, Modules One and Two, Curriculum Corporation, Classroom Management For Academic Success, Kid's Matter, World Youth Day facilitated by Donella Johnson, Literacy, Ralph Fletcher, FAT City, (Frustration, Anxiety and Tension), Part 1, ICT Training updates facilitated by Karen Keys, Student Reports to Parents, Student Wellbeing

and Boys, When Will You Learn? In addition, the majority of teaching staff underwent Anaphylaxis and CPR training refresher courses.

Several staff members also undertook professional development in the following areas:
Curriculum through ACT Curriculum Renewal Forum, Curriculum Renewal ACT Part 2, Every Chance to Learn Phase 3 and the National Statements Forum.

Pedagogy through Making School a Better Place for Boys, Kid's Matter Conference, Adelaide, All Redi for the Early Years and the Australian Government Quality Teaching Program.

Religious Education through Catholic School of the Future, Resourcing Sacramental Program and the Principal, Assistant Principal and Religious Coordinator Retreats.

Literacy, Numeracy and SOSE through Count Me In Too, Critical Capital Teaching and Learning Seminars, Writing Assessment Workshop, Grammar Focus Day and SOSE 2453.

Physical, Social and Emotional Development through the Rock and Water Program, National Conference Against Bullying, Melbourne, National Safe Schools Forum, Seasons for Growth Companion Training and renewals, Drug Education Forum and the Health Expo.

Information Technology through Netsafe, Interactive Whiteboards, Clickview Advanced, Learning Technology Specialist Meetings, Leadership ICT, ITS and Administrator Training.

LOTE through Endeavour Language and the Teacher Fellowships, Bahasa Indonesia.

Gifted and Talented through Tournament of Minds Judges Training Regional and National Games, Engaging the 3D Student, Identify and Provide For Gifted, Autism Spectrum Symposium and the Special Needs Day.

Career Pathways Professional Development through Leadership Conferences and retreats and PD Planning for Coordinators.

Administration in MAZE, and ECT Induction Days for first and second year teachers.

Various members of the teaching staff and Learning Support have also undertaken or continued further studies to upgrade professional qualifications. Two teachers are currently studying Masters of Educational Leadership, one teacher is studying Masters in Inclusive Education and one teacher has recently completed a Masters of Education (Teacher Librarianship). Within our Teacher Support Unit, three teacher assistants undertook the Teacher Support certificate course through the Australian Catholic University.

All members of the St Francis of Assisi teaching staff have teaching qualifications from a higher educational institution, thirty one of whom have a Bachelor Degree or above. These include one Master of Theology, two Masters of Education, one Master of Educational Leadership, twenty eight Bachelors of Education, and one Bachelor of Social Work. In addition, there are eleven Diplomas of Education; nine of which have been being updated with Bachelor Degrees, and one with Masters of Educational Leadership, three Graduate Diploma of Religious Education, one Diploma of Special Education, one Diploma of Early Childhood Services, two Graduate Diploma Library, one Bachelor of Arts and one Associate Diploma Child Studies. All Graduate Diplomas in Library, Special Education, Early Childhood Services and Child Studies have been updated to Bachelor degrees.

The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning at the school was \$1107.

Teacher Attendance and Retention

The total number of days the teaching staff were absent through sick leave, bereavement leave, leave without pay, examination leave, graduation leave, paternity leave, unpaid maternity leave,

long service leave or worker's compensation was 6.35 days. Average teacher attendance was 97%.

Student Attendance

Attendance data was collected and reported to DEEWR (previously DEST) during 2007. The average student attendance rate at Saint Francis of Assisi was 94.5%.

Retention Rates

Of the 37 teaching staff at Saint Francis of Assisi in August 2006, 28 or 76% were still at the school in August 2007. Of those staff not retained, one left to a promotions position, two moved overseas, four moved due to maternity and family reasons, and one secured a permanent position. In addition, half the staff not retained were in job share positions; while in 2007 only two classes involved job share arrangements.

Enrolment Policy and Profile

St Francis of Assisi's enrolment practices are in keeping with Catholic Education policies. The Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy can be found on the Catholic Education Office's website at <http://www.ceo.cq.catholic.edu.au/policies/enrolment.htm>

School Policies

St Francis of Assisi has comprehensive student welfare and discipline policies which effectively underpin practice. The Pastoral Care Policy works cohesively with the Social Responsibility Policy, Behaviour Management and Student Support Groups. They are further enhanced by the school's Values Program, Student Leadership Program, Awards System, Buddy System, Protective Behaviours Program and Seasons for Growth Program. Information related to each of these can be obtained through the school.

