

Saint Simon the Apostle Primary School



**Annual Report to the
School Community for 2008
Presented to School
Community June 23rd, 2009
Registered School Number -
1830**

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SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY 2008

**St. Simon the Apostle Primary School
2 Taylors Lane Rowville**

Our School Vision

At St. Simon's our school vision underpins all that we do in our school community. Our vision reflects the shared ideals that we strive for in educating children in our Parish Primary School.

Jesus is the Heart of a Christian Community

St. Simon the Apostle School, as part of the Catholic Parish Community follows the teachings of Jesus and strives to be a community of faith, sustained by the word of God and the Sacraments of the Church: a meeting place with Christ in communion with the people.

The school aims to provide an environment where all members feel happy, secure and part of a loving, caring community.

Positive attitudes towards learning are encouraged through an inquiry based curriculum which fosters the development of faith, gospel values and the attainment of skills and knowledge which equip children for a lifetime of learning.

Principal's Message

The following report is written to allow the school community to be aware of various areas of curriculum development which has occurred at St. Simon's Primary School during the 2008 school year. All the areas of the school curriculum have one main objective – "to educate our children at St. Simon's to attain their full potential – academically, physically and spiritually". This report is presented to parents so that they are aware of what the school has presented to their children throughout the school year. The report does not cover all areas of the curriculum but does cover the main focus areas. This report includes reports from the School Leadership Team, the School Advisory Board and the Parents' Association.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

St. Simon the Apostle School, Rowville was established in 1982, with an initial enrolment of 92 pupils and a staff of 6, the second school established by the Parish of St. Jude's, Scoresby. Rev. Father Les Tomlinson was appointed the first Parish Priest in 1988 when the Parish of St. Simon the Apostle was formed. By 1989 the school population had reached 500, while the catchment area had become of the fastest growing residential areas of Melbourne. The Parish Church was completed and officially opened by Archbishop Sir Frank Little on 13th November, 1993.

The students participated in a fund raising effort to contribute to the cost of the Baptismal Font. At the same time, the School Motto "Jesus Calls – Come Follow Me" was created. At the beginning of 1997, four streams of Preps commenced their schooling at St. Simon's, thus bringing the enrolment to 674 students, with a total of 22 classrooms. In the years 1982 to 1997 St. Simon the Apostle School has been in a constant state of rapid change and growth. Student numbers have since stabilized and are now predicted to stay around the 625 mark.

St. Simon's is situated in attractive surroundings on 2.5 hectares of land at the corner of Wellington Road and Taylors Lane. It is situated approximately 28 kilometres east of Melbourne, in a rapidly growing residential area, surrounded by several industrial estates. The school is organised along traditional lines. In 2006 there are 24 classes with an average class size of 27. Each of the four Prep classes have numbers of 22 or 23. Different organizational structures may operate at times due to student needs, or special programs. Of the 620 children 312 are girls and 308 are boys, from 429 families. Parental involvement is an important feature of the school. Programs such as Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Perceptual Motor Program, Library, Inter-School Sports plus various Art activities are supported by parent input. Parents on the School Advisory Board assist the Principal in deciding future school direction and oversee the other parent committees – Parents Association, Uniform Shop and Canteen.

St. Simon's has had a long tradition dating back to 1986 of involvement in the Integration Program which supports children with severe disabilities within the mainstream setting. The student population is drawn from a very diverse range of cultural backgrounds. In all, a total of 31 different nationalities are represented. While approximately one third of the students are from language backgrounds other than English. In 1995 an allocation for an English Second Language program was granted by the Catholic Education Office and increased in 1997. This funding currently supports our LOTE Japanese program. The co-operation and enthusiasm of the Staff and Parent Community working together, within the context of our Catholic faith and tradition, promotes an environment which fosters a love of learning and is supportive of individual needs.

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD REPORT

The year started with the board welcoming four new members who stepped forward to take on the positions vacated by long serving board members at the Last Open General Meeting.

Many committees and boards find it difficult to fill positions however I believe this represents the commitment of our families to the St. Simon's school.

During this year Sally-Anne Cook took on the added responsibility of re establishing the Public Relations sub committee which has resulted in St. Simons children and school's highlights being represented more often in the local papers.

The Board also undertook the "Canteen Survey" due to the lack of volunteers available and the need to understand the requirements of the school community. This information will be used to support any decisions required in the future with facts and opinions gathered from the survey. The response to the survey was unprecedented with more than 50% of the school's families returning their responses.

