

St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College



Annual Report

for

2005

Prepared by Executive Staff

School Performance In State-Wide Tests and Examinations

Curriculum Report 2005

Overview

The 2005 academic year once again demonstrated the quality teaching and learning occurring at St. Mark's College. The staff and students of the College are to be commended for their efforts throughout the year and for the wonderful results attained.

Higher School Certificate

In 2005, 56 students sat for the New South Wales Higher School Certificate in 22 courses. In total, 98% of candidates across all courses achieved marks of 50 or more (Band 2 or higher) with 40% of these placed in Band 5 and 6 (80-100 marks) and nearly 82% of candidates in Band 4 or above. Of the 22 candidates who sat for one unit extension courses 86% achieved 25 marks or more out of 50 with 77% of these achieving in the highest bands with 40 marks or more. In general, student achievement was at or above state level in 77% of all courses. Some notable achievements are tabulated below:

Subject	Band Range	School (%)	State (%)
Ancient History	4 - 6	77	69
Business Studies	4 - 6	100	53
	5 - 6	69	24
Chemistry	4 - 6	89	63
	6	21	8
Economics	4 - 6	100	73
English (Standard)	4 -6	67	34
English (Advanced)	4 -6	96	90
	6	12	8
Information Processes and Technology	4 -6	80	64
Legal Studies	4 -6	83	67
General Mathematics	4 -6	67	58
Mathematics	4 -6	80	64
	5 -6	60	39
	6	33	15
Mathematics Extension 1	E3 – E4	92	74
	E4	42	31
Mathematics Extension 2	E4	44	31
Physics	4 -6	84	68
	5 -6	47	36
Senior Science	5 -6	75	32
	6	25	5
Studies of Religion	4 -6	100	84
	5 -6	57	40
	6	14	10
Arabic Continuers	4 - 6	83	63

School Certificate

School Certificate results are summarised in the table below:

Test	Number of students	Performance Band Achieved by %	
		Bands 1 - 2	Bands 3 - 6
English - Literacy	64	16	84
Mathematics	64	14	86
Science	64	3	97
Australian History, Civics and Citizenship	64	6	94
Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship	64	11	89

Numeracy remains a College strength and literacy is improving, although we now have to cater for more students with special needs in these areas. Science results have continued their upwards trend to the best level achieved to date. The results for the Geography component of Civics have continued to improve, while the History results have improved dramatically to best ever levels. This reflects the importance with which these subjects have been promoted by the College. The College will continue to work at promoting these subjects in the light of the particular needs of our school demographic.

Literacy and Numeracy Assessments in Years 3, 5, 7 & 8

Results for the BST and the Writing Assessment are summarised in the table below:

2005 Test	Year 3		Year 5	
	Band 1	Bands 2 - 5	Bands 1 - 2	Bands 3 - 6
Basic Skills Test (BST)				
Aspects of Literacy	14%	86%	0%	100%
Aspects of Numeracy	32%	68%	0%	100%
Writing Assessment	7%	93%	0%	100%

Our Year 3 results confirmed our internal testing indicating that this year group has had particular difficulty in grasping many fundamental concepts. A number of special programmes have been initiated, which appear to be helping to improve standards. For our Year 5 students, 90% of students registered improvements in literacy, while 100% of students registered an improvement in numeracy in Year 5 compared to their Year 3 performance.

Results for ELLA and SNAP are summarised in the table below:

2005 Test	Percentage of students achieving Elementary Band or higher	
	Year 7	Year 8
English Language and Literacy Test (ELLA)		
Writing	100	100
Reading	98	98
Language	98	95
Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP)		
Numeracy	98	95
Number	98	95
Measurement	94	95
Space	98	95
Data	100	97
Numeracy Problem-Solving	98	95

The results in ELLA for Year 8, when compared to Year 7, showed that our standards are continuing to rise against external indicators, with 89% of students recording overall progress in literacy.

SNAP results are continuing to trend upwards in all areas, reflecting the improvements made to the curriculum after analysing earlier results. College results are above state average in very SNAP category. The majority of students in Year 8 improved upon their Year 7 results.

