JUST LOOK AT WHAT WE’VE DONE!
# School Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Address:</strong></th>
<th>13 NICHOLAS STREET NEWTOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal:</strong></td>
<td>Mr. Mark Soldani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parish Priest:</strong></td>
<td>Fr. Kevin Dillon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Board Chair:</strong></td>
<td>Ms. Marita Fitzpatrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Telephone:</strong></td>
<td>(03) 52211075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email:</strong></td>
<td><a href="mailto:strobert@srnewtown.catholic.edu.au">strobert@srnewtown.catholic.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website:</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.srnewtown.catholic.edu.au">www.srnewtown.catholic.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our School Vision

At St. Robert’s our VISION is......
EDUCATION for LIFE.

Following the example of Jesus, supported by Faith,
encouraging our parents and caring for those in our community
we will endeavour to educate all for their future.....
Through....

….as members of the Body of Christ,
in partnership with parents, Parish Priest and the community.
School Overview

St Robert’s Catholic School Newtown provides a comprehensive education for girls and boys Prep to Grade six on a .91 hectare site in Newtown, Geelong. St Robert’s first commenced in 1943 and Sister Roberta Rainsford took charge as the first Principal of the school. The Sisters of Mercy ended their association with the school in 1977. The association with the Sisters had lasted 34 years and the subsequent lay staff members, have built upon the firm foundation that the Sisters had established. In 1942 the school consisted of one classroom, an entrance hall and a cloakroom. In 1943 a second classroom was added and in 1948 four more. It was not until 1970 that an additional classroom and staffroom was added making St Robert’s a one stream school with a classroom for each grade level from Prep to 6. The modernisation and refurbishment of the original building was completed in 1986. The school chapel was refurbished in 1989.

In 2001 architects were engaged to draw up a master plan for major capital works for the school. This master plan included the demolition of existing toilets, construction of new toilets, construction of additional classrooms, relocation of the library and the upgrade and part construction of a new administrative area.

Capital Grant submissions were placed with both State and Government agencies through the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. As anticipated, a jointly funded project incorporated a considerable Parish/School financial contribution and a grant allocation from the Catholic Education Office’s Supplementary Capital Fund, Capital works commenced in November 2005 and were completed in September 2006. Works included five new classrooms and the refurbishment of existing classrooms including the addition of terrace areas to the classrooms along the eastern side of the school and the relocation and upgrade of the school administration area. In August 2007 the school library with an attached IT facility, was relocated at the southern end of the school’s Mass Centre. In October of 2008 major works were carried out to redevelop the school oval with the installation of a state of the art all purpose synthetic playing surface and running track.

Enrolment predominantly comes from the Newtown area and enrolment numbers have steadily increased in recent years to 353 in 2008.
Some factors that have influenced this trend are the diligent efforts of staff in maintaining best practice teaching and learning, a committed and supportive parent body, predominantly professionals or associate professionals with a high level of socio economic background, a tremendous community and pastoral spirit and an increasing number of young families moving into our catchment area. Many of these families have infants, pre-school and primary school aged children.

Since the unification of the Parishes of St Mary’s and St Margaret’s, St Robert’s is one of four catholic primary schools in the largest parish of Geelong, St Mary of the Angels. St Robert’s is currently the largest of the four schools.

St Robert’s school continues to have a strong and active Parents and Friends Association and a School Advisory Board. Board members include a representative from each of the grade levels, the Parish Priest, the school principal, a P&F representative, two staff representatives and an independent Chairperson.

The Advisory Board has the capacity to influence outcomes as it provides a wide range of viewpoints on the day to day and future operations of the school.

As a Catholic school we strive to demonstrate our commitment to our faith and provide living examples of God’s loving care for all people. Parents, staff and family members share a strong partnership in our school and visitors are always welcome.
Principal's Report

Using the findings from the 2007 review, the School Leadership Team in partnership with all members of staff designed an annual action plan for 2008. This action plan identifies goals, intended outcomes, targets and key improvement strategies for the school. The school has also identified principal responsibilities and accountability personnel to drive improvement and development in particular areas within each of the spheres.

