



Catholic  
Schools Office  
DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

# ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

# 2015

SERVICE † LEADERSHIP † JUSTICE  
*Together in Christ*



## St Brigid's Primary School, RAYMOND TERRACE

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## About the Annual School Report

St Brigid's Primary School is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) as a member of the Catholic system in the Diocese of Maitland - Newcastle.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development in 2015 and gives information about 2016 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act, 2008.

The information in this Report is complemented by the Catholic Schools Office website and school websites where other publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained.

# Messages from Key School Bodies

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## Principal's Message

This Annual Report outlines the many successes during the 2015 school year at St Brigid's Parish School Raymond Terrace. This report is an overview of the achievements and activities during the past year.

St Brigid's Parish School has a proud history of educational continuity and tradition, serving the community of Raymond Terrace and Port Stephens region since 1850. The school is housed on a site mixed with heritage listed and modern buildings. These buildings are surrounded by a garden setting.

During 2015 St Brigid's School continued to have close and frequent ties with the local parish. The regular support of Father Kevin Kiem allowed the St Brigid's Parish and school to have a constructive, proactive relationship.

Highlights of 2015 were the celebrations to mark 165 years of Catholic education on this site in Raymond Terrace. It was discovered that a Catholic school was established in 1850, then was taken over by the Sisters of Mercy in 1890. As well as this, the school Spring Fair was a great success financially, and a wonderful community event.

The parent body, particularly the P&F Association continued to support St Brigid's. Their support made educational projects a reality. The staff of St Brigid's again were the driving force behind the excellence this year. Their passion and commitment to Catholic education at St Brigid's School is very noticeable and appreciated.

## Parent Body

### President's Report

Firstly I would like to say what a privilege it has been to hold the role of president in 2015 and be of service to our school community.

2015 has been a great year in many ways. In March saw the celebrations of 165 years of history for our school with a liturgy and dinner involving past and present students and staff, and a book to mark the occasion.

The year continued on a high note with P&F organising an Easter raffle, mother's day and father's day stalls, discos, helping out with those affected by the storm and floods in Dungog, and of course the Spring Fair.

It was a huge year for the P&F and without the amazing fundraising committee, the treasurer, the secretary, and everyone that was on board, it would not be possible. I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to everyone.

I am a true believer in life of what you give, you receive. People give of themselves for many reasons, some just feel the need to help as natural caregivers and nurturers, and some enjoy the opportunity to socialise. The giving also helps our children and the community. Regardless of our reasons for giving and being in service to others, above all true giving from the heart lifts the spirits of the giver and receiver, and creates a spirit of positivity.

I would like to thank David, the staff, and the students of the school for their continued support and encouragement to our P&F, as I feel we all work as a team for the betterment of all.

I would like to wish all of you and the extended community of our school all the best for 2016.

Monique Malone

## Student Body

The school parliament consists of twelve (12) Year 6 children who have an individual focus around St Brigid's. The areas of focus are Technology, Environment, Sport, Health and Welfare, Fundraising and Entertainment, and Communication. The school parliament, as well as other Year 6 students, carried out various civic responsibilities such as conducting assemblies, supervising creative play space, attending official functions and welcoming visitors.

The school parliament of St Brigid's supports the Principal and teachers providing a link between the staff and students, and setting a good example.

## SCHOOL FEATURES

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### History of the school

The first Catholic school was built in Raymond Terrace in 1850. In 1890 St Brigid's was then established and administered by the Singleton Sisters of Mercy. Since that time extensions to the building site took place in 1920 and then a major building development of five classrooms occurred in the 1950's.

During the 1990's the school was further developed and expanded due to the area demand for Catholic education. During 2010 the relocation of classes from the hall side to the church side was completed. The new hall was completed early 2011.

The foundation stones of the first Catholic school are preserved in a wall in the current school library.

### Location/Drawing Area

St Brigid's is a co-educational K-6 Systemic Primary School in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. We service the community of Raymond Terrace and Port Stephens. The school is housed in a garden setting with many open playgrounds. The buildings are a mixture of heritage listed and modern designs.

