Year: 2015
School name: Sacred Heart Catholic School
School sector: Catholic
School type: Primary
Year range: Kindergarten – Grade 6
Total enrolments: 171
Girls: 96
Boys: 75
Indigenous students: 29
Teaching staff: 16
Full-time equivalent teaching staff: 10.8
Non-teaching staff: 14
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff: 6

Suburb: Geeveston
Address: 4690 Huon Highway, Geeveston, 7116
Telephone: 03 6297 1313
Fax: 03 6297 1990
Email: shg.principal@catholic.tas.edu.au
Principal: Mr Luch Brighella

School Profile

Sacred Heart Catholic School is a co-educational school (K-6) with an enrolment of 171 students that has provided quality, child-centred education in the Huon Valley for 78 years. The school is situated on a magnificent 10 acre bushland property about 3km from the township of Geeveston. Today a dedicated and very professional staff carry on the spirit and traditions of our founding order; The Sisters of St Joseph. The school has an excellent educational reputation in the local and wider community. The school has a very comprehensive Aboriginal Education Program, and also participates in many community events and activities. Sacred Heart is a collaborative environment where staff and students work in teams, and learning takes place in small interpersonal groups. The school offers an extensive range of specialist programs including LOTE, Physical
Education, Art, Drama, Music, Band, Dance, Outdoor Education, Learning Support and counselling. Information Computer Technology is strong throughout the school with ICT fully integrated across all learning areas. In 2015, our one to one iPad program continued for Grades 3-6 and the number of iPads in K-2 has been increased. The school offers many opportunities for parents to work in partnership with the school, and this strengthens communication and promotes a real sense of community throughout the school.

Governance

The Sacred Heart Catholic School Advisory Board assists the Principal with the management of the school as an institute of Catholic Education and where possible, assists with major school initiatives and developments.

In 2015, the Sacred Heart Catholic School Advisory Board was:

Board chair: Mrs Fiona Steel
Treasurer: Mrs Fiona Donato
Secretary: Mrs Fiona Donato
Members:
- Mr Adrian Short
- Mrs Karan Spilling
- Mr Bashir El-Tahche
- Mr Steven Richter

Ex Officio:
Principal: Mr Luch Brighella
Parish Priest: Father Michael Tate

Catholic Life and Mission

All staff and students joined in the celebration of Mass on many occasions throughout the year through our monthly Mass program that was very well supported by our parish priest Fr Michael Tate. This included our Commencement Mass, and also celebrating the Feasts of the Sacred Heart and St Mary MacKillop. We also had a Thanksgiving Mass where all in our community had the opportunity to express their gratitude for the wonderful year experienced by all. Children from Grades 3–6, attended the Catholic Education Week Mass at St Mary’s Cathedral celebrated by Archbishop Julian Porteous, along with students from many other Catholic schools. Masses are prepared by different teaching teams thus giving each team the opportunity to do this a number of times over the year. The Feast Day of St Mary MacKillop provided a wonderful opportunity for our community to connect with our Josephite history and charism through this celebration.

Classes also came together regularly for our school prayer services held on Tuesday afternoons and also at the beginning of assemblies. Our Grade 6 class once again attended the World Day of Peace Liturgy hosted in 2015 by the Christian Church in Geeveston.

The school has continued to run its Junior Joeys Program for students in Grades 4-6. These children gathered regularly to connect with our Josephite charism and organize fund-raising events responding to the famous motto of St Mary
MacKillop; “Never see a need without doing something about it”. Our Junior Joeys also visited Eldercare Aged Care spending time with the residents and making Christmas cards with them. They assisted with the Apple Drive that raised over $3000. This was a great opportunity for our Junior Joeys to help raise funds for Caritas and local outreach group, Geeveston Cares.

In 2015, a Chaplaincy Program, funded by the Federal Government, was introduced at Sacred Heart supporting the social and emotional needs of many of our students. Mrs Leanne Hall was employed as our School Chaplain and coordinated a range of activities and programs including the Rainbows Program that supports students at our school experiencing grief in their lives.

School in the Life of the Parish Diocese

In 2015 a number of children received the sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist in the Parish. These students were prepared at Sacred Heart by teacher/AP, Mr Ryan Kinder and Father Michael Tate. This was certainly a time of celebration for both our school community and the wider Huon Valley parish community.

During the first term the students raised significant funds for Project Compassion ($2000), The Nepal Earthquake Appeal ($2000) and Geeveston Cares ($400). The children saw these as great opportunities to help others in our world whether they be local, within Australia or in developing countries overseas. Much needed funds were raised by selling apples and having our Caritas Games Day.

Spirituality Programs

In 2015 a number of opportunities were provided for enriching experiences in spirituality. Staff were able to attend a number of workshops at the Catholic Education Conference offered by the TCEO. We were also fortunate to have Fr Michael Tate provide a number of staff spirituality sessions after school throughout the year. Sister Margaret Henderson conducted a Courage to Be, staff spirituality day at Mary Knoll and four staff members were able to attend Josephite Colloquiums in both Tasmania and Sydney. These were very enriching experiences for all who attended.

