About This Report

St Finbarr’s is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report to the Parish School Community for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school’s Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office. This Report has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2014 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

The contents of this Report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6685 6342 or by visiting the website at www.bbplism.catholic.edu.au/
Principal's Message

The primary purpose of St Finbarr’s Catholic Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. St Finbarr’s offers students a Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the faith and spiritual growth of the students as well as opportunities to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school’s mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students’ achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2013. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards, in the school office and on class webpages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that St Finbarr’s has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- The school’s work as a professional learning community saw increased improvement in Mathematics results across the school.
- The school entered teams in the Maths Olympiad with excellent results.
- Large numbers of students performed well in a variety of external competitions.
- Year 3 and Year 5 students performed very well in the annual NAPLAN testing.
- A significant number of students participated in the Premier’s Reading Challenge.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school’s cultural program and community involvement:

- The first ever St Finbarr’s Arts Showcase was an outstanding success.
- Students participated in the annual Byron Bay ANZAC Day march.
- The school’s Outdoor Education and Excursion Program included a Year 6 trip to Canberra, providing an insight to students into Australian culture and democracy.
- St Finbarr’s students were very successful at the Lismore Music Society Eisteddfod.

Students performed well at various sporting events throughout the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights:

- A large number of students achieved at representative level in swimming, cross country and athletics.
- Large numbers of students took part in a range of representative trials in sports such as tennis, rugby, football, cricket and netball.
- Three students competed at regional level in cross country.
- The school’s swimming, cross country and athletics programs were very successful and encouraged full student participation.
There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Finbarr’s is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

John Wilson
Principal

A Parent Message

It has been a pleasure to see the links between the Parish and the school community being fostered, actively encouraged, and grow.

Christian values are embedded in the school's culture and it is obvious that every child, from Kinder on, is very familiar with Mary McKillop's "never see a need without doing something about it".

Fr Anthony regularly visits the school. We know his care and encouragement is much valued. The Sacramental Program has become a partnership between the school and the parish. This has facilitated the smooth inclusion of children who attend other schools in the parish area. The Principal’s weekly reports in the Parish Bulletin keep parishioners up to date with the school happenings.

Some of the most enjoyable highlights are the regular invitations to events at the school and at times parishioners have been able to assist. It is important to maintain these links. For some parishioners it is some years since their children attended St. Finbarr's but they remain interested and enjoy the connection. On a very practical level parishioners continue to contribute financially each week to the school. Parishioners look forward to continuing to enjoy this close relationship with the school.

Parent Involvement

In 2013 parent involvement has been an important part of enhanced partnering and collaboration in the school community. This has been evident as parents have taken a hands-on role such as: providing much valued voluntary assistance in the classroom; assisting with guided reading in Kindergarten, providing support at school sporting events; at an informal level through the role of class parents; co-ordination of the Arts Showcase in partnership with the Deputy Principal and through events such as Mother’s and Father’s Day and the annual Christmas Fair fundraiser.

General Report

The Forum has been a cohesive and congenial group this year. The decision to implement the Forum Norms enhanced our cohesiveness and effectiveness in meetings. This has ensured we focus on timeliness and effective meeting protocols. My sincere thanks to all parents who contributed in 2013.

Mrs Ann McCabe
Acting Chair, St Finbarr’s Parish School Forum
This Catholic School

St Finbarr’s is located in Byron Bay and is part of the Holy Spirit Parish which serves the communities of St Finbarr’s (Byron Bay), St John’s (Mullumbimby) and St Kevin’s (Bangalow). School families are drawn from the towns and communities of Byron Bay, Suffolk Park, Ewingsdale, Bangalow and the surrounding district. Last year the school celebrated 97 years of Catholic education.

The Parish Priest Fr Anthony Lemon is involved in the life of the school.

St Finbarr’s is a parish school with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through such activities such as:

- the Sacramental Program
- weekly Altar Serving teams
- weekly Children’s Liturgy managed by the school staff
- regular Family Masses
- the of sharing meals from the ‘Heart Freezer’ with parishioners.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text “To Know, Worship & Love”. Catholic life and culture permeate school life with 2.5 hours of religious education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school’s prayer life. The aims and direction of St Finbarr’s parish school is guided by Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate the essence of this statement into all aspects of parish school life. Religious Education is always given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.
St Finbarr’s caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>TOTALL2013</th>
<th>TOTALL2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE (Language background other than English)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Curriculum

The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

The school aims to develop in students a love of learning and engage them actively and cooperatively in the process of life-long learning through the core values of respect, honesty, personal best, encouragement, teamwork, commitment and belonging.

Our teachers work collaboratively in professional learning teams where they closely scrutinise student assessment data and share effective teaching strategies in order to assist students to achieve high levels of learning.
Student Performance in National Testing Programs

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 34 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 31 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. In Year 3, students who achieve Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieve at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Finbarr’s students in each band compared to the State percentage.