This year also sees the retirement from the board of Chris Goulet who has been a long serving member of the board. Chris was instrumental in getting the council to provide the crossing guard at Wellington Road and we take the opportunity to thank her for the time and care she invested during her time on the board.

Overall this year the board has worked together to support the Principle, Vice Principle, the teachers and the families that make up St Simons the Apostle Primary school and look forward to continuing in 2009.

EDUCATION IN FAITH/ RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REPORT

Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which He looks with compassion on this world, yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good'.

- St Teresa of Avila

And so we as educators of future stake holders know that not only is our role to educate our children in the beliefs, rituals and story of our shared faith but it is as important to help them understand being a Catholic in the world today has an active service role for we are called to continue the work that was begun by Christ many years ago. It is with pride that we at St Simon the Apostle are able to say with confidence that our children do have an understanding of this role.

Our 'motto' for this year has been 'Just want Justice', and this has coloured our approach to our work in RE this year. The children have enthusiastically embraced our fund raising efforts this year. The support for Caritas and other organisations has been positive. One such effort saw a group of children [6B] nominated for a community award. They were one of 20 finalists and we congratulate them for their efforts in fundraising and for the nomination they received. I would also like to acknowledge all the children of St Simon's who supported the many causes this year.

2008 saw us trial the final exemplar units in RE. Each level trialled 8 units last year and with the exclusion on Prep a new 8 units this year. This now means that we have trialled all units nominated by the CEO. In 2009 we will now be able to refine the units and make them more suited to the specific needs of the children at Rowville. Natalie Dib and myself have also been attending PD on how RE is going to be reported on across the diocese of Melbourne. 2009 will see the introduction of reporting in a consistent way in the diocese. At this stage the marking system has not been finalised however it will be soon and we will be reporting in this mandated way in June 2009.

2008 has seen the continuation of each grade taking responsibility for the planning and leading of the school liturgy. The children have engaged enthusiastically in this leadership role and have led us well. They are very keen for their parents to join us when it is their turn and this has helped to make our liturgies communal experiences. Each time this happens it gives both the children and teachers greater confidence for the next time they are the leaders.

As all communities do we had our share of difficult times this year. Some were new challenges to be faced and others were anniversaries of other difficult times. The staff are again to be congratulated on how they stepped up and supported each other and people in the community.

2008 saw the 20th Anniversary of the Parish. This was celebrated by Mass at the school during the day and also a parish mass at night.

The leaders of our school celebrated Mass at the Cathedral during Catholic Education Week in March. It was an excellent opportunity for them to see that we are connected to a wider Church community. The children had their photo taken with Archbishop Hart which we framed and presented to Fr Martin. The children were excellent ambassadors for our school.

Professional Development for staff this year in RE centred on Prayer. We invited Barbara Bretherton to facilitate a day around prayer for adults and children. The day allowed us to focus on our own prayer and how to make prayer a meaningful experience for our students. Barbara provided us with an excellent day with a good mixture of both reflective and hands on activities for us to take away and use in our classrooms. This was followed up with a staff meeting on meditation led by Helen Rochecouste. Barbara's PD was supported by Helen leading the staff [those who wished to attend] in meditation on Thursday mornings at 8:10 for Term 3. Thank you Helen for sharing your expertise in this area with us.

The connection between the Parish and the school continues to be a strong and positive one. The sharing of ideas and resources is continual and of benefit to all, I believe. The Sacramental Program of the parish has been supported by the school staff. Teachers were very active in supporting the sacramental programs within their classroom to help consolidate the work being done by the parents and Jacqui. Units of work we do throughout

the year are connected closely with the sacramental program. This year we had all staff, not only those with sacramental grades, at the Confirmation and Eucharist Masses.

The Grade 6 children shared a reflection day on Confirmation with other children in the Parish who were also receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. This day is very successful due to the efforts of both teachers and Parish staff.

I would like to welcome Cate Kavanagh to our team this term. Cate has replaced Padre Jim who left us to take up a new position. Cate has been very proactive in her role as Chaplain and has worked with teachers on the planning and execution of their liturgies. She has also been very keen to be useful in any way that she can to both myself and staff. Welcome and thanks Cate.

2009 will see RE as our major Curriculum focus, culminating in our Family Night in Term 3. Plans are in the infancy stage but it will be a fantastic night and it will be great to see our faith shared in a variety of interesting ways. Looking forward to sharing it with you.

