



Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn  
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

# ST THOMAS MORE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Campbell, ACT

## 2011 SCHOOL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



## SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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PRINCIPAL

## **MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

### **Principal's Message**

Welcome to St Thomas More's Annual School Report. This report provides information both for existing families and for those wishing to enrol their children at our school. In this report you will read about the highlights of 2011 for our community as well as about our school policies. At St Thomas More's we are proud of our achievements in NAPLAN testing. You will have the opportunity to compare our school results in Literacy and Numeracy with the National means and to learn how our targeted programs have led to consistent improvements in our results over the past three years.

### **Community Council Message**

St Thomas More's Primary school is a small co-educational Catholic school located close to central Canberra. The school's proximity to Duntroon and Russell makes it a popular choice for Defence families. The school offers all the best qualities of a traditional education, providing a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, while embracing best practice in information communication technology and resources. Teaching programs are tailored to the individual needs of each student so that each child's learning is extended or supported as appropriate. We warmly encourage parent participation through membership of the School Council.

### **Student Representative's Message**

Everyday, the teachers come to school and teach with passion. The students see this and are more willing to learn with someone who is looking forward to the lesson. As well as showing passion, the teachers encourage us to try our best and congratulate us for everything we do right. This helps to promote a love of learning for students since their work gets recognised by their classmates. It is more fun to learn if you have someone else to learn with. That's why the teachers encourage group work where you can make new friends and learn with someone else.

## **SCHOOL FEATURES**

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St Thomas More's Primary School is a Catholic Primary School located in Campbell. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 161 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 55% male and 45% female students; 0% indigenous students; and 2% Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 19 staff comprising 12 teachers and 7 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including the Office Administrator, Learning Support Assistants, School Chaplain, Defence Schools Transition Aide and Janitor.

In 2011 St Thomas More's school celebrated the 50th Anniversary of its opening in 1961. Special events to mark this milestone included a Feast Day Mass and dinner. Sr Marie Martin, of the Sisters

of the Holy Faith in Dublin, was on the funding staff of the school in 1961. She travelled from Ireland especially to be in attendance for the celebrations in June.

Another highlight of this anniversary year was the completion of a new \$2.2 million School Hall which was funded through the Federal Government's Building the Education Revolution program.

The school has an active parent body led by the School Council. Parents keenly support school events such as Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day Breakfasts, the Art Show and the Dance Display. Students are encouraged to take part in ICAS competitions which are organised by the University of NSW. They can choose from Mathematics, Writing, Computer Skills and Science. Maths Olympiad is also offered to students who excel in Mathematics and problem solving.

Parents can opt for their children to have private lessons from specialist piano and violin teachers who work in the school.

The school provides many opportunities for students to participate in sport. They can choose to play in basketball, soccer or netball teams. Gymnastics and soccer clinics are organised for students during the year.

The school's website can be found at [www.stmore.act.edu.au](http://www.stmore.act.edu.au)

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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St Thomas More's Primary follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

Community prayer is important at St Thomas More's school. Each morning staff members gather for prayer and school captains lead prayer for the whole school at morning assembly each day.

Our Values Program permeates all aspects of life at the school. Twice a term a new value is introduced and used as the basis for staff, class and school prayer and for a Values Assembly. This year's Values included Compassion, Wisdom, Unity, Friendship, Trust and Cooperation.

The school has close links with the Parish of St Thomas More. The Parish Priest, Father Julian Wellspring, regularly celebrates with students and parents class and whole school Masses as well as the sacrament of Reconciliation.

2011 saw the appointment of a Sacramental Coordinator as well as the introduction of a Parish-Based Sacramental Program which was taught in tandem with class Sacramental programs.

Mini Vinnies, an offshoot of St Vincent de Paul, is an outreach ministry which aims to assist the needy in our community. This year the School Chaplain has coordinated fund-raising, visits to the elderly in the parish, cake stalls and food-hampers for a refugee family.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN

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Students in Years 3 and 5 sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) in May this year. 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.

