

## 6. Principals Report:

### PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2016

**Introduction** In 2016 the Pope declared that it was to be a Year of Mercy which coincided with our founders, The Sisters of Mercy, celebrating 170 years since their arrival in Western Australia. It was pleasing that seven of our Year 6 students volunteered to give up the first day of their holidays, to accompany Mrs Morton and I, to celebrate this anniversary by attending Mass at the Cathedral on 29 September.

This year we also participated in a Cyclic Review conducted by Catholic Education Office. The panel interviewed a large number of members of the school community and believed strongly that we were meeting our improvement agenda. They also wanted to ensure that new staff to the school carried on the qualities and culture developed by long serving staff members.

The departure of one of the longest serving staff members took place in June with Kate Byrne retiring after working at the school for 40 years. Kate would be the first to admit she wasn't the perfect teacher but she was extremely self-giving and loved supporting those who most needed help. These are attributes that we can hope existing staff can continue.

Over the past twelve months we have welcomed a number of new staff. Our new Assistant Principal and six early career staff. I'm enthused and genuinely excited by the new ideas and energy that they have brought to the school and now that they have got through their first tenure at the school I can see that 2017 will be a great year for them and in turn for the students.

The Cyclic Review Panel was very impressed by the facilities at the school and also acknowledged the strong links between St Joseph's and the Parish and St Joseph's and St Norbert's College. The rapport between the two schools is excellent and they suggested this could be used as a model for many other Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools. We are extremely appreciative of support that the Principal, Annette Morey and the staff of St Norbert's offer St Joseph's. Central to this sense of cooperation, and the overseer of the collaboration between the schools, is Fr Peter who continually strives to ensure that the students at the schools get the best, as he believes they deserve the best.

The panel highlighted that there existed amongst the staff an outstanding understanding of what needed to be done and when, however, for new staff there needed to be written clarity so that new staff understood these requirements. Consequently teams were formed and substantial work has been completed on documenting clarity. In 2016 there were many opportunities that we can be proud of but for me our liturgies and sacramental celebrations are a highlight. In recent years we have had visiting priests in Fr Peter's absence. These priests are amazed by the singing and the reverence our children show. I think the Archbishop is also impressed by St Norbert's and St Joseph's as it was a genuine highlight for us when the Archbishop invited Cardinal Maradiago to visit our schools.

Our sporting performances also show how far the school has come over the years by winning both the Interschool Swimming Carnival and Athletics Carnival for the second year in a row. It was pleasing to see so many children trying out for a spot in our interschool athletics squad and over 80 children representing the school. We also won our first soccer shield which was a great highlight.

Our year 6 children also showed their versatility by receiving an honourable mention for their creative dance and our choir also received an honourable mention as did our bible readers and solo singers and musicians.

#### **2015 and 2016 Annual School Improvement Plan.**

In recent years it has been a requirement of Catholic Education that schools develop Annual School Improvement Plans and report on progress of current and future goals. The goals are set under the LEAD Framework of Learning, Engagement, Accountability and Discipleship.

#### **Learning**

In 2016 we continued to reinforce the numeracy practices that had been established over previous years by our hard working numeracy team. Numeracy results across all year levels and in NAPLAN results have continued to improve due to the support initiatives like Mangahigh Maths, Mathletics, Have Sum Fun Maths and the Australian Maths Competition. Acknowledgement by MAWA of a silver award for being a Maths Activ School is testimony to the hard work by the maths team.

Our NAPLAN scores show that we are above the National Average in all ten assessment areas. Literacy results continue to be strong and we have continued our focus on the explicit teaching model and questioning techniques. Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation all show improvement. Although reading results are above the National Average we still need to ensure current practices are consolidated and new initiatives are imbedded.

## **NAPLAN 2016**

<b>Year 3</b>	<b>School 2016</b>	<b>School 2015</b>	<b>Australian</b>
<b>Reading</b>	432.1	439.5	425.7
<b>Writing</b>	442.5	428.1	420.5
<b>Spelling</b>	443.5	419.9	420.1
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	462.2	439	436.3
<b>Numeracy</b>	420.9	413.9	402.2

<b>Year 5</b>	<b>School 2016</b>	<b>School 2015</b>	<b>Australian</b>
<b>Reading</b>	503.2	512.1	501.7
<b>Writing</b>	513.9	485.6	475.4
<b>Spelling</b>	561.0	535.1	492.9
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	576.6	531.2	505.0
<b>Numeracy</b>	543.2	496.3	492.9

## **Bishops' Literacy**

Once again our Year 5 students did extremely well in the Bishops' Literacy Assessment with the All Schools' Average being 60.4% and our students achieving an average score of 73.4%.

In 2017 we want to ensure current good practices are continued and at the same time ensure that clear direction is given to our new teachers through documented policies and plans and classroom observation and feedback.

The use of Information Technology in schools is an ever changing landscape and the impact of the Leading Lights Project coordinated by CEWA is not clearly understood. What we do understand is that we have a team of very good IT people at the school who will be able to make the necessary changes to accommodate this initiative and move to the forefront of ICT Education.