Finally I would like to thank the staff who help our children understand and make meaning of their faith. Who show through both word and action what it means to be a faith filled person.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Financial Performance for the year ended 31st December 2008

Reporting Framework	Modified Cash \$
Recurrent income	Tuition
School fees	369,964
Other fee income	232,646
Private income	72,047
State government recurrent grants	735,666
Australian government recurrent grants	2,692,363
Total recurrent income	4,102,686
Recurrent expenditure	
	Tuition
Salaries, allowances and related expenses	2,926,907
Non salary expenses	625,977
Total recurrent expenditure	3,552,884
Capital income and expenditure	
	Tuition
Government capital grants	66,736
Capital fees and levies	123,320
Other capital income	12,000
Total capital income	202,056
Total capital expenditure	165,389
Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent capital and bridging loans)	
	Tuition
Total opening balance	1,596,052
Total closing balance	1,487,123

TEACHING AND LEARNING/ CURRICULUM REPORT 2008

- 2008 saw the continued focus of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). As well as using the Victorian Essential Learning Framework to plan our curriculum, we have also focused on understanding the Principles of Learning and Teaching (POLTS).
Our curriculum planner has undergone change to reflect the scope of VELS. The school report has expanded to include the Domains of Personal Learning, Interpersonal Learning, Communication and ICT. We will continue to report the same way in the areas of Mathematics, English Health and Physical Education, Civics and Citizenship and Science.
- The School Review process has already begun in preparation for the formal process in Term 3 2009. The staff from the Catholic Education Office (CEO) has been working with us to prepare us for our School Review in 2009. We look forward to working with the CEO as we reflect on the strengths and challenges in our school as well as setting future directions and goals for our school.
- Professional Development during 2008 continued to focus around the need to familiarize staff with the VELS format and language. Professional learning took place on our term one school closure day focusing on The Principles of Learning and Teaching. Weekly Professional Learning Team (PAL) meetings and Level Planning meetings have continued to cover moderation in both Literacy and Mathematics. The staff has a clear understanding of the standards of achievement at the level in which they work for the Domains of English and Mathematics. Both the Literacy and Mathematics Coordinators have been instrumental in the provision of this vital Professional Development.
- St. Simon's School Development Plan had identified the area of Mathematics as the area to focus on during 2008. To this end, the Curriculum and part of the Professional Development budgets were setup to facilitate this outcome. Term 3 was nominated as the time that the whole school would have a Mathematics focus, allowing us to incorporate the VELS initiatives into our curriculum planning. Michael Ymer came out to work with staff in two after school sessions. The highlight of this focus was the Family Night that saw the majority of school families touring around the classrooms engaged in hand on activities exploring the various aspects of the Mathematics curriculum. This evening and the continued focus throughout the year on the area of Mathematics has enabled staff to raise their understanding of effective teaching strategies in the area of Mathematics. Michael Ymer's parent information night examining how parents can support their children's maths learning was well attended and well received. Some great insights were achieved by all attendees.
- Attendance at CEO Zone Network Curriculum meetings continues to provide us with opportunities to access ideas, resources and processes that have supported our curriculum development this year.
- 2008 will see a continued focus on developing curriculum further based on VELS, together with the Principles of Learning and Teaching. As always our curriculum is based on what is meaningful to learn for students.
- 2009 will see a major focus around the Review Process, as well as continuing to understand the VELS, POLTs and Assessment and Reporting as we start to report to all areas of VELS.
- In 2008 the Annual Naplan Assessments at Grades 3 & 5 level were implemented. The proportion of students at St. Simon's in Grade 3 meeting National Benchmarks as measured in the 2008 Naplan Assessments are as follows –

Benchmarks

Reading – 99% (2007 - 97.1%)

Writing - 97.9% (2007 – 100%)

Mathematics – 99% (2007 – 94.9%)

The proportion of students at St. Simon's in Grade 5 meeting the National Benchmarks as measured in the 2008 Naplan Assessments are as follows:

Benchmarks

Reading – 97.9% (2007 – 87%)

Writing – 94.7% (2007 – 98.9%)

Mathematics – 97.9% (2007 – 96.7%)

Changes in benchmarks results from the previous year-

Year 3	Year 5
Reading 1.9%	Reading 10.0%
Writing - 2.1%	Writing - 4.2%
Spelling 99%	Spelling 95.8%
Numeracy 4.9%	Numeracy 1.2%

Naplan Chart

Year 3 NAPLAN

St. Simon's	Comparison with Like Schools
Reading	On Par
Writing	Above
Spelling	Above
Mathematics/ Numeracy	Slightly below

Year 5 NAPLAN

St. Simon's	Comparison with Like Schools
Reading	On Par
Writing	Above
Spelling	Above
Mathematics/ Numeracy	Slightly below

The parent data indicated that parents were satisfied with the school. Parents believed the school's strongest area of satisfaction was in student behaviour management, student safety and connectedness to school.