# Catholic Identity and Mission

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## Catholic Imagination and Spirituality

St Brigid's School was founded by the Sisters of Mercy. Their faithful commitment to Catholic Education in Raymond Terrace and its surrounds has provided us with the rich heritage of which we are very proud. Even though the demographic of the school population has changed much over the years, grandchildren and great grandchildren of our pioneering families are attending St Brigid's today. The stained glass window from the former convent chapel has pride of place in the new school hall. This year we are celebrating the 165th anniversary of the school opening. We will be holding various events to highlight this occasion. These include a Liturgy and a *Back to St Brigid's* under the stars dinner. Being Catholic in St Brigid's school means inspiring each other to the fullness that comes from recognising the wonder and joy of God's world in each other and creation.

## Family, Parish and Diocesan evangelising and catechesis

St Brigid's has continued to have a rich liturgical life. The school year began with our opening school liturgy. New students, parliamentarians, staff and parents were welcomed and blessed for the journey throughout the year. Our school theme for 2015 is 'Remember My Love'. This theme was chosen to incorporate our school's 165th anniversary as well as the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli.

At our whole school liturgies we involve the students, parents, parishioners and staff to share what it means to belong to a Catholic community.

On various feasts and significant days in the life of the school, the community comes together to celebrate. Teachers work together with the Religious Education Coordinator to plan liturgies that occur regularly throughout the term. In 2015 the school celebrated often as a faith community, and these celebrations included the opening School Liturgy, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Harmony Day, Holy Week, Easter, St Mary MacKillop, Catholic Schools Week, Mission Week, the Gifting Mass, Year 6 Farewell, and the Closing School Liturgy. Our ANZAC Day liturgy has particular meaning as parents at our school are involved in active military service overseas.

## Christian Discipleship

Representatives from Year 6 attended the Diocesan Mission Mass and Catholic Schools Week Mass. Students in Year 4 to 6 attended Friday morning Mass with the parish on a regular basis.

One way to achieve our goal of strengthening school, parish and community links with parents is through the promotion and encouragement of greater participation at school liturgical celebrations.

Parents were encouraged to join their children for class Masses and the Liturgy of the Word throughout the year.

During 2015 St Brigid's School continued to strengthen our links with the St Brigid's Parish by being involved in weekend liturgies. Each grade help coordinate a Sunday liturgy. These liturgies allow for families from the school to celebrate with the wider parish community.

Prayer features strongly in the daily life of St Brigid's. Each day we gather as a whole school to pray our school's morning and afternoon prayers. Class prayer is creative and features formal, informal and meditative prayer experiences. In 2015 the Family Prayer Kits were introduced. Each week a student has the opportunity to take home the prayer kit. It contains suggestions for family prayer and action.

## Religious Education and Curriculum

Religion is taught daily through a wide variety of strategies such as dance, drama, research group work (incorporating information technology), art and music. Teaching and learning in Religious Education at our school follows the Diocesan Guidelines. The teaching programs are based on the Diocesan Units of Work Consistent with other subjects within the curriculum, the program is outcomes-based and seeks to ensure a breadth and depth of content from Kindergarten to Year 6. The Stage Three students began working with the trial units.

The Year 5 students were involved in a leadership day. This day involved the training for the Mighty Mate Program.

Members of staff are involved in furthering their religious studies through the Masters of RE.

During 2015 the staff attended a spirituality day which was initiated by the CSO Religious Education Team and lead by Richard Leonard The weekly staff prayer reflection held each Friday morning, allowed for group prayer and discussion.

Bernadette Gibson presented an overnight retreat based around the Beatitudes. This was a wonderful opportunity to share community and spirituality as a whole staff.

### Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Raising the awareness of the needs of others is an important aspect of our response to the Gospel. Social justice perspectives are developed through:

- Project Compassion
- St Vincent de Paul Gifting Mass
- St Vincent de Paul Competition
- International Children's Day Concert/Mission Day
- Participation in 'You Can Do It' Program
- Mighty Mates Programme
- Catholic Mission Partners
- School support of school in East Timor through Mercy Works

The 'Seasons for Growth' program was once again conducted successfully by a team of staff members. The aim of this program is to give children a chance to understand their grief, which might be a result of the loss of a family member through death, divorce, or separation.

## Student Profile

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The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

LBOTE*	SWD*	Indigenous
38	36	28

\*Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE); Students With Disabilities (SWD)

### Enrolment policy

St Brigid's Primary School follows the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office *Enrolment Policy 2013*. This Enrolment Policy has been devised in order to accommodate the needs of families seeking a Catholic education. It aims to set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices and assist the system of Catholic schools to provide schooling, where possible, for all Catholic children who seek enrolment, cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources and to encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Copies of the Policy are available from the school, or from the Catholic Schools Office website. Parents concerned about school fees should ensure they make contact with the school. Diocesan provisions (including standard discounts for those with a Health Card) exist to help in this area, and the Principal can also exercise discretion where genuine need exists.

### Actual Enrolments 2015

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
K	80
Year 1	61
Year 2	73
Year 3	46
Year 4	58
Year 5	40
Year 6	55
Total	413

### Student Attendance - K to 6 - PDF

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2015

K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	School Average
94	95	95	95	95	93	93	94

## Managing Student Non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents and guardians, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. The compulsory years of schooling is age 6 to 17. Principals and school staff, in consultation with students and their parents, will usually be able to resolve issues relating to non-attendance. While parents should be reminded of their legal obligations under the Education Act, (1990), the welfare of the student must be the focus of this consultation. The most effective means of restoring and maintaining regular school attendance includes sound attendance monitoring practices and regular follow-up of unexplained absences by contacting parents promptly. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of additional school based strategies including student and parent interviews, reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program, development of a school-based attendance improvement plan, referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies and support from school - based personnel. If a range of school-based interventions has been unsuccessful, support may be requested by referring individual cases of unsatisfactory attendance to the Catholic Schools Office.

## Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

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### Student Welfare Policy

Our approach at St Brigid's is basically to be proactive rather than reactive. We base our policies and procedures around Restorative Justice which focuses on 'Rights, Rules, Responsibilities and Routines'. The children in each grade develop their own rules and responsibilities from these. As well, we have the 'You Can Do It' programme with the key concepts of confidence, communication, getting along, and persistence reinforced. We also have various awards, reward days and stickers to help motivate the children each day. The underlying concept to all these programmes is building resilience in the child.

### Discipline Policy

During 2015 the 'Warning Slip' programme was continued and revised. This programme directly impacts on negative behaviour. Fundamentally, it is to track the behaviour of children both frequency and specific area of concern. If a child receives 2/3 warning slips, parents are contacted. If a child receives 5 warning slips, they are placed on a Level 2 contract which monitors the child over one week. We also have a Level 3 contract for more serious incidences.

At St Brigid's, we hope the discipline fostered at this school is an extension of what is expected at home, and we encourage our parents to support it. Parents are welcome to view our discipline policies in the school library and obtain copies from the administration office.

The full text of the School's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers. *St Brigid's Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy* is reviewed regularly and is available on the school website.

### Complaints and Grievances

The school has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy (2013), developed to provide a consistent approach for all Diocesan schools. This policy aims to address the concerns of Parents / Carers and the wider community. These concerns may include children's learning, behaviour and welfare, school organisation and management, student health and safety issues.

A copy of this policy and the informative parent brochure is available from the school office, school website or is available on the Catholic Schools Office website.