### School and National Mean Scale Scores

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	416	416	406	422	394
<b>School</b>	448.4	441.2	424.4	443.1	414.3

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	488	483	484	500	488
<b>School</b>	540.8	497.8	513.7	557.1	520.9

### Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	94%	95%	93%	93%	96%
<b>School</b>	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	92%	92%	91%	92%	94%
<b>School</b>	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%

### Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>Band 6</b>	41%	28%	22%	28%	13%
<b>Band 5</b>	19%	38%	25%	25%	32%
<b>Band 4</b>	16%	25%	34%	34%	23%
<b>Band 3</b>	22%	6%	21%	9%	29%
<b>Band 2</b>	3%	0%	0%	3%	3%
<b>Band 1</b>	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>Band 8</b>	27%	20%	13%	27%	20%
<b>Band 7</b>	33%	27%	27%	33%	20%
<b>Band 6</b>	13%	20%	40%	27%	40%
<b>Band 5</b>	27%	20%	20%	7%	13%
<b>Band 4</b>	0%	7%	0%	7%	7%
<b>Band 3</b>	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%

The above tables show that our targeted programs have led to strong growth especially in Year 3 and Year 5 Reading where 60% of students are achieving in the top two bands. Following the introduction of First Steps Spelling across the school we have also seen growth in Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation with the majority of students in Years 3 and 5 performing in the top two or three bands. 2011 saw the introduction of Numeracy blocks across the school. The results are strong, with more than 60% of students in Years 3 and 5 achieving in the top three bands, and we expect to see continued growth in Numeracy.

## SCHOOL POLICIES

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### Enrolment Policy

In enrolling students we are directed by the Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy which can be found on the Annual Report page of the school's website or on the Catholic Education Office website at <http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx>

### Behaviour

The aim of our Pastoral Care and Student Management Policy is to ensure a consistent, caring and positive approach to behaviour management and Gospel values underpin the policy. At the commencement of each year classroom teachers develop with their students class rights and responsibilities. These are based on the principles of Restorative Justice which are embedded in the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

As a staff we are committed to modelling responsible behaviour to all students in our care and dealing with them at all times in a fair and consistent manner. We endeavour to work in close partnership with parents to provide a safe and caring learning environment for all students.

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons to enforce discipline at our school.

The full text of the school's Pastoral Care and Student Management Policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

## **Complaints and Grievances Resolution 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. A full text of the school policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

## **PRIORITIES AND TARGETS**

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These targets represent a sample drawn from the 2011 Management Plan which incorporates the school's Literacy and Numeracy plans for 2011. Each of these targets was met during 2011.

1. Growing the capacity of teachers and leaders: a consultant was engaged to work with staff to strengthen leadership and deepen educational initiatives, including the Australian Curriculum as the school moves towards registration in 2013. Interested staff were invited to take part in a model of coaching involving peer coaching and support.
2. The introduction of Numeracy Blocks across all classes made use of modelled, modelled, shared, independent components and cognitive closure.
3. Staff continued their work with First Steps Writing and Spelling to build student capacity and growth in their NAPLAN results.
4. Staff continued their use of NAPLAN and diagnostic data to improve teacher practice and provide opportunities for improved student outcomes.
5. Staff continued to use the language of the Quality Teaching Framework to enhance their teaching programs and classroom practice.
6. Staff continued to develop their understanding of Restorative Justice as a component of the school's Pastoral Care and Student Management Policy.
7. Construction of the new \$2.2 million school Hall made possible through the Federal Government's Building the Education Revolution program.

Some targets for next year which are drawn from the Management Plan for 2012.

1. To continue to integrate the Australian Curriculum into school policy and documentation, especially in English, Maths and Science.
2. To continue to develop and improve the Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy so that all community members have a clear understanding of the process of Restorative Justice.
3. To continue to improve communication between the School Council and the school community via regular Newsletter articles.
4. To complete landscaping around the new hall, including playground equipment and sun-shade.