In regard to school discipline, the Social Responsibility Policy guides a program of developing self discipline through an effective recording, monitoring and structured system of action. Preventative, corrective and supportive actions are in place so that inappropriate behaviour is dealt with on an ongoing basis. A copy of the Social Responsibility Program is available through the school.

A number of policy changes occurred in 2007. Saint Francis of Assisi's Sunsmart Policy was updated in line with the Cancer Council guidelines, and Internet Use Policy was updated, assisted by Netsafe guidelines. The Integrated Curriculum Policy was updated, documenting current practice across all Key Learning Areas.

Student welfare and discipline policies were updated with the addition of Cyberbullying, Lockdown and Mobile Phone Policies being written to complement existing policies based on our increasingly technologically advanced, and socially changing world.

Copies of Saint Francis of Assisi's Pastoral Care and School Welfare Policies can be obtained via the school website. CEO policies regarding Enrolment, Complaints and Grievance Resolution can also be located on the school website. Copies of all school policies can also be obtained from the front office.

School Determined Improvement Targets

Many targets were achieved. However, only a brief summary of a few priority areas is included:

- close alignment of school and parish practices to support the administration and Mission of the parish of Corpus Christi
- further development of the school's pedagogical practices through the Quality Teacher Framework, professional development, policy and curriculum development.
- Review and restructuring of school practices and structures that supported effective learning and differentiation.
- Introduction of an effective student awards program.
- Consultation, review and promotion of strategies at school, parish and regional levels to continue to promote the school within the parish and local community.
- Implementation, maintenance and further development of programs that supported the school community such as Student Leadership, Seasons For Growth, Parent Action Groups, Indigenous Support, Before and After School Care and interschool sport.
- ICT upgrade which included classroom-based laptops and Wireless Network Connection.
- Improvements to grounds and gardens.

A copy of the school's Strategic Management Plan is available through the school.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

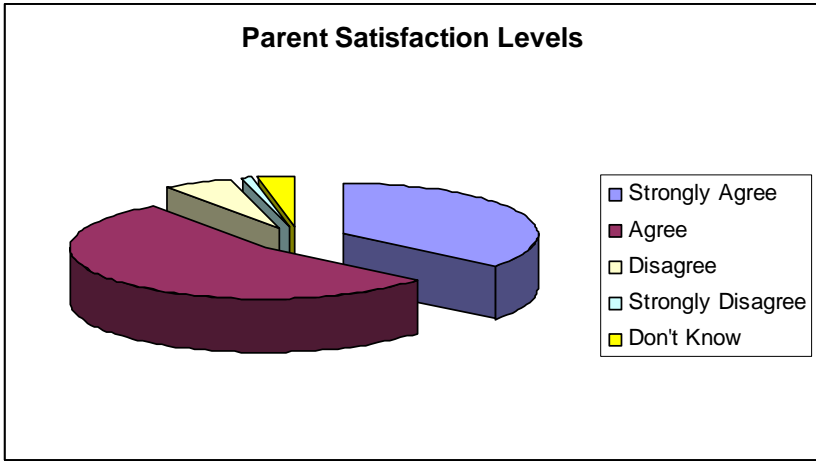
There were many ways in which the school promoted respect and responsibilities during 2007. Concern for our environment and social justice issues are central to the schools philosophy. There were formal and comprehensive programs and regular practices which included:

- Year Six Student Leadership Groups
- Involvement of Parish Youth Team in Confirmation Program
- Staff Masses and prayer times
- Buddy program linking older students with younger students
- K – 6 Values Program
- Weekly Class Masses at Sacred Heart Church
- Participation in Combined School Masses at Holy Family Church in Gowrie
- An extensive ANZAC Day week of activities centred on a whole school ANZAC Day liturgy
- Remembrance Day Liturgy
- Class, Year and Whole school assemblies and liturgies
- Social Responsibility Program
- Support of the National Vocation Awareness Week
- Student Support program
- Schools Environment Club.