In 2008 St Robert’s continued to place great value and importance in Religious Education. We have a very strong link with our Parish community and the sacramental program greatly fosters our commitment to parish faith life. This year the reunification of the St Mary’s and St Margaret’s Parish have brought the four schools, St Mary’s, St Margaret’s, Christ the King and St Robert’s, closer together and the schools have maintained a close communication and shared and planned initiatives that have proven to be mutually beneficial for the schools. The Parish Sacramental Program is one example of this and the schools have come together on several occasions this year for professional development of staff.

School masses, both whole school and level based continue to be an integral part of our Religious Education curriculum. Class masses have been particularly well attended by parents and family members this year which is something we will continue to encourage. The school chapel has provided a place for individual and group prayer.

At the beginning of 2008 the Teamboards were ready for use in all classrooms. This brought a new dimension to learning and teaching. The teachers are now using them on a daily basis across many curriculum areas. The students enjoy using the Teamboards and their level of engagement when using them is high.

St. Robert’s was successful in applying for two grants from the Catholic Education Office, in the area of Science. The first was to establish a partnership with the CSIRO. The CSIRO Lab on Legs visited in week one of term four and added a different dimension to the Science unit we undertook in term three. The second grant funded the Science Club in Term Four, following on from the success of the Science Club in 2007.

The provision of professional learning activities for all staff continued to be a focus of Leadership and Management. This included days where teachers attended professional development sessions. It remains a commitment of the school to provide meaningful professional development...
to all staff members ensuring that all are kept up to date and well informed in good teaching and learning strategies.

Program initiatives that positively benefit our children remain a key focus of the school. The Health Promoting School’s Program, Drug Education, The National Health Schools Framework and the Keys to Life and Go For Your Life programs were all included in our curriculum and continue to promote the importance of maintaining a healthy body, healthy mind and healthy relationships. The school’s Wellbeing Core Team meets regularly to set goals and monitor outcomes of wellbeing initiatives. The school renewed its ‘Asthma Friendly Schools’ status, and is officially a ‘Sun Smart’ school. Staff have been trained in the use of Epipens, and much work has been done to introduce ‘harm minimisation’ strategies for children at risk of anaphylaxis.

All teaching and administrative staff successfully completed the requirements to apply first aid and have Level 2 First Aid accreditation. In 2008, the school has successfully applied for ‘Drug Education Forum’ and ‘Values Education’ grants, expending this money on a whole school performance of ‘Buddies’, a show targeting healthy relationships.

The reintroduction of The Student Representative Council has provided another opportunity for student representation and has proven to be a valued means of staff/student interaction. Issues raised at SRC meetings are brought to the attention of staff and action taken. An SRC report to the school community is now being offered at school assemblies after each meeting.

During my time away this year responsibility for management of the school was left in the capable hands of Maria Kristiansen with the support the school leadership team members, Nathan Owen, Religious Education Coordinator, Annice Lappin, Learning & Teaching Coordinator and Julie Prendergast, Wellbeing Coordinator. In short as expected, they did a fantastic job.

Parents and Friends Association have once again been strong contributors both financially and in a community building sense. They remain dedicated to building a strong supportive school environment. Their efforts this year with the Auction Night and the Parish Fete proved again that the P&F is integral to the success of St Robert’s in more ways than one. I am grateful for all their efforts and contributions. The spirit of partnership between our parents, teachers, children and the wider community remains a satisfying aspect of our school.
Education in Faith

Goals and Intended Outcomes

GOALS
To lift the profile of RE in the school for students and parents.
To engage student and parent learning in our RE program and parish faith life.

OUTCOMES
* Consolidation of an already strong RE curriculum and liturgical celebrations.
* Further enrichment of student knowledge and experience in RE, prayer and liturgy.
* Continued development and review of our sacramental program with strong parish connection.
* Maintain a 90% student belief that it is important to pray.
* Reach 80% or above for students to value the importance RE
* Provide opportunity for ongoing professional development in faith and RE for all staff.
* Reach 80% or above for staff opportunity for Professional development.
* Maintain a high parent satisfaction percentage of 80% or above.

Achievements

Religious Education continues to be held in high regard at St. Robert's in the classrooms, school and wider school and parish community. The population of our school is predominantly Catholic with the majority of the students coming from within our parish boundaries. The classroom programs have been well resourced, especially in the area of religious literature and music. Teachers have continued to use the Religious Education Curriculum Framework (Coming to Know, Worship and Love) to plan, teach and engage their students in quality units of work. When surveyed, 75% of students agreed or strongly agreed that 'at St. Robert’s, Religious Education lessons are interesting and engaging.'