2015 saw the continuation of our Breakfast Club that offered warm Milo and toast every morning to students at our school. Banjos Bakery and Foodbank Tasmania generously supported this free program. Students, staff and parents also volunteered each week in the service of others.

Eddie Rice Camps Tasmania continued to support students from Sacred Heart with school holiday camps and the Head to Heart program. These experiences supported children who do not often have the opportunity to attend camps and activities.

Parent Participation

Parents at Sacred Heart volunteered in many different ways. They assisted in classrooms, with programs like MultiLit, on excursions and camps, with the
Veggie Garden, Breakfast Club, reading, Library, Sporting events, the P&F Association and School Board to name but a few. We were very fortunate to have so many parents so actively involved at our school.

During the year we commenced our new playground development providing a range of new play experiences for our students. Many parents volunteered their time and expertise to be part of the Playground Development Team or to attend working bees providing in kind support for this new project. The school was very grateful for the generous support of our school families.

Our Parents and Friends Association continued to actively support our teaching and learning programs through fund-raising events, like the Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day gift stalls, the Trailer Raffle and a school disco. The Trailer Raffle was very successful and the P&F were able to fund the purchase of many new resources for classrooms and ICT resources. The P&F also donated $20,000 to financially support the new school playground development. They also continued to support our Move Well Eat Well Program by sponsoring the purchase of fruit and veggies for Tasty Tuesday platters and fruit stations at school sporting events.

The School Board led by Fiona Steel has continued to be a wonderful support to the Principal and the school community. The Board met monthly to assist with planning, policies, financial operations and new developments. The Board has worked tirelessly to ensure that our school is affordable for all families and that fee assistance is provided when necessary respecting the dignity of the parents within our school community. The School Board has worked hard to improve our financial operation with good successes over the year. In 2015 our School Board provided continued support and guidance with our school buses that provides free transport to and from our Sacred Heart for the students.

Our parents also supported many community and school events including:

- ANZAC Day services at Geeveston, Dover and Huonville.
- The Huon Show and many other local community events.
- Huon & Channel and STCPSSA carnivals
- The Schools Triathlon
- The Huon Valley School Music Concert
- Sporting Schools after school sports programs

Our Learning Community

Our Learning and teaching program continues to roll out the Australian Curriculum and staff has been well supported with professional learning opportunities both at school and through the support provided by the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office.

In 2015, our major focus was around Literacy; particularly reading comprehension and oral language. To support our reading program, resources were directed to providing quality literature that students could easily access in their learning areas. New libraries continued to be resourced in classrooms and new programs like the Daily 5 continued with great success. Literacy Programs
like Letters and Sounds continued and new staff members were supported with quality professional learning opportunities and Leadership/TCEO support.

The School Wide Positive Behaviour Program continued to flourish in all learning areas around the school. It was very reassuring to see that students are no longer just responding to rewards, but are just being positive, safe and respectful members of our school community because it is the right thing to do.

Specialist programs continued with LOTE, PE, Art, Music and Library not only fulfilled the teacher release time requirements but also provided quality programs for our students from Kinder – Grade 6. Back to back release times provided excellent opportunities for teachers to plan and carry out a multitude of classroom responsibilities. The introduction of Visual Arts, Drama and Band in 2015 was in direct response to feedback received from parents, students and staff through our last School Improvement process in 2014. These new initiatives have been very well received by our students in all classes.

**Literacy and Numeracy**

Sacred Heart’s Literacy and Numeracy results in 2015 highlighted the extensive work and commitment of staff to provide a quality teaching and learning program for our students. Teachers have spent many hours unpacking data and using it to inform their planning and preparation.

**NAPLAN RESULTS 2015**

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PAT, PIPs and ENI Testing is conducted throughout the year by class teachers and our Learning Support teacher, to assist teachers with valuable data to inform their planning of a differentiated program for all students in their care.

Two written reports with A-E ratings were sent home to parents throughout the year and two Parent Teacher interviews were offered.
Leadership

There are many opportunities that support leadership throughout the school. Our Leadership Team works incredibly hard to support, staff, students, parents and the learning and teaching program. I am very grateful for the many and varied responsibilities carried out by our Leadership Team members; Cate Doherty, Ryan Kinder and Ronita Barratt. Their dedication and supportive approach ensures that school priorities in Religious Education, Mission, Literacy, curriculum, well-being and admin are carried out in an efficient manner.

