



OUR LADY OF VICTORIES PRIMARY SCHOOL  
SHORTLAND

# ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT 2009



15 LOVELL PDE  
SHORTLAND, NSW, 2307  
PHONE 02 49511003  
FAX 02 49558730

[admin@shortland.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@shortland.catholic.edu.au)

[www.shortland.catholic.edu.au](http://www.shortland.catholic.edu.au)

# Messages from Key School Bodies

## Principal

Our Lady of Victories has been providing the community with Catholic Education for over fifty years. We have a close working partnership within our Parish of Wallsend/Shortland and provide spiritual support for all our families. The Gospel values are integral in all aspects of our school planning and curriculum. This is highlighted during our annual Christmas Carols which are well received and supported by the parish.

Our school is tucked away in a peaceful leafy environment with plenty of space for children to run around and explore their limits. Our links with LandCare have enabled us to provide an environment which is in keeping with the local flora and environmentally sustainable. We continue to monitor the health of our local stream and report to Hunter Water our findings twice a term. We finished the year with a new coat of paint and are looking forward to the completion of upgrades to classrooms both physically and electronically in 2010.

Our Lady of Victories continues to deliver an excellent education for the children of our community. We have a committed and skilled staff providing excellent learning opportunities for all the children and I would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution they make to our community. There was a lot of discussion about the school reporting site introduced by the Federal Government. It is encouraging to see how successful our school has been in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy when compared to others in our area and similar socio-economic backgrounds around the nation. This affirms the work the teachers and support staff put into their programs.

I commend the 2009 Annual School Report for Our Lady of Victories to you and am delighted to have the opportunity to share our celebrations and achievements of 2009 in this report.

## P & F

Our Lady of Victories has a very good relationship with the parent body. The P&F work hard to support the leaning needs of the children at Our Lady of Victories. The school was supported through the P&F by providing \$8000 in purchases and general support which included reading resources and more technology equipment. The Association also provided social occasions to meet the new families and teachers at school discos, a Tupperware Party and a Party Plan Expo.

## Student Leaders/SRC

Our school is such a great school because of the wonderful activities we have during the year. We were lucky to have Miss Claudia from the YMCA come to the

school in Term 3 to teach gymnastics. During the year we had different sports clinics such as soccer and rugby league. These activities helped us to exercise and keep fit while we were having fun.

The Year 6 Fun Day was a highlight of the year because of its great stalls and there was an amazing range of activities from 'The Murky Marble Dip' to raffles, hair styling and a jumping castle. There was loads of marvellous food to be bought as well and afterwards we had our annual Talent Quest.

The Year 6 Camp was definitely a high spot for the children in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade and we are sure we will have great fun there later this year.

Throughout the year we have school masses which are always special occasions as each class gets turns to lead the school in celebrating the Eucharist. There are also times when we can join with the local community, for example, our ANZAC Day liturgy.

Our Lady of Victories is a fantastic school and we were blessed with so many opportunities throughout the year. If that isn't enough, the students and staff are very kind to each other and school atmosphere makes it a great place to learn in.

Alex Delbridge & Christopher Hendry  
School Captains 2010

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## Religious Dimension and Culture of School Life

### Catholic Identity

Religious Education is vital to the life of Our Lady of Victories' school and parish community. We are committed to developing a strong Catholic faith community and identity.

We promote the formation of respectful and loving relationships with others, with self and with God through liturgies, masses, school celebrations i.e. Yr 6 Fun Days and various programs run within the school e.g. Kinder/Yr 6 Buddy Program and Seasons for Growth.

As well as specials times and events throughout the year, we begin **every week** at Our Lady of Victories with a **Liturgy**. Students, staff and parents gather to pray together every Monday morning. Classes take turns at leading these Liturgies. The liturgies focus on a variety of things:

- on the needs of the students at various times of the year e.g. sharing, friendship and forgiveness
- on particular groups within the community
- on significant global events such as a natural disaster.

Through these Liturgies, students are given the opportunity to reflect on their own needs and the needs of others.

Students are led in **formal prayer** several times a day: morning, before lunch and recess, and in the afternoon. Students also have opportunities for individual prayer/reflection time in their classrooms during RE lessons or when the need arises.

## The School as part of Parish and Diocesan Life

The students of Our Lady of Victories are given the opportunity to experience being members of a wider group – the Parish – through involvement in:

- **Sacramental Programs**
- **Liturgical Celebrations**
- **Altar Serving**

In 2009 13 students from Our Lady of Victories received the **Sacraments** of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist. These students, along with their parents, attended weekend classes in preparation for receiving the Sacraments. The classes were led by members of the Parish Sacramental Team.