Class and whole school Masses and prayer services continued to reflect the Church’s Calendar and the special events in our school. Students were eager to participate and most of these liturgies were well attended by parents. When surveyed, 96% of students agreed or strongly agreed that ‘at St. Robert’s, it is important to pray, while 82% of parents were satisfied with the opportunities their child was given to pray at school.
The strengthening of the parish/school sacramental program continued to develop as the religious education co-ordinators from all four parish schools worked as a parish team and became the centre point for administration and co-ordination.

The strong link with our Parish community was again evident through the sacramental program. Parents were invited to enrol their child to receive each Sacrament after engaging in an Adult Faith Education session. Each session was engaging and gave parents the opportunity to engage with the facilitators and ask questions. When surveyed, 74% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that ‘parents are invited to be involved in the sacramental program.’

The Sacramental evenings were followed by parent/child activity evenings that focussed on each of the Sacraments, deepening both parent and children knowledge. The Sacramental celebrations of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation were strong expressions of the faith of our community, with large numbers in attendance for all celebrations.

A survey completed by our parents, indicated overall satisfaction with our Sacramental program.
Learning and Teaching

Goals and Intended Outcomes

GOALS
To improve student achievement in Number.
To enhance student engagement in their learning.
To improve student achievement in Spelling Component of Literacy.

OUTCOMES
* Median in NAPLAN to demonstrate at least one level’s growth over two years.
* All students deemed capable to demonstrate at least one level VELS growth over two years.
* Current high standards of P-2 reading to be maintained.

Achievements

In 2008 national benchmark results in reading, writing, spelling and numeracy indicate a high proportion of our students are at or above national benchmark standards. All students in Years 3 and 5 met the minimum standards in reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In numeracy all students in year 5 met the minimum standards with 97.4% of year 3 students meeting the required standard.

In 2006 all Year five students were at or above national minimum standards in reading and in 2007 95.2% of students were at or above the standards. This increased by 4.8% in 2008 indicating all students to be at or above the national minimum standard. In 2006 Year 3 reading results indicated 91.8% were at or above the national minimum standard. In 2007 this increased by 8.2% resulting in 100% of students achieving at or above national minimal benchmark standards and remained at this level in 2008. From 2006 through to 2008 Writing results indicated 100%, that is all students, were either at or above the national minimum standard. From 2006 through to 2008 Numeracy results for year five students indicated 100% were either at or above the national minimum standard.

In 2006 98% of year three students were at or above the minimum standards in mathematics. This figure increased by 2% to 100% in 2007. Year 3 numeracy decreased by 2.6% to 97.4% in 2008, a figure
indicative of a trend in numeracy across the state. Results for our school continue to maintain levels of achievements that are marginally higher than like schools across the system.

The Interactive Teamboards are now in use in all classrooms. They have brought a new dimension to learning and teaching. The teachers use them confidently on a daily basis across many curriculum areas. The students also enjoy using the Teamboards and their level of engagement when using them is high. The continued purchase of appropriate software has also assisted in developing many ICT skills when utilizing the Teamboards.

Professional development continues to be offered for staff in the area ICT. Most classes use the ICT lab on a weekly basis, accessing the broad range of programs purchased by the school and accessing the Internet for information and activities. Plans are in place to introduce scanners as well as numerous headsets in every classroom to further assist students in gaining necessary computer skills.

Once again in 2008 students were offered the opportunity to participate in the University of NSW Competitions. A variety of competitions were presented to the students for their participation in throughout the year. Some students achieved success by winning these competitions.

Four members of staff undertook school action research in 2008 which focused on “Personalised Learning for students in the 21st Century” As part of our school improvement plan these teachers took on the ICT module. The focus question for this action research was ‘How does the use of ICT tools personalise and engage students in inquiry learning?’ The goal being to help students through a learning centered approach where they are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. It was a very worthwhile experience where teachers and students were learning together. A report of this action research was presented to the St Robert’s School Advisory Board and staff at the commencement of 2009. The action research was also published in a Catholic Education Office document. It can be accessed at school through consultation with the Principal and associated staff members.

There is certainly a lot to be happy and proud of within the area of Learning and Teaching. It is safe to say that parents, students and teachers are well satisfied with the school’s progress in this area.

