Do small things with great love

Mother Teresa School

2010 School Report to the Community

Mother Teresa School

Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE
Welcome to Mother Teresa School

Welcome to Mother Teresa School!

The school opened for the first time in 2010 with children enrolled from Preschool to Year 2. Mother Teresa is a campus of Good Shepherd Amaroo and it was fitting that the first few weeks of primary education for the children was at Good Shepherd as our classrooms were not ready for occupation. The children and staff were made feel very welcome at Good Shepherd. In 2009 it was decided that our motto should be the words of Mother Teresa, “do small things with great love” and this motto has been an inspiration to all in the first year of operation. Our logo features a bowl and towel of service, an indigenous pattern, a crucifix and a family representation.

Children in the preschool were enrolled in 3 groupings and places filled very quickly as word spread through the community about the high level of care and education offered at Mother Teresa ELC. Mother Teresa ELC has a Centre Based Care Licence which enables parents to claim a rebate from the Federal Government and the centre provides before and after school care as well as vacation care. The preschool program operated from 9.00am -3.00pm.

Children in the Primary School were enrolled in two Kindergarten classes and a multi age Year 1/2. During the year the children have learnt what it means to be part of a new school community. There has been a strong focus on prayer and the teaching of Religious Education during 2010. The staff has introduced Godly Play with the children from preschool to Year 2. We are proud of the work done in improving student literacy and numeracy across the school. Teachers provide high quality Literacy Blocks for the children and the primary aged children are all engaged in the Mathletics program.

Highlights of the Year

What a wonderful first year we have had! Some of our highlights include:

• A staff retreat at Galong to establish relationships between staff and with our Parish Priest, Father Mark Croker.
• The school opening day with breakfast, balloon rides and jumping castle.
• The Easter celebration with children dressing in period clothing and remembering our Christian story.
• Our first Grandparent Day with visitors from across Canberra and interstate who were treated to a concert, special liturgy and tours of the school facilities.
• The World’s Biggest Morning Tea arranged by the children in the ELC.
• The visit by the Mother Teresa sisters on the anniversary of Mother Teresa’s 100th birthday.

We are proud of what we have been able to achieve this year!

• The formation of the Community Council.
• Purchase of high quality resources including library books and levelled readers.
• We have been able to meet with parents to outline ways they can support the teachers in the classroom.
• The establishment of the Parish Toddler Playgroup that meets every second Thursday at Mother Teresa.
• The winning of the Shop for Your School promotion sponsored by Gungahlin Shopping Centre.
• The integration of the ELC into the daily life of the school.
• The communication protocols that see the weekly newsletter emailed to all families.
• The whole school focus on sustainability that was a result of the whole school excursion to Mugga Lane and the way our building has been designed to be energy efficient.
• Participation in the Minister’s Physical Challenge resulting in winning a Gold Award and $900 to spend on sporting equipment.
Principal's Report

It has been a privilege to have been chosen to be the Foundation Principal of Mother Teresa School in Gungahlin. We have grown so much in a short space of time and this is due in no small way to the dedication of the wonderful staff, parents and children who form our community.

During 2009 I was able to meet many new families and share our dreams of what our school community could be. I am pleased to say that our dreams have become a reality and we have a school of which all community members can be proud. The buildings provided for us to work in are functional and bright. The children love their breakout space and the various types of furniture that has been provided. Our curriculum is exciting and innovative.

During this year we have developed our Vision and Mission statements. The School Vision tells us that Mother Teresa is the “Place to be” and our Mission encourages us to be:

- welcoming
- accepting
- inspired by our values
- partners
- safe and happy
- environmentally responsible
- immersed in our Catholic faith

During the year we have established themes for the children. The term themes were as follows:

Term 1 - You are God’s work of art
Term 2 - Live as children of light
Term 3 - Have a loving and understanding heart
Term 4 - God loves a cheerful giver.

From these themes values emerged that were introduced to the children at regular whole school prayer assemblies. Significant links have been forged with the parish, and our parish priest Fr Mark Croker and the pastoral associate Fiona Wilkinson are regular and welcome visitors to Mother Teresa School. This year the Year 2 children made the Sacrament of Reconciliation together with the children from the other two schools in the Holy Spirit Parish. Regular meetings are held with the other principals in our parish schools and the Religious Education Coordinators also hold meetings on a regular basis.

In 2011 the school will more than double in size and one huge challenge will be to engage with the new staff, children and parents and to encourage them to be part of our continuing story.

School Community Report

The Mother Teresa Community Council was formed for the first time towards the end of 2009 to help guide the school into existence. At the beginning of 2010 the Council members were elected into various roles. The Chair Michael Whyte has led a dynamic and enthusiastic team. Members of the Community Council have particular responsibility for various school endeavours. Roles include, parent liaison, defence support, treasurer, maintenance, preschool liaison, friend raising and grants. The sub-committees meet outside the Community Council and bring along reports and decisions to be ratified by the Community Council.

The Council has successfully held a family movie night, disco, breakfast for Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day. The Council has successfully applied for a Children’s Week grant and have been involved in a shop for your school promotion and shopping voucher collection. In Term 4 the school was awarded a gold prize in the Minister's Physical Challenge and the prize has allowed the school to purchase over $900 worth of sporting equipment.

The Council this year deliberately focussed on friend raising rather that fund raising. In 2011, the Council looks forward to continuing to support the school.
Student Wellbeing and Engagement

There were three class groupings at Mother Teresa in 2010. In Kindergarten we had 39 students with one Aboriginal student and 24 children in Year 1 and 2 with two Aboriginal children. Of the 63 children enrolled, 26 were boys and 37 were girls. There is a strong multicultural enrolment pattern emerging with a proportion of children from Indian backgrounds attending Mother Teresa. Harrison has a high SES score and many of our families come from middle to upper income families. Housing costs in Harrison are quite high and the majority of the children live in Harrison. Mother Teresa has a strong representation of children from Defence families. We have a designated position on our Community Council to help support Defence families and we have held enrolment positions for these families to help meet their needs. Children in all classes have made significant progress in literacy and numeracy this year. In 2011, the children in Year 3 will sit the NAPLAN test for the first time. We are proud of the achievement and improvement shown by our children. Our school Counsellor has provided support to a number of our children and families during the year. Families have had access to our Councillor each Friday morning. CatholicCare has held a parent training course for families in the Parish during 2010 and this received very positive feedback from parents.
Priorities and Targets

During the 2010 school year Mother Teresa School has been active in growing a school community of children, parents and staff. This has been done by creating an open and welcoming environment for all members of our community. We have held welcoming BBQs, meet and greet nights, information sessions as well as a Grandparents’ Day together with special breakfasts for Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day. The staff have written our Mission and Vision statements to reflect the type of school we have become and wish to be into the future. The opportunity to gather as staff at an overnight retreat late in 2009, will be repeated in 2011 as we welcome on board many new staff.

The focus on our Religious Education, English and Maths this year has seen pleasing improvement in the childrens’ results. The support of our Special Needs team has enabled timely and supportive intervention across the three grades.

Literacy and Numeracy

Part of our planning for 2011 will see a focus on the following key elements:

- To establish agreed practice around - Teaching methods, programming, Literacy and Numeracy Blocks
- Understanding and implementation of the Australian Curriculum in English, Maths and Science
- Data collection
- Use of testing
- Literacy Blocks
- Guided, shared and modelled reading
- Spelling
- Use of Running Records
- Implementation of Read On (CEO English support document)
- In-servicing for all staff on First Steps Reading
## School Contact Information

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This report was prepared by:

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