## School Improvement

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### School Improvement Plan

The 2015 School Improvement Plan focused on the following areas:

- Promote a sense of invitation, welcome and inclusivity between school and parish
- Implement the revised K-12 curriculum framework, support by appropriate resources and professional development
  - Set explicit goals to address areas of weakness identified by NAPLAN data and other measures
  - Implementation of intervention strategies in the K-2 years and at key transition periods for underachieving students and students at risk
  - Whole school approach to support the mental health needs of students
  - Establish collaborative learning groups to address student needs
  - Develop literacy and numeracy plan for school based assessment data
  - Whole school focus on institute of teachers and teacher accreditation and providing staff mentoring and PD opportunities

### School Academic Priorities

Key improvements achieved this year	Key improvements for next year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Improved student achievement in literacy and numeracy was enhanced by the establishment of collaborative learning groups in each stage. These groups followed a three (3) week cycle of formal meetings to increase professional dialogue and planning to address identified needs. Focus areas including kindergarten, literacy intervention based on Best Start and Continuum information, Year 1 and 2 numeracy intervention based on Continuum information and CMIT learning framework, and Years 3-6 numeracy intervention based on assessment data (including continuum information, ACER, NAPLAN and others).</li> </ul>	<p>During 2016 St Brigid's will continue to release all class teachers from class every three (3) weeks as a stage team to analyse and review student data, and plan and review class strategies and intervention to improve student outcomes in Writing and Mathematics.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The continued SAP (State Action Plan) funding allowed support for collaboration learning groups and a variety of initiatives. Initiatives such as the establishment of whole school Assessment schedule and tracking sheets, the Year K-4 continuum data using ELK, and Years 5-6 using Gate 21.</li> </ul>	<p>By all teachers focusing on agreed practices and expectations, it is intended to improve student outcomes of each child by 12 months over the year as evidenced in data collected.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The increased emphasis on the partnership between home and school through regular parent correspondence and PD opportunities, created greater awareness, which created regular conversation on learning outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>Develop a school based Professional Practices and Development Policy to compliment current practice of collaborative learning times and meet the Institute of Teachers accreditation action plan.</p>

## Academic Achievements

During 2015 St Brigid's was again targeted for the State Action Plan Literacy and Numeracy Program. This program enabled St Brigid's to have a greater focus on the intervention support with literacy and numeracy. The focus was Years K-6.

The NAPLAN testing has given St Brigid's a clear indication of the students strengths and weaknesses Results are studied by staff and modifications are made in the daily teaching of students. During 2015 St Brigid's results were among the best ever, particularly with all areas of Year 3.

St Brigid's also actively encourage student participation in educational competitions such as the University of NSW, and Newcastle Permanent competitions. Many students were awarded certificates to acknowledge their achievements.

The Learning Support Teacher and the Teaching and Learning Team support staff to assist all children to reach their academic potential.

The school debating team were Regional and Port Stephens Rotary winners.

### Cultural achievements

During 2015 the children participated in a variety of excursions and incursions. These had a direct link to the learning activities being taught in the classroom.

A number of children were successful in gaining places in Aspire 2015. the school choir, both Primary and Infants, performed at special occasions around the Raymond Terrace community.

### Sporting achievements

During 2015 St Brigid's participated in various sport competitions and knockouts. St Brigid's is proud of the varied opportunities it can provide the children. Our aim is to allow maximum participation and combine this with good nutrition as a way of life.

The 'Before School' morning sport programme continued and was extended from traditional summer/winter sports to other movement disciplines.

The school had student representation at Regional, Diocesan and Polding levels in many sports.

## Student Achievements

### Performance in National Testing

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for student in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	65.12%	71.10%	4.65%	12.90%
	Writing	80.49%	75.80%	4.88%	9.30%
	Spelling	68.18%	65.20%	9.09%	16.70%
	Grammar	75.00%	73.20%	9.09%	12.60%
	Numeracy	65.91%	60.80%	9.09%	16.80%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2015		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	48.72%	57.90%	20.51%	20.00%
	Writing	41.03%	52.40%	20.51%	19.50%
	Spelling	58.97%	60.80%	17.95%	14.60%
	Grammar	46.15%	60.90%	28.21%	18.60%
	Numeracy	52.63%	55.80%	21.05%	17.60%

## Staffing Profile

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### Staff Qualifications

Qualifications and Experience	Number of Staff
I. Teachers with teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).	0
II. Teachers with qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by NOOSR but lacking formal teaching qualifications	28

### Workforce Composition

Number of Staff	
Total teaching staff	28
Total non-teaching staff	14
Grand total	42

Percentage of teachers who are indigenous	0
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### Teacher Attendance

94%

### Teacher Retention

Teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 96%.