All staff continue to be involved in an extensive process to develop a
Learning Charter that caters for all students and learning styles. Staff are encouraged to engage in professional development activities suited to their needs and the needs of the school.

Having identified the need to further enhance the children’s achievements in the area of spelling staff engaged in professional activities relevant to developing successful strategies for the teaching and learning of spelling. A whole professional development day was successfully completed by all teaching staff and extensive time was devoted to “Spelling” at regular Professional Learning Team meetings.
Student Wellbeing

Goals and Intended Outcomes

GOALS
To maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment that supports the wellbeing of all members of the school community.
To consolidate and reinforce recently introduced upstream programs targeting social-emotional literacy, anti-bullying, physical wellbeing.

OUTCOMES
* That all members of the school community receive the support and opportunities required to raise levels of personal and communal resilience.
* That the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of students continue to be addressed explicitly via the ‘You Can Do It’, ‘Kids- Go For Your Life’, Drug Education Plan and ‘Bullying Register’ initiatives.
* That preserving and restoring wellbeing through restorative justice practices become an integral part of the school’s culture.

Achievements

The average attendance sits at approximately 96%; however, a trend of removing students during term time for both short and long term family vacations impacts considerably on this figure. The school prefers that family holidays be arranged during conventional vacation periods. Teachers generally encourage parents to maintain learning in literacy and numeracy areas, and provide some support strategies to this end.

The school continues to maintain a number of upstream programs and strategies to target overall levels of wellbeing amongst the student population. These include: “You Can Do It” and ‘Bounce Back’ (social/emotional literacy), “Kids Go For Your Life” (physical wellbeing) and “Restorative Practices” (positive discipline and healthy relationships). As well as these, annual student wellbeing and bullying surveys are administered to gather baseline data around sensitive wellbeing issues, including student satisfaction with the school. The ongoing aim of these surveys is to measure student satisfaction with the school and monitor trends over the next three years.
Data from the ‘Student Perceptions of School Connectedness’ survey indicated that overall student satisfaction among grades 3-6 children is approximately 86%, while 91% of children indicated that they look forward to being with other children at this school. Student/teacher relationships gained approval from the children, with 92% believing that children and teachers know each other pretty well, and 91% acknowledging that children get on well with the teachers.

A key focus for the year has been the development of positive and healthy relationships through the implementation of the ‘Restorative Practices’ approach to behaviour management. All members of staff have been provided with professional development opportunities, and have been encouraged to utilize key strategies in classroom, playground and staffroom settings.

The school’s Wellbeing Core Team continues to meet on a regular basis, to set goals and monitor outcomes of wellbeing initiatives. Members of the Core Team have been involved in developing draft policies in the wellbeing area, and have assisted with the completion of accreditation applications for the ‘Kids – Go For Your Life’ program awards. Following review of the lunch order menu, in consultation with the P&F, Advisory Board, and parent community, the school plans to make formal application next year for awards recognition.

At the curriculum level, the School-Based Drug Education Program was conducted P-6 in fourth term, together with other health-based integrated learning topics.
Leadership and Management

Goals and Intended Outcomes

GOALS
To build leadership capacity and accountability by empowering all staff.
To create a culture of partnership which encourages collaborative and participative decision making

OUTCOMES
*A formalised process of appraisal and recognition through structured Annual Review Meetings linked to personal and professional action plans for all staff.
*Clear and specific role descriptions with adequate time allocations for teachers, members of the leadership team and those in positions of leadership.
*A formal induction program for new staff.
*Improved communication between staff and leaders in the school.
*Regular, monthly Leadership meetings that focus on strategic planning for overall school direction.
*A more effective Consultative Committee.
*PLT meetings that provide opportunity for research, professional development, collaborative program planning and exploration of effective and practical learning and teaching ideas for all teachers.

Achievements

In keeping with our goal to build the leadership capacity and accountability of all staff and create a culture of partnership which encourages collaborative and participative decision making the school’s leadership team have adopted strategies that have sought to inform and involve all staff in all matters of school organization. All teaching staff agree that school leadership is consultative and inclusive of all teachers both part time and full time and 72% of staff now believe our communication processes are improving with various strategies implemented in 2008. A sense among staff that the student’s needs are managed well is supported by survey data that identifies 82% of staff as having a strong sense of achievement in this area.
Recognising the importance of good communication links between all members of staff, considerable efforts have been made to ensure that all staff members are kept up to date with everything relative to school organization and activities. 76% believe that there is a good process in place for making important decisions, The average attendance rate per staff member was a very healthy 90.8% indicating a high level of wellbeing amongst staff and staff retention although a little lower than previous years due to teacher retirements and relocation within the system remains high at 84%.