The student data indicated that students were satisfied with the school. The strongest area of satisfaction for students was in the learning confidence, student safety and connectedness to school.

The staff data indicated that staff believed the school's strengths were effective discipline policy, student motivation and job satisfaction.

Value Added

St. Simon's school provided a number of programmes and school activities that had a positive effect on the children and the broader school community. Some of these programmes were:

- Parish Based Sacramental Programme
- Student Representative Council
- School Leadership Groups
- Buddy Programme
- Seasons Programme
- Young Leaders Day
- Regular Interschool Sport for senior students
- School Assemblies - each grade to host assembly
- Students of the Week
- Uniform and Good Manners Awards
- Excursions and Incursions
- Camp Programme – Grades 3 to 6
- Swimming Programme
- School Psychologist
- School Advisory Board

- Parents' Association
- Uniform Shop
- Games Club
- Canteen
- Facilities Management Team
- Classroom Parent Helpers
- Curriculum Evening – Maths
- Book Week Activities
- Student Wellbeing Programme
- Japanese Day
- Whole School Liturgies – twice per term
- Mass for the Sacrament of the Sick – students support parishioners
- Curriculum initiatives in Social and Emotional Learning (Circle Time)
- Friendship Corner
- Parent Teacher Meetings
- Parent Support Group Meetings (P.S.G.)
- Prep Sports/ Athletics Twilight Programme
- School Athletics Carnival – Grades 1 to 6
- Peer Mediation Programme
- Meditation Programme
- Weekly Newsletter (Contact)
- School Report to School Community – June and December
- School Reporting Programme
- Make Poverty History Campaign, St. Vincent de Paul Programme
- Be Just, Be Green, Be More Programme
- Project Compassion

ICT REPORT 2008

ICT has continued to be an important part of the curriculum at St. Simon's this year. With the introduction of new equipment and software, students and teachers are better equipped to integrate technology into the curriculum. Some of these developments in the use of ICT have been:

St. Simon's Website

Documents Online

- A number of popular/important forms are online as PDF documents. Forms and documents such as Permission Slips, Tuckshop Lists and Order Forms are available from our Documents Page.

Online Forms

- We have the convenience of a number of online forms to make easy contact with St. Simon's, such as contacting the office, principal or deputy principal.

Archives

- Our Archives Page is a section where we store previous photo galleries, information, etc.

Reporting Online

- Teachers have access to an online reporting package linked directly from our website.

There have been many positive comments from the parent and local community in regards to our website which has been greatly appreciated.

Hardware & Software

With generous contributions from the Parents Association we were able to purchase new video cameras and digital cameras for classrooms. We were also able to upgrade our school file server to cater for a wider variety of file types such as video and multimedia files. We also purchased a new web server to cater for our reporting package. This allows teachers to do their reporting online. Data projectors were purchased for the Preps and Grades 1/2. Each year level now has their own Data Projector for presentations, whole group and small group lessons.

The whole school now operates on the Windows XP platform. Operating on this platform has allowed the school to use the latest software and educational programs such as Office 2003, Kidpix 4 in the juniors classes, Kahootz in the middle classes and Photoshop in the senior classes.

ICT in the Classroom

All grades Prep – 2 classes have at least three computers in the class while grades 3 – 6 have at least four computers. Children across all year levels have been achieving marvellous results using ICT to support their learning. Some of their work can be viewed on our website and some examples of this work have been:

- **Podcasting** – Senior grades have been developing online radio shows that can be accessed through the Internet.
- **Legomation** – This has been a focus in grade 5 and follows a similar format to claymation.
- **Websites** – Classes have been experimenting in developing their own websites.
- **Multimedia Projects** – The use of programs such as PowerPoint, Swish, Key Note, Photo Story and Kidpix to develop multimedia projects.
- **Photoshop** – Photo manipulation in Photoshop.
- **Online Units of Work** – Classes are beginning to develop
- **Interactive Whiteboards** – This was presented at a staff meeting and is something that the school is looking at purchasing to trial in 2009.

Email & Internet

All staff and children in grades 3 – 6 have individual logins for both the Internet and email facilities within our school. This has allowed the school to better monitor Internet and email activity and has also allowed children to use their own email accounts as a tool to support their learning.

Every classroom has secure, fast Internet access that is monitored and checked on a regular basis.

Symposium

Earlier in the year we had a professional Development day with several other schools. The purpose of this symposium was for teachers to choose areas of the curriculum they wanted to further explore with ICT having a particular focus. Some of the ICT workshops included Claymation, My Classes Learning Modules, Audacity and Photo Story that was presented by Matt Olesen.