At St Finbarr’s, school and student performance is closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and SMART 2 Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Finbarr’s students in each band compared to the State percentage.
### Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Year 5 NAPLAN results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that students have performed well in 2013. A number of initiatives have impacted on these results including the implementation of a range of teaching strategies to improve student understanding of literacy and numeracy. The school began a collaborative approach to analysing student assessment data in Mathematics and uses this information to share highly effective pedagogy and implement discreet interventions where necessary.

NAPLAN results will be further analysed to inform and guide the direction for future improvements. The high percentage of students achieving minimum standards, compared to State figures, is testament to the focus on curriculum differentiation strategies implemented and developed over the last two years.
## Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total number of non-teaching staff employed in the school.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All teachers have been involved in professional development activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole-staff development day professional learning activities in 2013 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Days</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning Communities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kylie Lipscombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian Curriculum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>School leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Retreat</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>School leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proclaim Spirituality Event</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Diocese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Australian curriculum</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>School leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Review and Development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>School leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:
- Early Learning Plans
- John Hattie Visible Learning
- Jim Knight Instructional Coaching
- Kylie Lipscombe Professional Learning Community Coaching
- Autism Spectrum Disorder training
- Down Syndrome training

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $6,585 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.
Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance figure is 93.84%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

There were three new staff employed for the 2013 school year as a result of increased enrolments and staff movements.

Student Attendance

School attendance is always high. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher immediately the child returns to school. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the principal to discuss their leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2013 was 90.2%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance rates by Year group</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Policies

School policies are reviewed regularly. In 2013 the following policies were reviewed, updated or newly created:

- First Aid Policy
- Homework Policy
- Risk Management Policy
Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at St Finbarr’s requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.

Children who turn five by 30 June are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school’s website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

The school’s Student Welfare Policy is contained within our Growing Together as Friends program which is part of the overarching school framework. As St Finbarr’s community members we share beliefs and values and grow together through shared experiences. This policy outlines how the values espoused in our Mission Statement guide us in our teaching and management of behaviour and relationships to truly make St Finbarr’s a place of belonging and nurturing that will enable everyone to learn.

The policy is lived out through various elements of the program such as school values, student awards, social/emotional competencies, personal development education and by creating a positive and caring classroom and school environment.

Discipline Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and ensures that school practices respect the dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms of individual students. The policy is contained within the Growing as Friends program and is discussed with students, staff and parents on a regular basis. Reminders about the policy are regularly included in school newsletters.

Students, staff and parents have a clear understanding of the expectations articulated through this policy and are supportive of the need to provide a safe and caring learning environment. The policy acknowledges teacher and student rights and responsibilities and is based on the Gospel teachings of love for self and others.
Complaints and Grievance Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. The policy is available at the front office or from the school's website.

School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five-year Strategic Plan. 2013 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school's main goals and priorities were to:

- improve learning results for all students in Mathematics;
- build collective ownership for the learning of all students through collaboration in professional learning teams;
- lead the community through the review and development process to build an effective five year school improvement plan.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways.

- St Finbarr’s teaches a new component of a school value to students every week within Program Achieve and the Five Keys to Success.
- These values form part of the ‘Eight that Makes Us Great’ and students are rewarded on the playground when they are seen promoting one of the values.
- At weekly assemblies two students are awarded the Finnie’s Finest Certificate for demonstrating the school value of the week.
- An integrated Personal Development and Health program incorporates social and emotional competencies and the school values.
- The Mary MacKillop award is presented to a student who “sees a need and does something about it” each fortnight at assembly.
- The Mini Vinnies team organises opportunities for awareness raising and fundraising each term for those living in poverty or recovering from natural disasters.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:
The school conducted a comprehensive review and development process involving all members of the school community. The outcome was a thorough plan for school improvement for the coming five years. Elements of the process included the following:

- All staff completed a survey.
- All Stage 3 students completed a survey.
- All parents were provided with a survey and 75% were completed.
- Staff met regularly over two terms to use this survey information to design effective goals for the school’s improvement.
- The parish School Forum assisted with the survey design and monitoring of the review process.
- The Catholic Schools Office validated the process and the resulting school improvement plan.

Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2013 is presented below:
2013 INCOME - St Finbarr’s Primary School - BYRON BAY

- Govt. Capital Grants: 0%
- Other Capital: 7%
- Fees: 10%
- Other Private Income: 4%
- Grants - Commonwealth Govt: 56%
- Grants - State Govt: 23%

2013 EXPENSE - St Finbarr’s Primary School - BYRON BAY

- Salary & Related Expenditure: 75%
- Other Expenditure: 23%
- Capital Expenditure: 2%