Although teachers do not seek recognition for their efforts, effective formal appraisal processes are considered an important aspect of leadership and management. It seems that most staff are satisfied with the quality of recognition received however leadership recognizes that this is an area that needs further development and refinement.

Professional development of staff continues to be a major focus with approximately $26000.00 expended on professional learning in 2008. Without exception all fulltime (15) and part time (3) teachers were provided with professional learning opportunities throughout the course of the year at an average cost of $550.00 per teacher. In addition to this non teaching staff including administration officers and aides were given opportunities to further develop their role related skills Whole school professional development for the year included activities on Restorative Practices, Spelling, Mathematics, Learning and Teaching and First Aide Certificate 3. Other professional activities undertaken by either individuals and small groups included professional learning experiences in Religious Education, Literacy, Reading Recovery, Middle school Literacy Assessment, Senior Maths, Information Communication Technology, Student Wellbeing, Indonesian, Physical Education, Leadership, Indigenous Studies and Personal Learning.

Teachers are encouraged to take up opportunities to advance their qualifications through further study. with 72% of staff having gained a Bachelor Degree, 20% have achieved higher qualifications in the form of Graduate Diplomas and Certificates with 4.5% attaining a Masters qualification.
School Community

Goals and Intended Outcomes

GOALS
To maintain and strengthen links within the St. Robert’s community.
To promote the parish/school, parish/home and home/school/parish network.
To establish links with the wider community.

OUTCOMES
* More focus groups of parents creating further opportunities for parent involvement.
* The Parents and Friends Association enhance their balance in fundraising and social activity within the school community.
* The Parents for Parents Program continues its support for families in the school community.
* More parent faith development opportunities within the school.
* A formal induction process for newly elected School Advisory Board members.
* Opportunities enabling participation of working parents.
* The Parents for Parents group widen their support network to include emergency support for the parish community.
* School/Parish links continue as high priorities of the school.
* Continue to support wider community project initiatives e.g., Legacy, MS Read-a-thon, Cancer Research, Auskick, Community Garden etc.

Achievements

Once again this year as has been the case in the past open honest and informed communication between the staff and the parents of our children continue to be an important aspect of the school. An environment that encourages and welcomes the discussion of parent’s views and concerns is most important and forges a genuine sense of partnership between teacher and parent. Open relationships between parents and teachers that encourages effective communication continues to provide the greatest catalyst for the overall development of our children. Reporting to parents via internal reporting systems, school newsletters, student incident reports, special mail outs, assembly announcements and personal notices or phone calls is embedded in school routine. Parent/teacher interviews and Parent Information evenings or sessions continue to play an important part in
ensuring that parents remain in touch with teaching and learning practices that have a bearing on their children’s educational, spiritual, physical and emotional, development and well being.

This year the reunification of the St Mary’s and St Margaret’s Parish have brought the four schools, St Mary’s, St Margaret’s, Christ the King and St Robert’s, closer together and the schools have maintained a close communication and shared and planned initiatives that have proven to be mutually beneficial for the schools. The Parish Sacramental Program is one example of this and the schools have come together on several occasions this year for the professional development of staff.

Program initiatives that positively benefit our children remain a key focus of the school. The Health Promoting School’s Program, Drug Education, The National Health Schools Framework, the Keys to Life and Go For Your Life programs were all included in our curriculum and continue to promote the importance of maintaining a healthy body, healthy mind and healthy relationships.

The reintroduction of The Student Representative Council has provided another opportunity for student representation and has proven to be a valued means of staff/student interaction. Issues raised at SRC meetings are brought to the attention of staff and action taken. An SRC report to the school community is now being offered at school assemblies after each meeting.

The School Advisory Board meets regularly and continues to provide an effective voice of the Parent community through the class representatives of the Board. Parents and Friends Association have once again been strong contributors both financially and in community building and remain dedicated to building a strong supportive school environment.