On **Shrove Tuesday**, Fr Dom led students, staff, parents and other parish members in prayer and blessed then burned the palms to make the ashes for the **Ash Wednesday** masses.

Students from Yrs 3 - 6 attended the 9am Parish Mass on Ash Wednesday, while K - 2 children received the ashes during a Liturgy in the school library with Fr Dom and Sr Angela.

The teachers took this opportunity to talk to the children about the symbol of the cross and how it identifies us as followers of Christ.

During **Holy Week**, students from Yrs 3 – 6, along with parents, relatives and friends, participated in a **Reconciliation Liturgy**. During this liturgy the symbols of Christ's Passion were carried forward, placed in the sacred space and reflected upon.

In **March**, the Parish of Our Lady of Victories celebrated their **feast day**. Students joined with parishioners in a special Mass dedicated to Mary. After Mass the classrooms were open to parents and interested others to view children's work. This was followed by a School Assembly where each class performed one item. All then were invited to stay for a picnic lunch.

In **April**, to commemorate **Anzac Day**, returned soldiers of the Shortland community were invited to the school to participate in a Liturgy and afterwards a morning tea. Fr Dom, Sr Angela, parents, friends and relatives also attended this very special commemoration.

Also in **April**, Our Lady of Victories celebrated **Catholic Schools Week** with a Liturgy that focused on the importance of Catholic Education.

**Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day** are always special at Our Lady of Victories.

In **May**, a Mothers Day Mass was held to celebrate the specialness of mothers everywhere, particularly in our Parish. This was followed by morning tea hosted by the Yr 6 students.

In **September**, the fathers of the school/parish community were treated to a Fathers' Day breakfast followed by a Fathers' Day Mass.

Throughout the year, the **student leaders** of Our Lady of Victories – school captains – are given the opportunity to represent their school at **Diocesan** celebrations.

In **March**, they attended the Diocesan Mass for **Catholic Schools Week** and in **October** they represented their school at the Diocesan **Mission Mass**.

## Teaching of Religion

"Religious Education is a core subject in the curriculum of Catholic schools." (Barry Dwyer from K-12 Religion Syllabus).

At Our Lady of Victories Primary School, a **Religious Education** lesson is taught each day in all classes for the duration of 30 minutes. This is a total of 150 minutes per week. The teachers at Our Lady of Victories follow the guidelines of the Maitland-Newcastle CSO K-12 Religion Syllabus and its Resource Units. Curriculum Differentiation is included in all teachers' programmes of Religion.

## Retreats and Faith Development Programs

In **November**, Our Lady of Victories' Staff participated in a **Reflection Day** at Stockton Surf Club. The theme of the day was "The Spirituality of Teaching". The day consisted of looking at teaching as a ministry or a profession, thinking about and discussing the question 'What makes a good teacher?', looking at the heritage of spirituality, reading about 'Dadirri' (the spirituality of Aboriginal people), and finally reflecting on our own spirituality.

The day was facilitated by CSO RE Consultant Mark Spencer.

## Values (including Social Justice Initiatives)

The Monday morning Liturgies during **Lent** focused on telling the life-story of a person or community that is aided by the money raised by the school's donations to **Project Compassion**. The community of Our Lady of Victories support **Caritas** with generous giving. Project Compassion money boxes were placed in each classroom as well as in the canteen and the office.

In **June** the school community supported the **SVDP Winter Appeal** by having an out-of-uniform day where children and staff were encouraged to wear their pyjamas and give a gold coin donation. A clothing appeal was also conducted which resulted in many bags of second hand clothes brought in by families to be donated to SVDP.

**October** is **Catholic Mission** month. Mr Richard Cootes from Catholic Mission was invited to Our Lady of Victories to speak to the school community about the work of Catholic Mission. In the weeks following his visit, families were encouraged to support the 'Family Mission Box Appeal'. Through their donations, the community of OLV raised over \$380 for Catholic Mission.

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## Policies

### Enrolment Policy

Our Lady of Victories follows the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office Policy *Enrolment (Amended 2008)*. The Policy has been devised to accommodate, as far as is possible, the needs of families seeking a Catholic education. In situations where enrolments have to be restricted because of limitations on capacity, preference may need to be given to children of Catholic families, as defined in the Policy. Implementation of the Policy is via our local school Enrolment Committee which has discretionary authority in keeping with Diocesan guidelines. Copies of the Policy are available from the school, or from the Catholic Schools Office website (cf end of Report). Parents concerned about school fees should ensure they make contact with the school. Diocesan provisions (including standard discounts for those with a Health Card) exist to help in this area, and the Principal can also exercise discretion where genuine need exists.