### Professional Learning Undertaken

During 2015 the staff of St Brigid's were involved individually and whole school professional development. These included:

- Teacher Accreditation
- ICT Framing
- Spirituality Retreat
- Child Protection
- CPR/Emergency Care
- State Action Plan
- MiniLit
- Literacy/Numeracy - Continuum
- Reading Comprehension
- Student Wellbeing/Positive Behaviour

- Recycling

## Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

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The opinions and ideas of parents, students and staff are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and staff.

### Parent Satisfaction

The partnership between home and school is a feature of St Brigid's. We make it a priority to create and maintain good constructive relationships. Regular communication with formal and informal is encouraged. We see good schools creating common goals, home and school, for the children to aim for.

Throughout 2015 St Brigid's had numerous opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the school.

St Brigid's has a wonderful name in Port Stephens. Many enrolments travel over 30 minutes to attend.

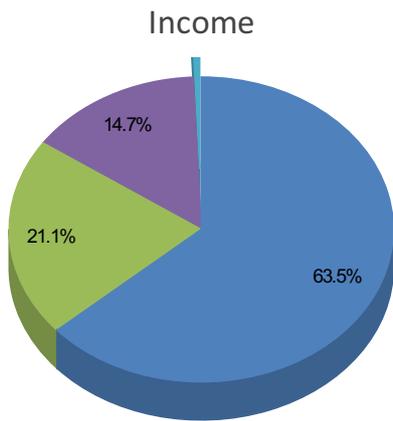
### Student Satisfaction

St Brigid's is a happy place, where students are happy and feel safe. The caring, supportive nature of all staff is a feature.

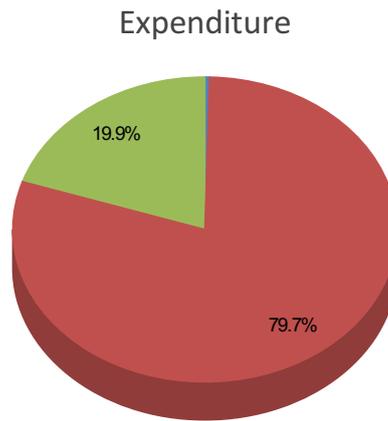
At St Brigid's we have a mindset among the staff "we treat the children as if they were our own".

### Staff Satisfaction

St Brigid's has a quality, happy staff. Very few staff have transferred over the years due to the positive culture present. Staff feel they are supported and given many opportunities to develop their skills.



- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (63.5%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (21.1%)
- Fees and Private Income (14.7%)
- Other Capital Income (0.7%)



- Capital Expenditure (0.4%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (79.7%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (19.9%)

This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire. School Financial Information for the 2015 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$2,826,884
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$938,946
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$655,694
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$29,517
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$4,479,393</b>

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$17,222
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$3,435,129
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$858,904
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$4,311,255</b>

For the 2015 year the St Brigid's Primary School received \$28,352 as Interest Subsidy. Our school community is appreciative of the support it received from the NSW State Government under the Interest Subsidy Scheme

### Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.

3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

## Report Access and Publication

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This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, The Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW, The Parent and Friends Association, the Parish Priest and to all parents.

Copies of this school's Annual School Report are available to the general public. Persons wishing to access a copy of the report should contact:

**Mr David Palmer**

**St Brigid's Primary School**

**RAYMOND TERRACE**

**Phone: 4987 2625**

For further information relating to the Diocesan Policy please refer to: <http://mn.catholic.edu.au>