The school conducted a series of fund raising activities aimed at teaching our students about our responsibility and call to help those outside the school community. These fundraisers included, Australian Red Cross, Catholic Missions, a Catholic Franciscan school in East Timor, support for St. Vincent de Paul and support for The Good Samaritan Foundation.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parents were surveyed to ascertain satisfaction rates across 14 major areas of teaching, learning and management at Saint Francis of Assisi. Parent results indicated high levels of agreement that school management, leadership and the learning environment was effective, levels of staff commitment and enthusiasm, community involvement and behaviour management was high, reporting was informative, the learning environment was safe, fair, and met student needs, and over-all satisfaction in student education was high. Summary of results are below:



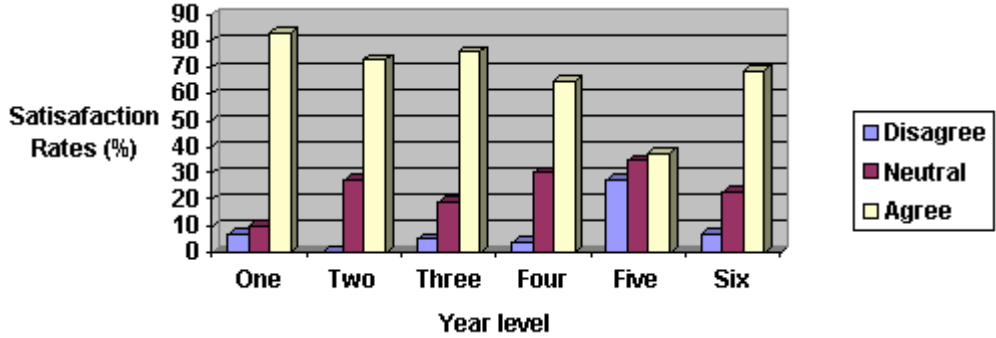
Saint Francis of Assisi parents, staff and students were surveyed regarding the federally funded, Success for Boys project, which focused on pedagogy, academic outcomes, levels of teacher competencies, student engagement and behaviour.

A sample of parent comments were obtained throughout the year, revealing high levels of interest and support. Staff and students were formally surveyed in February, May and November.

Teachers were asked to report on academic success, pedagogy, resources and student behaviours. The final survey, conducted at the completion of the project, demonstrates the level of staff satisfaction, represented as a percentage, in the following project outcomes.

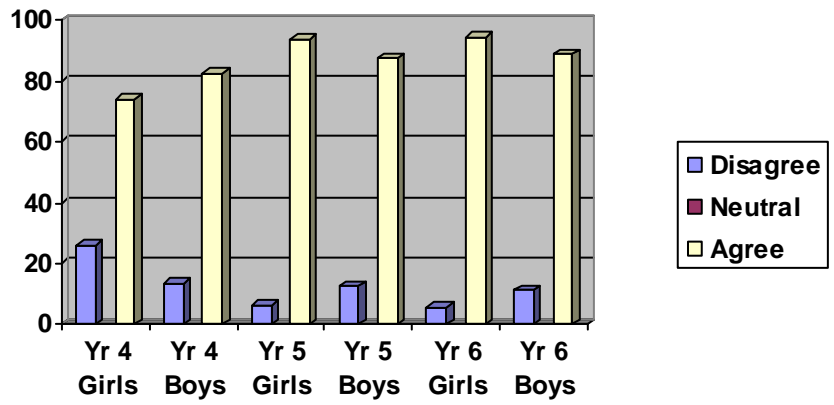
- Outcome One: Professional learning has been helpful.
- Outcome Two: Teacher competencies have been improved.
- Outcome Three: Student engagement has increased.
- Outcome Four: Student achievement has improved
- Outcome Five: Social skills of boys have improved.
- Outcome Six: The project should continue in 2008.

Levels of Staff Satisfaction on Completion of Success for Boys Federal Project



The student end of year survey asked the students involved in the Success for Boys project whether the single sex literacy groups should continue in 2008.

Levels of Student Satisfaction on Completion of Success for Boys Federal Project



Summary Financial Information

A summary of the school's financial information can be accessed on the school's website.

This report was prepared by: Michael Nuttall (Principal) Therese Nolan (Assistant Principal), Nicholas Kelly (School Board Chair) Jane Townsend, (School Secretary), Michael Bourne (Religious Education Coordinator), and Karen Keys, (Information Technologies Specialist).