Technical Support

Our School ICT Technician, Jeremy Luchow provides four hours of technical support a week, to address ICT problems both in and out of the classroom. His support and efforts ensures that smooth running of our ICT facilities with most ICT problems being resolved within the week.

My Classes and My Internet

Matt Olesen in his role of SINA Administrator has facilitated the professional development of staff in the implementation of My Classes web pages. These can best be described as Class Intranets and classroom teachers are developing their skills and confidence to implement these Intranets in the future.

I would like to thank Matt Olesen as Assistant ICT Coordinator, Jeremy Luchow as ICT Technician and Phil Hesse, Principal. Their support and commitment have allowed our school to implement programs and ideas that place our school at the forefront of technology within primary education.

LITERACY REPORT 2008

As I prepare this report, it seems appropriate to take some time out to reflect on the purpose of why we, as teachers do what we do. Our students are the focus of what we do, and it is our primary goal to equip each one of them with the essential skills that will enable them to become life long learners.

At St Simon's we are very aware of how significant it is for each child to be literate in the world today. So with that in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each teacher for the work they do in the area of Literacy.

2008 has seen St Simons participate in a number of Literacy projects run by the Catholic Education Office. These projects provide opportunities for us as teachers to further develop our understandings about effective teaching and learning in Literacy from Prep to Year Six. They also assist us to look more closely at the assessments we use to direct our teaching in the classroom.

2008 saw us begin the first year of a two year project called the Literacy Assessment Project. We were invited to participate in this project because of our involvement in the Building Literacy Project Year 3 and 4. This Project is run jointly with the Catholic Education Office and Melbourne University. The focus of the project is:

1. To use the Progression of Reading Development (PRD) to focus data informed conversations within the Year 3-4 Professional Learning Team (PLT).
2. To support teachers to identify their Year 3-4 students' reading behaviours, and to explore, design and implement appropriate learning opportunities to meet their learning needs

This has created much discussion and reflection by teachers in Years 3 and 4 in our team meetings. The questions posed for us as educators were:

1. How do we best meet these students' needs within the classroom setting?
2. What are the most effective teaching strategies to implement?

We have begun to trial various strategies with our students in small group teaching sessions. A particular focus has been on encouraging children to articulate the strategies they use when they read. The need to continue to explore effective reading comprehension strategies with our students has been identified as a focus that will continue into next year also when our Year Five and Six students will become part of the assessment and Year 5 and 6 teachers will participate in Two off-site Professional Development Days.

Our involvement in the Middle Years Project continues to see us linked with other local Catholic Primary Schools and Nazareth College, thus creating the Nazareth Cluster. Paula Mitcham has been our Middle Years Leader in this project and has led the year five and six teachers throughout their involvement in this cluster, as they explore various teaching strategies that focus on engaging Year 5 and 6 students in Literacy.

2008 also saw us continue to participate in the Lighthouse Project with St Joseph's Ferntree Gully. Over two semesters, six of our Year Five and Six boys participated in a program that involved being tutored by one or two of the Year Ten boys from St Josephs. This year the focus moved from debating to creating a digital portfolio that showed the broader community about school life at St Simons. The involvement in this project was both rewarding as well as fun for the boys. They participated with enthusiasm and were able to develop their ICT and presentation skills further.

Prep-Year 4 Foundation Literacies

Seven teachers who were new to teaching Years Prep to Year Four participated in another CEO program called Foundations Literacies. This program provides opportunities for teachers to hear about current teaching practices in Literacy as well as trial new ideas in between meeting off-site. It has also helped bring back to our Prep to Year Four team what is current in the area of Literacy so they too can benefit from this professional learning. In Years Prep to Two we have also focused on the area of Oral Language so as to assist students to become confident speakers, listeners and effective communicators.

We continue to be committed to the belief about Literacy at St Simons that all students can succeed given enough time and support. We especially appreciate the support from parents, particularly their presence in our junior classes, which enables us to run our Literacy sessions more effectively.

NUMERACY REPORT 2008

Mathematics was a curriculum focus in 2008 and as such significant time and money was made available to further develop the Numeracy Program.

Teachers from the Grade P/1 and the 3/4 level attended Professional Development in the SINE Numeracy Project conducted by the Catholic Education Office. The SINE project continues to expand and develop so, we as a school, are eager to stay in touch with the most up to date ideas and techniques that are made available to us.

The staff as a whole was involved Professional Development conducted by Mr Michael Ymer. It focussed on working through and improving classroom practises as well as offering ideas and furthering the staff's confidence in their planning and assessment.