Teacher Standards

There were 45 Full-time teachers employed at the College with 43 fully accredited credentials from a tertiary teacher training institution from Australia or overseas and two had degrees and were undertaking a study in a diploma in teaching. All overseas teachers had their qualifications reviewed and were then endorsed by the Department of Education, Catholic Education Office or the AIS.

There were 3 part-time teachers employed of which one was a fully qualified teacher and two had tertiary qualifications and were undertaking a study in a teaching diploma.

All teachers are encouraged to attend a variety of inservice training and all staff attend at least one inservice yearly.

All teachers had their First Aid Certificate renewed in July, as well as some attaining a variety of sports coaching certificates.

Retention Rates

In 2005 the retention rates in Years K to 6 were approximately 95%.

In Years 6 to 7 nearly all students continued at St Mark's College and enrolments increased in Yr 7 by 25%.

In Years 7 to 10 enrolments remained steady with almost 100% retention rates. While movements from Year 10 into 11 increased.

The reason for enrolments increasing slightly is due to the community's support of the College and its strong religious, pastoral and academic programmes.

College Policies

Child Protection

The School's "Child Protection Policy" details legislative requirements (Ombudsman Act 1974, Child Protection Act 1998, Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998, Children Care and Protection Act 1987 and Amendment Act 2003 and Children and Young Persons' Protection Act 1998).

This introduction briefly explains the procedures to be followed, with the Head of College in reporting instances of abuse to the appropriate authorities.

Advice is given and professional development days are set aside to outline to staff the "Do's and Don'ts" when dealing with children under their care and to be aware of behavioural signs of physical, verbal or sexual abuse. The procedure in dealing and reporting of these incidents are discussed at length and are set in place for staff to follow. Two staff members have received training from the AIS in conducting investigations and are responsible for the process. Any allegations raised against staff are taken seriously and the school follows the process as recommended by The Association of Independent Schools and the NSW Independent Education Union: 'Protocols for Internal Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings'. Any behaviour that has been found to be reportable conduct is passed on to the appropriate authorities (DOCS, Ombudsman and the Commission for Children and Young People) by the Head of Agency (Head of College).

Information is passed on to students through Coptic Orthodox Studies, PDHPE and Pastoral Care lessons and at special assemblies. Parents are made aware of Child Protection issues raised through the College Newsletter or notes sent home.

Staff are screened prior to employment through an extensive interview process, with follow up calls of previous employers and referees, and by completing a Prohibited Employment Declaration Form.

Anti-Bullying

This policy is clearly outlined in the school diary which is disseminated to all within the community. It defines bullying as “any single or repetitive act whose intent is to cause hurt or unhappiness” and details types. Teacher responses and sanctions are outlined.

Occupational Health and Safety

Refers to the relevant legislation, incident prevention and management, obligations of employer and employees, and Workers’ Compensation requirements of the College and staff. A College OHS Committee has been formed and regularly reviews policy and situations on a termly basis.

Risk Management

Describes how to identify and manage risks in all aspects and areas of College life. It includes a Risk Management Checklist and Risk Management Procedures with sample plans.

Policies for Emergencies and Critical Events

Defines procedures and drills, duties, and the possible need for Counselling subsequently. The deputy Head of College oversees, reviews and implements policy. Emergency Drills are conducted termly for the whole College Community.

Excursion

Teacher responsibilities for Risk Assessment beforehand, preparatory activities, procedures for organising, procedures following an accident, student/adult supervision ratios.

Professional Standards

Responsibilities of staff for students in their care during class time and at play/sport times. It explains the use of grounds and facilities, and it details security (eg. locking all classrooms when no teacher present) and overall responsibility for College security in the hands of the Deputy Head of College.

Student Attendance

Attendance requirements and the sanctions that flow from inadequately explained absences. These include:

- Using Rolls to record absences, contacting parents, seeking formal notes or contacting the appropriate authorities.

Complaints and Resolving Grievances

1. Curriculum

Junior School

- Complaints and grievances are referred to and resolved by Classroom Teachers, Junior School Stage Leaders, Junior School Head, Head of Curriculum, Head of College. All complaints are investigated and depending on the severity of the complaint any or all of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.
- Curriculum matters are governed by Board of Studies Requirements and College Assessment and Reporting Policies.

