



# 2015 Annual Report

## St Joseph's School, Tara

*A Catholic co-educational school of the Diocese of Toowoomba*

*"Faith, Friendship and Honour"*

<b>Address</b>	3 Fry St PO Box 42 Tara QLD 4421	<b>Phone</b>	07 4665 3259
<b>Year Levels</b>	Prep–Year 6	<b>Fax</b>	07 4669 4669
<b>Enrolment</b>	47	<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:tara@twb.catholic.edu.au">tara@twb.catholic.edu.au</a>
<b>Principal</b>	Mrs Mary Porter (Acting)	<b>Boarders</b>	No
<b>Vacation Care</b>	No	<b>After School Care</b>	No

### Profile

St Joseph's Tara is a systemic school within the Diocese of Toowoomba. St Joseph's is a small rural school in Tara, catering for students from Prep to Year 6. Established in 1965 by the Sisters of St Joseph's, the parish school celebrated its fiftieth year of Catholic education in 2015.

### Our Mission

Our mission is to create a safe and caring learning environment based on Catholic and community values. Our students will grow and develop through positive learning experiences and will focus on the basic elements of Literacy and Numeracy. We have high standards in relation to behaviour and we expect our students will conduct themselves with Faith, Friendship, and Honour.

## **Recent Developments**

In 2015, students have enjoyed new desks and new carpet. All classrooms are attractive and air conditioned. The exterior of the school hall has been painted. The gardens have been updated to beautify the school environment.

## **Distinctive Curriculum Offerings**

The School uses QCAA accredited curriculum. Toowoomba Catholic Education Office (CEOT) approved Learning Area Programs are in place and operate on a two to three year cycle to match the school's multi-age learning context. Small class sizes and quality teacher aide support enable small group and individual learning to occur.

At St Joseph's, Religious Education is a Key Learning Area where students learn about Catholic history and traditions, prayer and spirituality and ways to live a meaningful life.

St Joseph's has a MacKillop Club that provides opportunities for students to work for social justice. Students 'Do their bit to make the world a better place for all' and contribute to community by putting into practice Mary MacKillop's motto of "Never see a need without doing something about it."

In conjunction with the Learning Support department, the school offers assistance to individual students and small groups in literacy programs such as MiniLit, MultiLit and First Steps. Literacy is further supported in the school by a visiting teacher librarian who assists school staff in developing and implementing a library program.

In addition, the school also has a music program with a specialist music teacher.

Student progress is reported to parents formally twice each year through report cards and informally throughout the year through meetings, open days and classroom displays. Parent teacher interviews occur twice each year. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's progress as needed throughout the year.

Although small, we are an extremely well-resourced school. The school has accessed funding and received financial support from the P&F to help provide new sports equipment, purchase literacy and numeracy materials that include hands-on learning equipment. Religious Education resources and library resources are regularly sourced to ensure students have access to quality materials that align with the curriculum and student needs and interests.



## **Use of Computers**

We have a wide range of ICT resources that help to integrate technology into the curriculum. Students have network and Internet and ICT is integrated across the curriculum. Each class has a bank of computers; desktop computers, laptops and iPads. Each learning environment has a smart board to enhance learning. The iPads have a range of educational applications to support student learning. Students have their own log on passwords and H Drives.

An acceptable use of the Learning Technology policy is in place. Parents and students agree and sign a commitment to use the internet in an acceptable manner.

Students participate in a range of school funded programs such as Athletics, IMaths and Sound Waves. The licences purchased by the school also allow the students to consolidate their learning buy using these programs at home.

All teachers have access to the individual computers supplied by the CEOT. Planning and assessment is recorded in the Diocesan Learning Profile, an electronic planning tool.

## **Students with Special Needs**

St Joseph's has a Special Needs Committee which operates on CEOT guidelines. The committee meet regularly. The school follows CEOT procedures in developing individual education plans and beneficial modifications to learning tasks.