As a coordinator, I attended the Mathematics Network Clusters conducted by the CEO as often as possible. Here, coordinators met, spoke and shared ideas of what was happening at their schools. The clusters also immersed us, the coordinators, of new focus areas from the CEO to bring back to our own schools.

Being a Mathematics Curriculum Focus year, we as a staff developed and organised a Curriculum Focus Night for parents. The night showcased the practical work teachers are performing in their rooms and gave parents the opportunity to work with their children in activities planned by teachers in the various Mathematics Dimensions. The night was a success all round with over 300 families attending and many compliments being passed on.

The Curriculum Focus Night was followed by (in the next week) by a Mathematics Information Evening that was conducted again by Mr Michael Ymer. This evening was aimed at immersing and teaching parents in the methods our staff use in the classroom and to answer questions parents have on the St Simon's Mathematics Program. Again the night was deemed a success with over 40 families booking seats.

The Mathematics budget of \$3000 was spent on resources that were requested by the various levels for their day to day mathematics lessons and materials that were required to further cater for the Mathematics Curriculum Focus Night.

In conclusion, the year has been firstly very rewarding as a coordinator and also successful in demonstrating how the St Simon's Mathematics Program is continuing to develop and gain momentum in catering to the needs of the children and in offering teachers various resources to use in their planning and teaching practices.

Many of the recommendations from 2007 have been met and should be continued to be focused on in the upcoming years.

I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the staff and the leadership team for their support in this challenging role.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT

2008 has seen the continuation of the Special Education Co-ordinator role as a 0.6 appointment. The role encompasses a wide and varied range of responsibilities all which help to keep you on your toes. The major roles are

- ☉ Being a member of the Leadership Team.
- ☉ Ensuring that the referral process in place at our school - which allows for the identification, monitoring and support for children who are having difficulty with the standard curriculum - is followed and maintained.
- ☉ Assisting staff with programs that address the needs of the students in their grade who have difficulty with the standard curriculum. Many of these take the form of an ILP an Individual Learning Plan, which are necessary to have in place before children are referred onto outside agencies as these are part of the evidence needed when applying outside of the school.
- ☉ Liaising with outside agencies and personnel. Coordination of outside personnel such as speech therapists, psychologists, curriculum consultants, visiting teachers who regularly visit the school to work with children, parents and teachers.
- ☉ Completing and submitting reports, with classroom teacher help, to support integration children and ensure funding is maintained where possible.
- ☉ Working with the Teacher Aides who support the classroom teachers in working with specific children.
- ☉ Being available to parents.

This year there are 26 children funded under the Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs [LNSLN] umbrella. Children are funded in seven different categories. They are:

ID [Intellectual Disability],

SLD [Sever Language Disorder],

Physical Disability,

Social/Emotional Funding [Asperger's/Autism]

Hearing Impaired

Vision Impaired and Chronic Health [illness either long or short term].

This year we have 3 ID, 13 SLD, 4 Social/Emotional, 2 Physical, 1 Hearing Impaired and 3 Chronic Health funded children. Of these 7 will move onto secondary school in 2009 and 3 will probably no longer need funding due to the improvement in their learning. For 2009 we have made 4 new applications for funding in the 1st round and it is likely we will apply for another 3 in 2nd round in February. These are for children who will be Prep students in 2009.

As well as accessing funding many different services are available to us to help cater for the needs of the children at our school. We are able to access Speech Therapists, Psychologists and Behaviour management experts through the Catholic Education Office. This year we have referred 18 children for assessment. Four of these assessments have resulted in application for funding in 2009. We have 24 children accessing the CEO Speech Therapist. Four children are under the umbrella of Larmenier, which offer help with behaviour management strategies for the child their family and teacher.

This year we have begun to inservice teachers on how to best cater for children with Asperger's /Autism in our classrooms. All teachers with a diagnosed Asperger or Autistic child in their classroom along with all our Integration Aides and Phil attended professional learning with Sue Larkey an authority in this area. We will continue this next year with the children's new classroom teachers attending so that eventually all our staff will have this training. The number of children with Asperger's/Autism is increasing in our school [2 new Prep children in 2009] and it is important that we are able to cater for this specific learning style.