Senior School

- Complaints and grievances are referred to and resolved by the Classroom Teachers, Heads of Faculties, Head of Curriculum, Head of College. All complaints are investigated and depending on the severity of the complaint any or all of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.
- Curriculum matters are governed by Board of Studies Requirements and College Assessment and Reporting Policies.

2. Welfare

Junior School

- Complaints and grievances are referred to and resolved by the Classroom Teachers, Junior School Stage Leaders, Junior School Head, Deputy Head of College, Head of College. All complaints are investigated and depending on the severity of the complaint any or all of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.
- Welfare complaints may also involve the College Priest, College Counsellor, School Investigator or/and external bodies eg DOCS or other Child Protection Authorities.

Senior School

- Complaints and grievances are referred to and resolved by the Classroom Teachers, House Tutors, House Patrons, Deputy Head of College, Head of College. All complaints are investigated and depending on the severity of the complaint any or all of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.
- Welfare complaints may also involve the College Priest, College Counsellor, School Investigator or/and external bodies eg DOCS or other Child Protection Authorities.

Enrolment Policy

The College is a fully comprehensive co-educational school from Kindergarten to Year 12 underpinned by religious values and operating within the policies of the NSW Board of Studies. Parents and students are interviewed by the Head of College prior to enrolment. Parents are expected to provide all the appropriate documentation from pre-school or other schools, including: academic, pastoral, administrative and medical.

The Christian ethos of the College and the pastoral policy is expected to be upheld and fully supported by the parents and the students.

Procedures

1. All applications are processed within the School's Enrolment Policy.
2. Each applicant's educational needs are assessed and considered, through the collation and viewing of information.
3. Strategies are identified and reviewed based on the needs of the applicant before enrolment takes place.
4. The responses derived from the interview are considered regarding their willingness to be a part of the School's Community and in supporting the School's Ethos.
5. Parents are informed formally of the outcome.

The School had an enrolment of 569 students in 2005 from Kindergarten to Year 12, of which 263 are in the Junior School (K-6). Our student population comes from a vast area of the Sydney and outer Sydney metropolitan area and have varied social and language backgrounds. A number of students are ESL and some require special needs. In addition, some enrolments include overseas students.

Student Welfare Policy

A Christian College

- The College seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which minimises risk of harm and ensures students feel secure. St Mark's College supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of all students.
- The College implements measures designed to promote the safety and well-being of students, particularly having regard to its professional judgement as to what is required and will include in its consideration. Such matters as:
 - a) appropriate levels of supervision
 - b) security of buildings
 - c) procedures in case of fire (Evacuation Policy)
 - d) use of grounds and facilities
 - e) travel on College related activities and
 - f) other appropriate matters

The implementation of these requirements and procedures will be monitored for compliance from time to time.

- All staff (both teaching and non teaching) are screened for ‘Child Protection’ prior to the commencement of employment at the College.
- Appropriate measures are taken by College Staff to seek to ensure that all students are adequately cared for and supervised while undertaking both on-site activities, bearing in mind the type of activities and the age of the students involved.
- Genuine care for the students is in our hearts at all times – even when student behaviour has been frustrating. Bad behaviour must not be taken personally but rather, professionally. It should be dealt with firmly, but without ceasing to communicate the teacher’s care for the student. Some form of resolution and restoration of the relationship between the teacher and the student is necessary after disciplining. Follow up of students in distress is essential. *“For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry. For the spirit would fail before Me and the souls which I have made” (Isaiah 57:16)*
- If a student feels genuine care from their teacher, they will generally be willing to accept almost anything from them.
- These principles are reinforced regularly in staff and faculty meetings, briefings – at every opportunity.
- Existing staff who go outside these principles are counselled and advised appropriately by the College Leadership Team.
- Only teachers who are capable of effectively implementing the Christian aspect of the College’s belief statements are employed.

Professional Support

- The College employs a Counsellor (2 day per week for 2005). Staff refer students to her or students may approach independently. Counsellor to work in concert with staff, parents and parish to meet students’ needs
- Parish Priests who visit the College may also be used as a resource for counselling students and/or parents where appropriate.
- The College Counsellor will be a resource person who can refer people on to other professionals as required.