A Learning Support teacher is provided for 7.5 hours per week. The learning support teacher supports teachers in meeting the needs of the students with special needs. The school provides opportunities for parents to be part of the support process.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

St Joseph's offers its students the opportunity to broaden their horizons in the arts and academic areas. St Joseph's is a part of the Small Schools District sporting competition and we participate in Cross-Country and Athletics Carnivals. Students can also trial for district sporting teams. Students are also able to participate in Mathematics, English and Spelling competitions.

St Joseph's School is active in the community taking part in ANZAC Day ceremonies, visiting the local retirement home and Kindergarten, raising awareness of and resources and funds for local and global causes and participating in the local Show, Fetes, Book Week Parade and sporting events.



As part of our faith development, students are encouraged to be of service to and for others by raising money for Missions and visiting the residents at the local retirement village, Tarcoola. These are just two examples of our service to the community.

Students enjoy a wide number of extra-curricular activities (sporting, cultural, academic and spiritual) to enrich their learning e.g. Physical education lessons, Reconciliations week & NAIDOC Week activities, music lessons, sports carnivals, coaching clinics, Josh Arnold song writing and performances, school concerts, excursions, Academic competitions, Book Week Activities, Cultural Days, Catholic Education Week celebrations and leadership and spirituality retreats.

## **Social Climate**

St Joseph's School offers a range of programs to:

- Foster and develop Faith, Friendship and Honour
- Develop personal and interpersonal skills
- Develop Leadership skills
- Create opportunities for students to enjoy their learning
- Create an environment of inclusion
- Promote and integrate IT across curriculum areas
- Encourage development and opportunities in Music, Art and Drama
- Provide a range of sporting and athletic programs and opportunities
- Maintain quality facilities and resources that enhance educational and social activities

St Joseph's provides a supportive environment where students are encouraged to problem solve and treat others with respect. The St Joseph's community strongly supports an anti-bullying philosophy practised in both the school and local community. The school uses a range of educative and proactive measures to deal with bullying. We communicate our expectations with parents through the newsletter, at information nights and through formal and informal discussions. We set high standards of behaviour and ask our parents to form effective partnerships with us to ensure balance between school and home. Any incidents of bullying are referred to a teacher. If there are any incidents involving violence or repeated incidents, a report is made to the Principal who then follows procedures supporting student protection as per the Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Education Student Protection Policy and Procedure. Parents are contacted. Students are guided by the school expectations to act with Faith, Friendship, and Honour. The school community collaboratively developed a new student Code of Conduct over the last semester of 2015.



## Parental Involvement

In operating a school in a small community, we rely on the support of the Parents and Friends Association. The P & F is an integral part of our school community. The P & F Association supports the school by contributing to resources to promote student learning and wellbeing. Parents assist with a range of activities including fundraising, tuckshop, library, reading groups, maintenance work, and providing a voice within the P & F organisation. We encourage all parents to be active members of the P & F.

## School Financial Information

The information on net recurrent income including:

- Federal Government recurrent funding
- Queensland Government recurrent funding
- Fee, charges and parent contributions
- Other private resources

Is available from: [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)

## Staff Composition

Workforce Composition	Total Teaching Staff	Total Non-teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	6	7	2
Full-time equivalents	5.6	2.5	0.4

## Teacher Qualifications

<i>Qualification</i>	<i>% of Teaching Staff</i>
Doctoral / Post Doctorate	0%
Masters	50.0%
Bachelor Degree	16.7%
Diploma	33.3%
Certificate	0%



## **Professional Development**

1. In-servicing for 2015 focused on the Australian Curriculum, student improvement in writing and continuing to work with the Diocesan Learning Profile (DLP).
2. Staff also completed professional development in the following areas: Student Protection, Behaviour Management, HSE, The Lenten Program, Catholic Identity and Ethos, Prayer, The Religious Education Curriculum, Spirituality, How to teach writing, Scootle Writing, first aid, Reading, Speech and Language, ICT and an Education Officer Curriculum Project.
3. The stated school Professional Development budget allocated in 2015 was \$5000.00

The amount expended in 2015 in GL 2-04404 Professional learning was \$72.73. Due to finances, economical (free) professional learning was sourced and provided by Education Officer Sue Keefer, an online Scootle writing program, school based personnel with expertise (Middle Leader and STBLC teacher) and CEOT inservice (Tonia Flanagan, Neil Carrigan, QELi Small School Leadership Program) and support from Our Lady of the southern Cross Dalby (Janelle Young- ACU- Writing).