Staff had the opportunity to gather socially during the course of the year and according to surveys conducted data indicates that the majority of staff are happy with the level of social interaction among staff at the school (86%). They believe that we have a happy and friendly workplace (86%), and are confident that colleagues are interested and concerned about them (88%).

The spirit of partnership between our parents, teachers, children and the wider community is a satisfying aspect of our school.
Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Framework</th>
<th>Modified Cash $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recurrent income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School fees</td>
<td>235 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fee income</td>
<td>6500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private income</td>
<td>175 337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State government recurrent grants</td>
<td>424 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian government recurrent grants</td>
<td>1 567 488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total recurrent income</strong></td>
<td>2 408 469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recurrent expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries, allowances and related expenses</td>
<td>1 725 530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non salary expenses</td>
<td>598 697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total recurrent expenditure</strong></td>
<td>2 324 227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital income and expenditure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government capital grants</td>
<td>111 425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital fees and levies</td>
<td>51 329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other capital income</td>
<td>35 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total capital income</strong></td>
<td>197 878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total capital expenditure</strong></td>
<td>348 161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total opening balance</strong></td>
<td>1 563 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total closing balance</strong></td>
<td>1 535 907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the information provided above does not include the following items: System levies charged to individual schools, intra-systemic transfers and diocesan supplementary capital fund (SCF) supported borrowings for primary schools. The information provided is not comparable with other educational sectors. The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) is in the process of reviewing the Financial Questionnaire (FQ) during 2009 that may ultimately change the method of reporting these exclusions.
Future Directions

With an enrolment of 353 for the start of 2009 and projected enrolment figures indicating similar numbers to 2010 St Robert’s School continues to provide valued and quality education that is much sought after and respected throughout the local and wider community. In accordance with our school vision we have continued in our efforts to follow the example of Jesus. Supported by Faith, we encourage our parents and care for those in our community. We will continue to maintain our endeavour to educate all for their future as members of the Body of Christ, in a partnership with parents, the Parish Priest and the wider community.

The professional development of all staff will remain a priority. We are indeed fortunate to have a committed group of teachers who work hard to ensure that their teaching and professional practices are up to a standard that will provide the best teaching and learning for our children. All our teaching staff are encouraged to attend professional development activities relevant to their needs. It is our belief that the community understand the importance of teacher professional development and the need for teachers to attend days which take them away from school and particularly their class with the understanding that at all times replacement teachers continue to work with the children according to the program of work and activities set by the class teacher. It is not uncommon for me to see teachers working back late in order to fine tune the teaching and learning requirements for the replacement teacher. No doubt there are times where teachers would prefer not to spend the day away from their class but very rarely do they come away from a PD session not having gained valuable insights to their teaching.

The school has continued to maintain a physical environment that fosters best practice in all areas of school life. The completion of the resurfacing of the school oval with a synthetic all weather playing surface in the latter part of 2008 has proven to be a huge hit with the children with plans for further development and playground additions scheduled to take place in 2009. The classrooms and general buildings provide up to date state of the art facilities that are constantly audited for their effectiveness and operating conditions. In the past year the school has systematically upgraded classroom computers and various hardware to ensure that teaching and learning through the use of technology is at its optimum. Our aim is to continue to move through the classrooms with the intention of upgrading all hardware over a three to four year cycle.
As part of the Federal Governments Stimulus Program our school is awaiting confirmation of a major capital grant through the “Building an Education Revolution” (BER) Program. Architects have already been engaged and plans for the redevelopment of the School Community Center/ Library/ICT/ Science/Food Technology and Visual Arts room have been produced. The timeline for the project has been set and works are meant to begin some time in September.

The recent reunification of St Mary’s Parish has encouraged a stronger relationship between the schools in the parish and we are confident that we will continue to build upon this as the years progress, The four principals meet regularly with Father Dillon to discuss shared initiatives as do members of the individual schools Leadership and Religious Education coordinating teams. Parish Sacramental programs involving all four schools and the parish community have been successfully implemented this year and will continue to be an important consideration in the future.

The school will continue to review its policies and procedures relative to current trends and expectations with four significant policy developments the subject of current attention. A School Competitive Sport Representative Policy is in its final stages of development as is a unified Enrolment Policy for the four parish schools, and the school’s Uniform and Canteen Policies are both currently under review.