Welfare Committee:

- A committee made up of the Deputy Head of College (Chairperson), Junior School Head, COS Head, Administration Head, House Patrons & College Counsellor meet fortnightly to assess the needs of individual students who are facing problems and work towards finding solutions, including rigorous review and follow-up of strategies.
- Mentors from among the staff would be assigned to individual students by the Committee. A plan would be devised and put in place for helping that student. This might include the teacher asking about the student on a daily basis, encouraging, praising good efforts and behaviour, liaising with other staff, counselling, or simply being a “friend”. We all know how powerful such individual relationships can be.

Building Love and Other Virtues

- Staff create opportunities to mix with students informally: eg. Interaction with students when staff are on playground duty, coaching of sporting teams, pastoral care period. This increases the respect and love of the students for the staff and enhances the love and care of the staff for the students.
- A House System is in place in the College. All students are members of one of four Houses. In the Senior School each House has four House Groups consisting of students from Years 7 to 12. This allows students to have the opportunity to mix with students from different Year Groups and Year 11 & 12 students are encouraged to become both good role models and a support mechanism for the Year 7 to 10 students. House Tutors also have the opportunity to play a stronger pastoral role. The House System allows a rapport to develop and deepen, and would make caring for the students easier.
- Pastoral Period occurs once a week. During this period House Tutors conduct pastoral lessons with students. Topics are determined by the Head of COS or the Welfare Committee, depending on student needs.
- School Assemblies take place on a daily basis. It is a time where as a school, we pray together, acknowledge achievement (academic, sporting, positive behaviour) and incorporate activities that teach etiquette, courtesy and cooperation.
- Years 5 to 12 students all attend Retreats each year. The programs for each Retreat include time for staff and students to pray and to play together, to get to know one another, and to participate in activities that develop cooperation. This is especially helpful for Years 7 whose transition to a new stage of education is made easier as they feel welcomed and at ease with their new teachers.

The Student Welfare Policy and associated procedures is provided to all members of the College Community through the Staff Handbook and the Student Diary.

This policy is reviewed and developed through consultation with all College Staff by the Welfare Committee on a yearly basis.

Student Discipline Policy

Rationale

- It is a stated aim of St. Mark's College to provide quality education aimed at the total development of the student in a safe, Christian environment.
- St. Mark's is a College where the welfare of the students is seen by staff, administration, parents and the community as one of the highest priorities.
- Student Management views the young person as a whole, acknowledging that in a supportive environment students will achieve at their best.
- Student Management embraces the development of strategies to promote self-discipline within the student; discipline within the context of Student Management at

St. Mark's College is focussed less being punitive, but is about developing appropriate behaviours and responses in students. Encouraging acceptable behaviour by all students in an atmosphere, which is conducive to learning and to the intellectual, social and emotional growth of all.

Student Management and Teachers

- The Student Management Policy provides a positive behaviour development plan for both the whole school and individual teachers.
- The Student Management Policy provides a plan, an ordered system of concepts about behaviour, which allows the teacher to practise effectively in all situations. It provides for teachers to incorporate the following phases:

Preventative -	for example establishing rules and providing a suitable set-up of the learning environment.
Maintenance -	simple ways for getting students back on task.
Supportive -	use of encouragement, good communication approaches.
Reactive -	what to do if things come unstuck, logical consequences.

- Teachers have a tactical plan, which includes practical responses and ways to establish and maintain order and respond to misbehaviour. There are a number of tactics, well-known and practised by teachers, including non-verbals, I-messages and brief in class withdrawals. Teachers are aware of what not to do and learn tactics like anger containment and avoidance of dead time. Teachers need to know and routinely prepare and apply a range of tactics within a coherent strategic plan.