The amount expended in TRS to attend or develop professional learning (GL: 2-04105) was \$3216.18

Total expended: \$3288.91

## **Average Staff Attendance**

The average staff attendance is 97.22%.

## **Staff Retention**

100%

## **Average Student Attendance Rate**

The average attendance rate for the whole school as a percentage in 2015 was 88.0%



### **Student Attendance for Each Year Level** (expressed as %)

<b>Prep</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
85.3	92.1	86.7	88.1	88.5	80.7	91.1

### **Description of How Non-Attendance is Managed by the School**

The school manages the administration of attendances and absences through the electronic roll marking system. Classroom teachers are responsible for the marking of the rolls each morning and afternoon.

Parents are asked to notify the school administration of any absences. Student absences are marked as "Unexplained" until a parent rings or send a note.

If students have been absent for two days, a phone call to the parents is made asking for an explanation of the absence.

During the term, unexplained absence records are sent to parents and parents are expected to return the forms with an explanation for absences.

### **National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Results**

<b>Year 3 Test Results (2015)</b>				
	<b>OUR SCHOOL AVERAGE</b>	<b>NATIONAL AVERAGE</b>	<b>STATE AVERAGE</b>	<b>Percentage of Students at or above the National Benchmark</b>
<b>Reading</b>	325	425.5	418.4	60
<b>Writing</b>	332	416.3	405.8	100
<b>Spelling</b>	274	408.8	395.7	60
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	322	430.5	433.2	80
<b>Numeracy</b>	315	397.8	392.2	80



<b>Year 5 Test Results (2015)</b>				
	<b>OUR SCHOOL AVERAGE</b>	<b>NATIONAL AVERAGE</b>	<b>STATE AVERAGE</b>	<b>Percentage of Students at or above the National Benchmark</b>
<b>Reading</b>	439	498.5	494.5	80
<b>Writing</b>	479	478.1	470.2	100
<b>Spelling</b>	424	498.1	489.2	80
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	446	503.1	499/8	100
<b>Numeracy</b>	^	^	_^	^

^ To maintain privacy of individual student information where there are fewer than five students tested, results are not provided.

### **Value Added**

- Outreach to the community – pastoral visits to local community groups around town and (where possible) outside of the local community.
- Small class sizes where students are given significant time and support by school staff.
- Social and Emotional support through social skilling program and buddy system between younger and older students.
- Inclusive enrolment policy that supports students with special educational needs, diverse cultures, and/or religious groups.
- A strong relationship with St Joseph’s College Toowoomba where the provision of resources and opportunities to be a part of specialised projects is offered.
- Ongoing professional and personal development for staff and parents.
- Participation in the beginning teacher mentor program.

### **Excellence in Catholic Education-School Renewal and Improvement Process**

School Renewal and Improvement is an on-going process of self-evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. It informs action planning at the school level to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Above all, Catholic schools must be good schools with a strong learning orientation and a strong sense of purpose. This process provides an opportunity for each school to



reflect on 4 Domain areas. Each of these domains has elements (24 in total) which are reviewed on a cyclical basis and plans for improvement developed if necessary.

In 2015, the elements of Partnership with Parish; Students with Additional Needs; Students and their Learning; Professional Relationships and Teamwork; Community Partnership & Ownership and ICT Resources was reflected on, reviewed and planned for strategically.

### **Parent Satisfaction**

*"The kids love coming to school."*

*"My boy feels safe here."*

*"My child's story and other writing has improved. She is better able to express her ideas and she enjoys this task."*

*"It is a place where my child is nurtured and respected."*

*"I am very happy with my daughter's learning."*

*"The school is doing a really good job with my children."*

***A hardcopy of this report is available by request from the Principal.***