In the 2nd Semester this year we have employed two new teachers to take on specific roles for 2008. Val O'Connell was employed as the New Arrivals teacher as we had 4 children arrive in our school from non English speaking countries. Val has been working with these children to help them with their transition to English speaking classrooms. Also Jacqui Giuliano was employed as the Even Start tutor. Even Start is a government initiative offered to children in Grade 4 and Grade 6 who did not make the bench mark in the LAP [now called NAPLAN] testing completed in Grade 3 and 5 in 2008. We had 20 children who were offered tuition, 10 of who choose to have the tuition delivered at school and 3 who opted for home tuition. Two children had moved to others schools. Five families declined the offer. Both teachers have worked well with the children and have seen pleasing progress in their charges.

This year also saw the employment of a new Integration Aide. It was fantastic to be able to employ Chris Reid for the last 6 months of this year. Chris was able to join our current highly skilled team and blend in very well. It was also good for the children to be exposed to a different idea of who can be an aide in the classroom. [Chris is male and young!] Chris has enjoyed his experience so much he has applied to do primary teaching in 2009. We wish Chris well with his study next year and his ambition to become a teacher.

Children were invited this year to compete in The University of New South Wales assessment/competition for gifted and talented children. A number of children from Grade 3 to Grade 6 participate in Maths and Science exams. We had a child receive a certificate of High Distinction with other children achieve certificates of distinctions, credit and participation. I would like to thank Matt Clark and Geoff Klep who organised and ran this for the children.

I would also like to thank all staff for their support this year and for the effort they continually put into working with all the children in their grades especially those who need that bit of extra help. This is not only the funded children for whom there are many guidelines and expectations including, ILP's [Individual Learning Plans], PSG's [Program Support Meetings] etc but also for the growing number of children within every grade who for whatever reason miss out of the funding dollar, but who are no less in need of extra help.

I would especially like to thank Karen Bland, Maria Walton, Modie Wesley, Jo Zambiasi and Chris Reid our Integration Aides for the highly professional way in which they perform their duties. They are given a wide variety of tasks to carry out which they always do without a moments hesitation. Our Special Needs children, and for that matter all our children, are very lucky to work with such enthusiastic and caring individuals.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION REPORT - 2008

This year, the Parents' Association had a very busy and productive year. We set out to cover three key areas, these being social services, fundraising and aiding the school where required. Many events fall into two categories, as some things originally intended as services, now also provide income. Below is a list of some of our major events for the year to date & their profit if any.

Trivia Night – \$1007

The Fathers & Kids Footy Night – Numbers were high again as this has become one of our most popular family events on our calendar. More than 300 adults and kids enjoyed many footy activities. \$740

The School Disco – \$462

Mothers Day stall - \$1643

Fathers Day stall - \$1355 Both these events run each year by Jenny Maxwell and many parent helpers, these stalls provide the children with a chance to do some independent shopping!

Cadbury Chocolate Drive - \$8,025

Walkathon – \$8,2340

Pies and Slices - \$928

Easter Raffle – \$362

Pizza Days (2) - \$2,319 (estimated)

Biggest Morning Tea – a non-profit event in support of the Cancer council.

St. Simon's School Calendar - On sale again this year for only \$5.

This money raised, combined with our other minor fundraisers has given us a total of over \$29,000 in funds raised, which has been used to achieve the following outcomes:

- ◆ **\$ 7,500 to Information Technology** A yearly commitment of the Parents' Association which was increased this year
- ◆ **Remaining funds held for developing the school grounds in 2009. The new adventure playground is our major focus.**

The Parents' Association has also provided numerous morning teas, both for the parents and the staff in our support role to the school.

In December we will also hold a morning tea in conjunction with the teachers, to thank all the parents who have helped out in any way around the school during 2008.

This is our way of thanking everyone, as none of the above mentioned achievements could have been made without the many people who give so much time and effort to make our Parents' Association such a great success.

STUDENT WELLBEING REPORT 2008

All Catholic Primary Schools have been funded for the position of Student Wellbeing Coordinator since the beginning of 2006. This funding provides for an allowance of approximately one day per week. Some of the aspects relating to Student Wellbeing during 2008 are outlined below:

- Student counselling services provided by interns from the Cairnmillar Institute. Miss Ingrid Jurgensen carried over her clients at St. Simons into the new year. She conducted a smooth transition to Miss Phoebe Lodge who has been at St. Simons for 12 months. She will not be continuing next year. Mid year saw Miss Sabrina Anjara commence her internship which will continue into 2009. During 2007 there have been 18 students who have benefited from the services of these invaluable intern psychologists. This service is jointly overseen by SWC and Lis Thompson as Student Services Coordinator – there is much overlap between the two roles as they have many similar outcomes.
- The Games Club continued operating this year. Open on Tuesday and Thursday for most of lunchtime, the Games Club allows opportunities for a range of children to interact with SRC role models. Games Club participants have been nominated by staff or parents as children who would benefit from the structure of supervised game playing. Games Club runs at the same time as Chess Club. 'How-to-Play' chess boards have encouraged some children new to the game to give it a go. A chess demonstration at the commencement of the year by Andrew Le Roy from Chess Australia was a good spark for membership. In Term 4 two Year 5 girls have been running a knock-out tournament which has 25 children enrolled as contestants.
- Since its construction in the middle of last year the sand pit has been heavily patronized by children from all levels. This facility provides a constructive outlet for the many children we have who are not drawn to the lure of organized sports/games at play times. The addition of shade sails to this area make it a SunSmart, safe place for children to play. The inclusion of a range of sand vehicles for the Prep children has been welcomed in Term 4.
- Attendance at the CEO facilitated Student Wellbeing network meetings twice each year. These Zone meetings have also resulted in the formation of local network clusters that meet once each term. The cluster that St. Simon's is a part of is the only cluster with its own myclasses page for communication that is also utilized by a number of other clusters.
- The continuation of a parent library containing a collection of resources that parents may find helpful in the search for ideas/resources to help them with their families. This library is located in the school administration foyer and is available for use by all parents. Extra titles have again been added, with some of these being generously donated by school families.
- Our first term inquiry topic which deals with anti-bullying issues, the assertive discipline policy, learning styles and group dynamics continues to set the tone for success for the following topics in the school year. This unit is due for reinvigoration and some key student wellbeing concepts are being looked at for introduction in 2009.
- Student leadership has been discussed at staff level following the highly successful morning PE activities coordinated by senior student leaders. These activities have provided an excellent physical option that has helped promote healthy lifestyles. This enthusiasm and initiative has provided the spark for a revamp of student leadership next year.
- The student based Environment Club has been formalized and titled this year. Four key students from Year 5 have put themselves forward, nominating their time and energy to coordinate this club. Whilst there had always been some interest among students to help with gardening around the school, the attendance of the four students at the Knox Council Sustainability Forum provided the trigger for a more structured approach. They have over sixty of their fellow Year 2-6 students enrolled in the club under 4 different groups. Each Thursday they meet for either a business or working meeting that they chair and coordinate.
- The planned fitness course is also intended to meet a range of student wellbeing needs and is eagerly anticipated.

- The Student Representative Council has again been functioning this year. Mr. Andrew Miller has volunteered his time to coordinate this group. Consisting of 2 students from each of the Year 2-6 classes, they have regular meetings to discuss fundraising possibilities, Games Club involvement and school improvement ideas. SRC members are encouraged to conduct a regular class meeting to allow for the movement of ideas between students/classes and the SRC who will then liaise with admin as required.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

During 2008 the following building/ maintenance programmes were implemented: -

- Synthetic Soccer Oval
- Air conditioning in the Parish Hall
- Peace Park paved
- Garden area at the front of school upgraded
- Sails placed above sandpit
- Painting of Grade 3/ 4 area
- School Entrance – Wall carpet
- Carpet around the canteen corridor

During 2009 the following will occur –

- Building of Education Complex -
10 classroom building under the BER Schools of the 21st Century Programme
- Refurbishment of School Hall – under the National School Pride Programme
- Water tanks
- Fitness course/ adventure playground
- Continual improvement to garden areas
- Air conditioners to Literacy and R.E.C. Offices
- Seating near synthetic oval
- Sails over Prep Adventure Playground

It must be stated that these projects are possible due to the financial contribution of the Parents' Association, Canteen, Uniform Shop and the Facilities Management Committee.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Please note that this data is related to the 2008 school year. The 2009 data will be included in the mid year Annual Report to the community.

Staff Attendances on average for the 2008 school year

- Teaching Staff – 90.64%
- Non Teaching Staff – 98.27%
- All Staff – 91.99%

Staff retention for the 2008 school year – 80%

Teacher qualifications –

LEVEL	% of TEACHING STAFF	NO. of TEACHING STAFF
Degree - Doctorate	0%	0
Degree – Masters	15%	6
Bachelor - Degree	49%	19
Diploma – Graduate	25%	10
Certificate - Graduate		
Diploma - Advanced		
No Qualification	11%	4

School Fee Collections

SCHOOL FEE COLLECTIONS	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
St. Simon's	93.3%	94.1%	96.1%	96.3%	96.8%
Like Schools	92.2%	92.8%	93.9%	95.7%	96.7%

Students receiving - Education Maintenance Allowance

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
12%	12%	9.7%	9%	9%

Attendance of Children at School

Average attendance rate – 89.6%