Behavioural Levels System - Demerits

- The Behavioural Level's System of student management has been designed and adopted at St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox College, to provide an effective system for the management of students. It is intended to be developmental and preventative in nature, and to promote self-discipline and responsibility for behaviour upon the individual student.
- When a student fails to obey the **School Rules** or disregards the **Student's Rights and Responsibilities** the student enters the **Behavioural Levels System**. In circumstances where a student fails to respond to the school's programs, strategies or resources the Behavioural Levels System provides the school with the comprehensive documentation necessary for the student management process.
- The behavioural levels system is used to identify and report student behaviour.
- The behavioural level system has a range of 9 bands, which reflect the behaviour of any given student.
 - Level One = Exemplary Behaviour
 - Level Nine = Behaviour needs correction

- A student's behavioural level and number of behavioural merit and demerits will be included in each school report.
- Students are awarded merit points or demerit points by the House Patron (Years 7 to 12) and the class teacher (K to 6) to move the students along the behavioural levels. Consequences of poor behaviour breaching the school rules may result in a lunch detention, after school detention, within school suspension, out of school suspension or expulsion.
- Each new student to the school, students entering Year 7 to 12 have their behavioural level set to level 5.
- The consequence of a student reaching behavioural level nine leads to an automatic suspension from school for up to a period of 5 days. If a student reaches behavioural level nine for a third time, he/she will be viewed as failing to meet the College's behavioural requirements and may have her/his enrolment withdrawn.

Behavioural Levels System - Merits

- Rewarding good behaviour is a very effective way of stamping out bad behaviour. Teachers often do this by simple words of encouragement. However, we have also been developing more formal ways of rewarding good behaviour. Our award system acts as an encouragement to the individual student as well as an incentive to other students.

Junior School

- Three small Certificates of Merit are given weekly by each class teacher for Christian behaviour, good behaviour, effort or achievement.
- A larger Certificate of Merit is given weekly by each class teacher for excellent behaviour / cooperation in the classroom and about the College.
- When students have won 5 Awards, students receive a Silver Award from the Junior School Head.
- When students have won 3 Silver Awards, they receive a Gold Award from the Junior School Head.
- Birthday Certificates are also awarded to students who have had their birthday during the past week.
- Small Silver and Gold Certificates are also awarded for particular behaviours or achievements.
- Coptic Orthodox Studies, Coptic, LOTE and relief teachers are also able to use these awards.
- All Awards are presented at the daily Assemblies (parents are welcome to attend).

- Students that have progressed through the Behavioural Levels to attain Levels 1, 2, or 3 will be presented with colour coded merit badges which are to be worn either on the tie or the shirt collar.
 - ❖ Behavioural Level 1 Blue
 - ❖ Behavioural Level 2 Green
 - ❖ Behavioural Level 3 Yellow

The badges are presented to the students at the Whole School Assemblies. Further to this the names of the students are reported in the school's newsletter.

Senior School

- Certificates are awarded for academic achievements in tests, assignments, improvement, good behaviour, following instructions, punctuality, representing the College well, community service etc.
 - ❖ 5 Blue Merit Certificates lead to a House Patrons Awards
 - ❖ 3 House Patrons Awards lead to a Head of College Award
- The Certificates are presented to the students at the Whole School Assemblies. Further to this the names of the students are reported in the school's newsletter.

The Student Discipline Policy and associated procedures is provided to all members of the College Community through the Staff Handbook and the Student Diary.

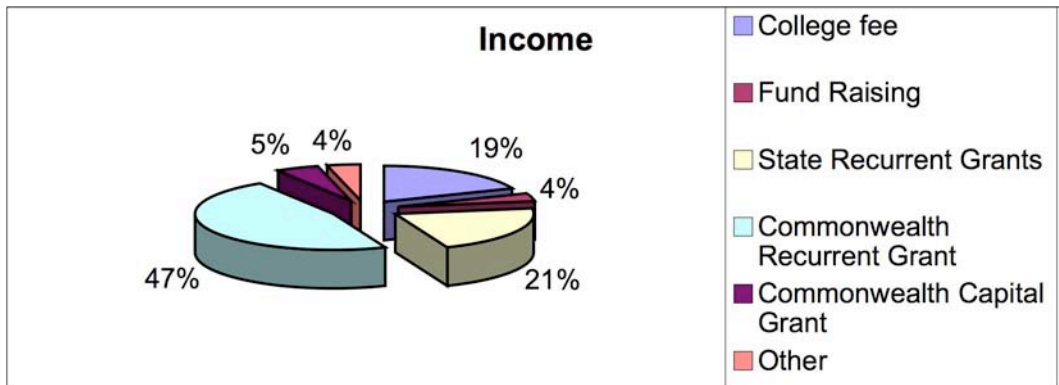
This policy is reviewed and developed through consultation with all College Staff by the Welfare Committee on a yearly basis.

