St Mary's Primary School Grafton

A faith-centred family environment
I welcome you to St Mary’s! Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important responsibilities you will undertake. St Mary’s is a school that students, parents, staff and parish members are immensely proud of. When you come to St Mary’s you become a part of a continuing tradition of Catholic Education which began in Grafton in 1868.

As a Catholic school, Christ's teaching is at the centre of everything we do. We strive to deepen each child’s relationship with God. Our children are encouraged to always do their best, to understand their beliefs and to work and play happily together. They are further encouraged to express their God-given talents and to show qualities of honesty, tolerance, forgiveness, caring and sharing.

As a school we are especially concerned with learning. At St Mary’s we believe learning should be enjoyable. Every child is motivated to excel and achieve his/her potential. The whole team at St Mary’s delivers a rich and diverse curriculum and every pupil experiences a varied, yet stimulating education within very spacious, state-of-the-art facilities and extremely pleasant surroundings.

St Mary’s is a happy and caring school where every child is known and loved. We seek to challenge and support all our children and make them excellent citizens of the future, knowing how important it is to do their best and care for those around them.

St Mary’s is embraced by a strong and committed community. We enjoy a very productive partnership with our parents, who are encouraged to be involved in every aspect of school life.

It is our sincere hope that all who belong to this school will work together in a climate of respect, support and understanding of each other.

I invite you to visit us and explore the opportunities available to your child with St Mary’s Primary, Grafton.

Yvonne Rincheval
Principal
Faith

At St Mary’s children have opportunities to express their relationship with God through prayer, liturgies, Mass, as well as class Religious Education lessons. The school and Parish support parents in the Sacramental and Faith development of their children. St Mary’s celebrates its feast day on 24th May each year, the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, the patron saint of our school and of Australia.

Cultural

All students have opportunities to participate in choirs, verse speaking, dance and music, as well as poetry and drama in local eisteddfods. All students learn Indonesian which enhances their ability to learn new languages and also their cultural understanding of the country. Learning to play a musical instrument is encouraged. A Music and Movement program operates in the junior years.

Community events such as the Jacaranda Festival, the annual show and the Anzac March are well supported by St Mary’s students. Children are enriched through their immersion in the Aboriginal culture during NAIDOC activities each year.

Pastoral Care

St Mary’s provides a safe and secure environment where all students can satisfy their needs in a way that respects the rights of others, and where they can learn to take responsibility for their actions. Comprehensive policies in behaviour management and anti-bullying have been developed. Pastoral Care is based on respect and dignity for the human person and therefore permeates all activities in the life of a school. Special programs such as Seasons for Growth and LAP (Learning Assistance Program) are provided to assist those students who require it. All children at St Mary’s experience a Peer Support program and Multi-Age Inquiry with Year 6 students acting as group leaders.
Academic

At St Mary’s Primary School we are currently following the NSW Board of Studies syllabus documents for the Key Learning Areas of English, Mathematics, Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts, Personal Development Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) and Science and Technology. Religious Education. The implementation of the Australian Curriculum will begin in 2014 as students are engaged in learning experiences that are varied, relevant, flexible and attuned to their individuals needs. Blending traditional educational values with innovative teaching and learning practices ensure St Mary’s students are given every opportunity to experience success.

The ‘Contemporary Learning Framework’ as set out by the Lismore Diocese, supports effective teaching which leads to improved student learning.

At St Mary’s we set and have high expectations, teachers ensure that students are clear about learning intentions and use evidence based methods to monitor learning, set targets and provide students with feedback.

Support

Programs are in place to support students with additional needs. A Learning Support Team monitors all students determining how best to meet their needs. Sometimes this might be through individualised educational programs, specialist intervention or one-on-one assistance from trained support personnel.

Extension and Enrichment

Opportunities to extend more capable students are also provided at St Mary’s. These include workshops, camps, peer tutoring, special projects and classes. Sometimes students engage with those from neighbouring schools in particular activities to support their gifts and talents.
Technology

Today’s students are digital learners. Every classroom is fitted with an Interactive White Board and data projector to engage children in their learning. Computer skills are taught to children from Kindergarten. Our students engage in film-making, photography and robotics using a range of computing devices. St Mary’s aims to make students media-literate so they can face the challenges of 21st century learning.

Sport

Students at St Mary’s experience a wealth of sports. Swimming is the weekly sport for the summer terms for all children from Kindergarten to Year 6. In term 2 all children from Kindergarten are provided with the opportunity to learn dancing under the guidance of a dance team called ‘Dance Fever’.

During term 4 the children from years 3 to 6 choose from tennis, indoor cricket, ten-pin bowling, soccer, netball, aerobics, squash and badminton.

Younger children learn skills for games at school. Pathways are in place for students to progress to zone, Diocesan, state and even national levels in many sports. Physical Education activities occur daily at St Mary’s.
Transition

For those pre-school children who are due to start Kindergarten the following year, a transition program is in place. Children come to St Mary’s for one half-day a week during terms 3 and 4. This gives children the opportunity to spend time with the children they will commence school with the next year and will allow parents to meet one another and gain further insight into how St Mary’s operates.

Playground

Play is an important part of school life. St Mary’s students love their play areas. There is a field large enough for team games, a multi-purpose court, a colourful climbing playground, a sandpit with toys, as well as spaces to play handball, skip or just sit and talk with your friends.

Parent Partnership

At St Mary’s you are recognized as the first and most important teacher of your child. We strive to develop a genuine partnership between school and home. Parents are encouraged to participate in the life of the school whenever possible. This can be through helping out in classrooms, in the canteen, working bees, special projects or through involvement with the P&F (Parents and Friends) organization. Parents are always welcome at St Mary’s.
Experience the difference

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