



Diocese of Toowoomba
Catholic Schools



MEDIA RELEASE

Excitement and anticipation is building for Holy Name students

Holy Name Primary School's winning regional team will be heading to the state championships for the University of Queensland's Opti-MINDS Challenge.

Opti-MINDS is an inclusive team challenge that empowers students to be creative and think in a sustainable way and to communicate this. Students have to be flexible, they have to listen to each other, they have to be creative, and they have to develop their thinking and problem-solving abilities.

The social science team that included Year 4, 5 and 6 students from Holy Name Primary school showed just what it takes to win at the Opti-MINDS Toowoomba Regional Final. Held at the University of Queensland Gatton Campus more than 500 students from 26 schools in the Toowoomba region competed in one of three challenges.

Lachlan Taylor, Year 6 student and part of the winning team, said of his experience at Opti-MINDS. "It means a lot. It was great fun, and we were never really doing it for competitiveness. It was just to have fun.

"It is a little bonus that we got through. We had fun and enjoyed the experience.

"I feel like everybody's helped me and I feel like I helped them, and vice versa. I got to learn about my teammates, and I've learnt some skills along the way as well."

Working in teams of 4 to 7 members, students need to solve and present their most creative solution in a 10-minute dramatic performance. It is an opportunity for those with a passion for learning and problem solving to demonstrate their skills in the development of sustainable thinking processes, the fostering of cooperation, teamwork, flexibility, innovative thinking and functioning.

The Social Science Long Term Challenge focussed on *Change And Adaption*. The Holy Name team had to select a group that exists today and fast forward that groups 50 years into the future to decide what changes would affect the group in this new time.

Kerri-ann Manthey, Year 6 and Enrichment teacher and Opti-MINDS coach facilitator at Holy Name Primary School said, "The reason we entered is for the benefits to our students. They have to work effectively in a team, which is a practice that we know, in real world situations is required. So it's a real priority for us getting the students able to work in a team."

Mrs Kathy Bliss, Principal of Holy Name Primary School, said about the Opti-MINDS competition, "For Holy Name School it means that we are giving children a wide variety of opportunities to be the best they can be in an area that suits their talents. When our students leave Holy Name, we like them to go to secondary school well rounded and having had the opportunity to explore their talents to the best of their ability."

The Opti-MINDS challenge is an opportunity for those with a passion for learning and problem solving to demonstrate their skills in an exciting, vibrant, and public way. Ultimately, students learn how to be reflective thinkers and life-long learners.

Success is certainly contagious at Holy Name Primary School this year with its second Opti-MINDS team achieving a magnificent second place in the areas of Language and Literature. With this much success, Holy Name Primary School is setting the benchmark for next year's competitors.

...ends...

CONTACT: Kathy Bliss | Principal Holy Name Primary School | 07 4632 4694 | kathy.bliss@twb.catholic.edu.au

Photo: Zahnee Walters, Lachlan Taylor, Elizabeth Ganly, Ethan Payne, Dominic Rice

Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools contacts:

Name	Kirsty Hogarth
Company	Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office
Telephone	+61 (0)7 4637 1408
Mobile	+61 (0)438 789 909
Email	kirsty.hogarth@twb.catholic.edu.au
Web	www.twb.catholic.edu.au