The Complaints and resolving Grievances Policy is currently being developed to include complaints and grievances associated with all aspects of school life.

Summary of Financial Information

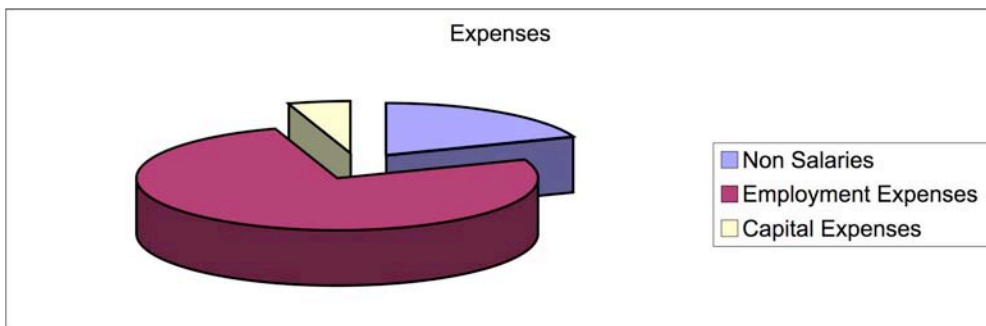
Income

College fee	1,000	18.99%
Fundraising	189	3.59%
State Recurrent Grants	1,129	21.44%
Commonwealth Recurrent Grant	2,478	47.05%
Commonwealth Capital Grant	260	4.94%
Other	211	4.01%
	5,267	100.00%



Expenses

Non Salaries	988	19.13%
Employment Expenses	3,917	75.85%
Capital Expenses	259	5.02%
	5,164	100.00%



Priority Areas of Improvement for 2006

1. Target: Introduce specialised programmes for literacy and numeracy for Year 4.
2. Target: Implement detailed assessment practices in the Junior School.
3. Target: Review the Junior School Report and introduce the new grading system as required by the NSW Board of Studies.
4. Target: Continue to provide professional development across the board.
5. Target: Continue to improve teaching and physical resources.
6. Target: Concentrate on Numeracy in Year 9.
7. Target: Sustain a compassionate and understanding environment at the College that engenders harmony and respect for all who learn and work within it.
8. Target: Introduce streaming in Junior School LOTE classes.
9. Target: Reduce the number of part-time staff.
10. Target: Employ more experienced teaching staff.

Priority Areas Achieved in 2005

1. Target: Increase course choices across the Senior School Yrs 7 – 12.
Achievement: Senior Science, Design and Technology and PDHPE were new HSC courses. The students performed admirably in these courses.
2. Target: Improve Literacy and Numeracy Levels across the College K –12.
Achievement: This is an ongoing priority but the regular review of programmes and teaching practices is making a difference. Basic Skills, ELLA and HSC English results are vindicating this approach.
3. Target: Introduce enrichment in Stage 1.
Achievement: A 1/2 Composite class was created with the most capable students enrolled. Enrichment in literacy and numeracy was the focus with Spalding as support. The results were most encouraging. This approach will continue into stage 2.

4. Target: Continue to provide professional development across the board.
Achievement: In 2005 teachers attended more inservices than in 2004 and they were part of a strategy to target specific areas that required strengthening. Eg. Classroom management, content skills, pastoral care, etc.
5. Target: Continue to improve teaching and physical resources.
Achievement: An additional science laboratory, new library and two design and technology workshops will meet the needs of students who in the past were not catered for.
6. Target: Sustain a compassionate and understanding environment at the College that engenders harmony and respect for all who learn and work within it.
Achievement: The College Pastoral Care Programme had an emphasis on engendering a harmonious and caring environment through specialised lessons once a week. This made a significant impact with less welfare issues being brought to the attention of the executive. This will be built upon in 2006.
7. Target: Continue to operate the College in a responsible and prudent way that enhances quality education.
Achievement: The Executive and middle management undertook this task with enthusiasm and commitment. Savings were made in a number of areas and this was transferred to faculty budgets to increase student and teacher resources in nearly all KLA's from K to 12.