### Student Welfare

We celebrate the children's achievements in Sport and Academic fields of endeavour with special lunches and assemblies. Each week awards are given to children from each class for outstanding work and exceptional community spirit. The school offered counselling and the Seasons Program for children experiencing emotional and family grief and separation. There are a number of programs and activities that promote the self esteem of the children. These include the "Star of the Week" for each class and our weekly award assembly.

### Discipline

The school Behaviour Management Policy clearly outlines the Rights and Responsibilities of all children at Our Lady of Victories both in the classroom and on the playground. It clearly sets out the consequences of making the right and wrong choices. **Corporal punishment is not practised at Our Lady of Victories. Our Lady of Victories does not promote the use of corporal punishment by parents in relation to school discipline.**

Copies of the Behaviour Management Policy are given to all new students and are available from the office and the school website. It was last reviewed in 2008. The Student Behaviour Management Policy is available on the School Website by clicking on the Policies Button or by request from the office.

Where issues of a serious nature concerning consideration of suspension or expulsion are being required, Our Lady of Victories' Policies are underpinned by the Catholic Schools Policy of Pastoral Care 2002. In particular, attention is given to Procedural Fairness and the steps outlined on p13 of this document.

### Complaints & Grievances

Parents and children are able to approach their class teacher and/or the Principal with regard to any complaints or grievances. Our Lady of Victories has adopted the draft CSO Complaints Management Policy. This policy outlines the steps to be followed when a complaint or grievance has been received from a parent, student or member of staff. It stresses the importance of procedural fairness provisions in addressing the complaint.

A copy of the policy can be obtained from the school or from the Catholic Schools Office. The Catholic Schools Office's Complaints Management Policy (2006) is to be utilised for any complaints or grievances which cannot be managed at the school level.

Issues relating to Child Protection Legislation are referred to the Catholic Schools Office Child Protection Unit.

### Student Achievements

#### Academic Achievements

Academic excellence is valued at Our Lady of Victories. We encourage children to participate in the University of NSW Competitions in Maths, English, Science and Computers, Debating and the Newcastle Permanent Maths Competition.

Those children who have a skill in the areas of Art, Maths, English and Science are invited to attend a 5 week enrichment course held at San Clemente High School.

#### Cultural Achievements

Our Lady of Victories offers weekly music lessons to interested children in piano, guitar and drums. There are a number of children who participate and share their learnt skills with the community at assemblies and special occasions.

#### Sporting Achievements

The school participated in all regional carnivals and trials for many different sports. Many children were selected to represent the region at Diocesan trials. The older children participated in team sports at the Knights Knockout and the Catholic School Netball Gala.

## Performance in Statewide Tests

NAPLAN Program 2009 - Year 3						
Percentage in Skill Band						
		Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Writing	Numeracy
Band 6 and Above	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	50.0%	8.3%	41.7%	25.0%	25.0%
	National Performance	21.8%	18.6%	25.5%	15.8%	12.3%
Band 5	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	25.0%	58.3%	41.7%	33.3%	25.0%
	National Performance	20.1%	20.2%	22.7%	28.6%	20.1%
Band 4	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	8.3%	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%	33.3%
	National Performance	22.6%	25.1%	21.3%	29.7%	27.0%
Band 3	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	8.3%	16.7%	0.0%	25.0%	8.3%
	National Performance	18.1%	18.7%	14.0%	15.1%	22.7%
Band 2	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	National Performance	11.1%	9.4%	9.0%	6.3%	11.8%
Band 1	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	8.3%	0.0%	8.3%	0.0%	8.3%
	National Performance	4.4%	5.9%	5.7%	2.6%	4.2%

NAPLAN Program 2009 - Year 5						
Percentage in Skill Band						
		Reading	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Writing	Numeracy
Band 8 and Above	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	19.0%	14.3%	14.3%	13.6%	19.0%
	National Performance	12.5%	9.6%	14.5%	6.8%	8.2%
Band 7	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	33.3%	23.8%	33.3%	18.2%	19.0%
	National Performance	20.5%	17.6%	21.2%	17.1%	16.5%
Band 6	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	33.3%	33.3%	42.9%	59.1%	33.3%
	National Performance	25.1%	26.3%	25.9%	30.8%	28.3%
Band 5	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	9.5%	14.3%	4.8%	4.5%	19.0%
	National Performance	20.7%	26.0%	19.7%	26.5%	27.4%
Band 4	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	4.8%	14.3%	4.8%	4.5%	9.5%
	National Performance	12.9%	13.0%	10.8%	11.6%	13.7%
Band 3	Our Lady of Victories Primary Sc	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	National Performance	6.5%	5.8%	6.3%	5.5%	4.1%