Staff are encouraged to take up leadership responsibilities in the following teams:

- Teaching teams
- Aboriginal Education
- School Environmental Team
- Move Well – Eat Well
- School sport

Opportunities for student leadership are provided in the following areas:

1. School Captains / House Captains / Band Captains (Grade 6)
2. Student Representative Council (Grades 3-6)
3. Aussie Sports Leaders (Grade 6)
4. Junior Joeys (Grades 4-6)
5. Green Heart Warriors (Prep – 6)

Sustainability

In 2015, Sacred Heart continued to develop a Sustainability Program within the school. A recycling program has been implemented across the school with a grant from the Huon Valley Council. Thirty fruit trees have been planted around the school and a forty tree apple orchard has been established. A plantation of blueberries and raspberries has also been planted. Veggie gardens continue to flourish and chickens have been introduced with the chicken coup built with Aboriginal children as their PLP project. Class teachers have received curriculum support from our school sustainability officer, Anna Demarco and a number of school sustainability events have been introduced. These include: Earth Hour promotion, power free teaching days, a sustainability fashion parade and an Eco Week program. Our school environmental group; The Green Heart Warriors has grown to over 40 children and meet weekly to discuss and promote sustainability initiatives at our school.

Sacred Heart has further strengthened its relationship with Catholic Earthcare Australia, particularly through the Assisi Pilot Program. In Term 4, our school hosted a 3 day permaculture program for a group of 20 people from schools, the TCEO and Catholic Earthcare Australia. A school energy audit has been completed and an Energy Champions Program has been established to save the amount of electricity consumed at Sacred Heart.
Aboriginal Education

In 2015, all classes took part in our Aboriginal unit of work; Weaving our Stories. Teachers were well supported with their curriculum planning in this unit by our Aboriginal Key Teacher, Ronita Barratt. In addition to the History and Literacy components of this unit, Aboriginal Community Groups (mixed grouping of children from Kinder – 6) designed and created a piece of Aboriginal artwork made solely from recycled materials. These were presented by each community group at our culminating performance. A whole school Aboriginal excursion day was held at Kent Beach Dover, where the children we able to take part in a range of Aboriginal art, craft and cultural activities all run by Aboriginal, non-teaching staff members from Sacred Heart and local Aboriginal artist, Leigh Oates. Our 30 Aboriginal students were well supported with their PLPs, by Aboriginal Key Teacher, Shae Longey. Feedback about PLPs from students and their families was very positive. A new Aboriginal bushland garden was completed with the help of students, staff and parents as a joint Aboriginal and Sustainability project.

School Improvement

In 2015, Sacred Heart Catholic School continued to respond to the TCEO model for School Improvement in the following domains:

- Catholic Culture and Ethos
- Leadership
- Learning Environment
- Curriculum and Teaching
- Student Learning and Achievement

This process provides a framework for goal setting and action based on feedback received from stakeholders in the community. It provides a sound foundation for decision-making, policy development and the implementation of systemic strategic development and imperatives.

Sacred Heart has engaged its key stakeholders in a way that responds well to the School Improvement Process, thus ensuring that the school plans strategically for the future needs of the school. There are opportunities for this to occur at Board, Leadership, Staff, P&F Association, Student Leadership and Team meetings. Surveys are organized, particular after regular school events to gain feedback. The process has been school based, learning centered and future orientated.

School Improvement at Sacred Heart Catholic School is driven by a desire to enhance student learning by engaging and involving the community in critical reflection.

Pastoral Care

Our Vision at Sacred Heart Catholic School promotes that all within our community can develop a relationship with God and be witness to Christ by living the Gospel values whilst promoting peace and tolerance. All in our community can work together to provide a safe, supportive, encouraging and
welcoming environment. We acknowledge the role of parents as the primary educators of their children and strive to promote a school environment where Christian values are respected and celebrated.

Students in Grade 6 follow the ‘Making Jesus Real Program’ that provides a values based approach to teaching religion in a language that our children can both relate to and understand. The program is based on children taking responsibility for their lives now and into the future.

Sacred Heart continues to work closely with a number of agencies in the area, especially those provided through our strong community partnership with the Geeveston Child Family Centre. In 2015 Mrs Jane McKie was our school psychologist working with vulnerable students and their families and offering a range of support programs to assist their social and emotional well-being.

Our connections with the local schools at Geeveston and Dover continued with all schools coming together at Sacred Heart to participate in the Bravehearts Program.

**Building Works**

In 2015, with financial support from the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, Sacred Heart was able to complete a number of minor projects to fully complete the building programs of recent years. These projects included new roof works to sections of the K-2 classrooms, recladding to the exterior of the Josephite Learning Centre and some plumbing and ventilation works.

The school commenced its new playground development with the existing oval being transformed to provide a range of diverse play experiences that our students would find enjoyable and challenging. These included a new bike track, the establishment of a loose parts play container, a giant sandpit with pirate ship and water pump, a 30 metre long rope and tyre suspension bridge, new swings, an old truck with a performing stage and a dry creek bed. A number of the projects were completed in 2015 and further works are scheduled for 2016.

This Report was prepared by:
Mr Luch Brighella
Principal
Sacred Heart Catholic School
April 2016