## Staff

### Staff Qualifications

Qualifications & Experience	Number of Staff	
I. Teachers with teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).	9	
II. Teachers with qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by NOOSR but lacking formal teaching qualifications		
III.(a) Teachers not having qualifications as described in I or II above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context	(a)	(b)
III. (b) of these which are New Scheme Teachers.		

### Professional Learning Undertaken

The staff at Our Lady of Victories undertook and participated in the following curriculum initiatives during 2009.

- Reading resources in the primary grades were audited. Existing resources were found to lack breadth, depth and consistency. Numerous reading resources were obtained from various publishers, reviewed and after deliberation the Reading Box Blue, Red and Green Kits were purchased and

introduced in the primary grades. The materials in the kits are leveled allowing students multiple entry points with differentiated progress. The kits cover the range of text types in the English K-6 Syllabus, are highly motivational and have proved popular with students.

- The SWELL reading resources in the Infant grades were renewed with colour versions of the students' readers produced.
- Review of current Key Learning Area policies and related documents scheduled in the school's 2008 SEVDEV plan were put on hold in lieu of the pending introduction of the National Curriculum.
- Staff attended the inaugural 'Teachers' Visit Day' at the University of Newcastle. This was a unique professional development event which provided staff with the chance to learn about: cutting edge research from a broad range of academic disciplines; information relating to Key Learning Areas and fresh approaches to teaching and learning, including advances in technology. The experience further offered teachers the opportunity to relate the content of sessions to classroom practice.

### Teacher Attendance

The average teacher attendance rate for this school is 97%.

### Teacher Retention

The teacher retention rate from 2008 to 2009 was 87%.

## Enrolments

### Actual Enrolments 2009

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
Kinder	10
Year 1	18
Year 2	17
Year 3	12
Year 4	17
Year 5	22
Year 6	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	107

Roll Class	Number of Students
Kinder/Year 1	20
Year 1/2	25
Year 3/4	21
Year 4/5	19
Year 5/6	22

### Student Attendance (Primary)

The average student attendance rate for students at this school during 2009 was 93%.

## School Priorities

### Facilities

Infant classes were provided with wet areas. The school was repainted externally. Plumbing and water access to the primary building was restored along with guttering gutter guards. Plans and preparations were made to construct a community hall during 2010 as well as infrastructure and cabling for network upgrades and the installation of SmartBoards in each class.

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## Community Satisfaction

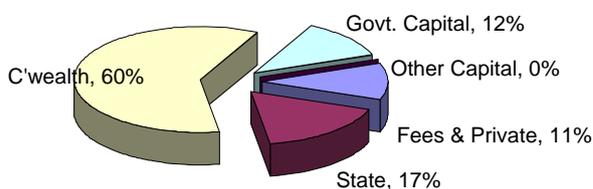
Our Lady of Victories was involved in the SEVDEV process in 2008. The community was widely surveyed and satisfaction in the school performance was high. Complete results of surveys and the review panel's validations and recommendations are available from the school office.

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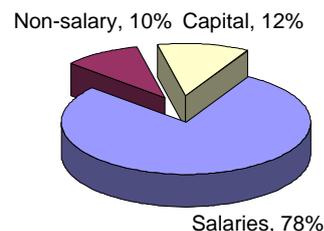
## Financial Information

The following graphs represent the income and expenditure for Our Lady of Victories Primary School, Shortland for the school year ending 31 January 2010 as aggregated from the annual returns to the Australian Government's Department of Education, Science and Training.

### Recurrent & Capital Income



### Recurrent & Capital Expenditure



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## Concluding Statement

In 2010, we look forward to the completion of the BER programs and a new community hall on our site. These additions have brought a great deal of enthusiasm and encouragement to the school community and the value of these programs cannot be underestimated.

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## Report Access and Publication

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

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

Mr Gerry Vandermaat  
Principal  
Our Lady of Victories  
15 Lovell Pde  
SHORTLAND, NSW 2307  
Phone: 02 49511003

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