## **Engagement**

Our engagement goals for 2016 were based on trying to develop student engagement by improving our staff capacity to enhance student enjoyment and ability in reading. With this in mind staff attended two days of professional development on comprehension and in turn, classroom comprehension skills were explicitly taught, reading running records were carried out, reading books were purchased and the reading resource room continued to be developed.

Although we have spent time on developing teaching practices in reading, we still have a number of areas that need consolidation. It is for this reason that student reading fluency and comprehension remains a major goal for 2017. We are in the fortunate position to be able to employ an experienced literacy coordinator for 2017 who will align school beliefs, analyse data, demonstrate practice and coach new staff in successful strategies. This is a really exciting opportunity and we have attracted applications from high quality and experienced teachers.

One of our goals is to encourage parents to recognise the importance of students to develop an interest in reading and assist them in developing good practices at home. Parent information sessions will be run in 2017. Whilst reading development remains a focus for 2017 the key goal for staff will be the introduction of the Brightpath writing assessment initiative. This a tool, that has been developed by UWA for the education department, can now be accessed by Catholic schools. The tool allows teachers to make consistent judgements about writing samples by grading them against a large computerised sample in a number of writing genres. Students can then see what they need to do to move upward along the scale.

## **Accountability**

The accountability requirements continue to grow each year and this year we developed school teams to ensure many accountability requirements were being addressed in the school. Occupational Health and Safety, school use of SEQTA, Students at Academic and Emotional Risk, Implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and National Quality Standards are all areas that we have spent time on and continued to address over the past six months. Every staff member from the teacher assistants, the cleaners, the administration staff and the teachers

were involved in working on the teams. Many staff worked extra hours in these teams. The teams will continue to consolidate their work in 2017 for the next school audit in 2018.

We have been recently advised that CEWA has engaged the Assurance Advisory Group to help manage and provide guidance on managing risks within school environments. This will support our Occupational, Health and Safety Team. One important area to be addressed by all within the school community in 2017 will be a clear understanding of our new policy on the Code of Conduct. Some of statements in the Code of Conduct will impact directly on what have been current practices in schools. It will impact on all forms of contact and relationships with students and provide very explicit guidelines.

### **Discipleship**

In 2016 we continued to make Christ central to our school with staff, students and parents provided with many opportunities to support the poor and marginalised in our community and abroad. The welcoming of all cultures to our school by the students is a genuine strength of this community and a reflection of the Christian values that they bring from home and are enhanced in their classroom. A sense of social justice and cultural tolerance is something that we can all be proud of. One of our goals was to Make Jesus Real and I do see Jesus real every day in our school. It is essential for all who work in our school to remember that children, learn far more about Christian life not by what is taught but by what they witness.

In 2017 in honour of our founders, The Mercy Sisters, we have decided that we need to acknowledge children who show significant acts of Mercy by awarding the Catherine McCauley Award. This award will be presented on limited occasions when staff witness a genuine act of Mercy over the school year.

Staff will also attend professional development on Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter on sustainability "Laudato Si".

### **School Community**

I feel honored and privileged to work with good people. People that put the children in our care at the forefront of their daily activities. I continue to be inspired on a daily basis by staff who show care and compassion to the students at the school and continue the Mercy values.

Many of these people are the elder statesmen of the school and there is a genuine challenge to the new staff, Samantha, Celeste, Liana, Georgia, Kathlyn, Marilyn and Ronan to keep this culture of self-giving strong. We have once again had some excellent achievements this year and it doesn't come easily. It comes from hard work and teamwork. I hope this work ethic continues next year.

There are a number of people that epitomise this culture. People like Maureen Carter. After twenty plus years you would think that Maureen may be tiring of some of her commitments but this year she continued to give up many lunch times to train her children for athletics, gave up after school to help guide Samantha through her first year, gave up Thursday lunch times to work with one of the leadership groups, sold books during book week helped coach the Cross Country Team not to mention the great job she does of teaching her 30 year 1 students. However one of Maureen's strongest assets is that she is always one of the first to acknowledge others who may be going through personal struggles with a kind gesture or thought.

This year we unfortunately farewell Selena Meegan, our 2016 Performing Arts Teacher. Selena has been offered fulltime work at Corpus Christi College. Selena is a talented young teacher who will be missed and we wish her all the best for the future.

I would like to echo the sentiments of Marisa by thanking the School Board Members for their ongoing support of the school and myself with regards to school finances and resources. I would like to add my thanks to Marjion and Lucy for their commitment to the Board over recent years.

I think the P & F is one of those thankless jobs within a school community and I'm always amazed at the energy and effort that this group of parents put in. I used to think that the lifespan of a P & F Member was about two years but this group of parents have continued to run events and provide valuable funds for the school for a number of years with many returning next year. I would particularly like to thank Marit and Deb for the outstanding contribution they have made.

We have a great school here but what is even better is the great kids. If you had the opportunity to see how our year 6 children support and interact with each other you would know what I'm talking about.

Finally I would like to wish you a great end to the year and a wonderful Christmas.

**7. Confirmation of Board Membership:**

With the resignation of two board members, Marion Vagg and Lucy Sawkins, and terms expiring for Elisa Rangitoheriri and Mike Saunders, four positions were available.

Elisa Rangitoheriri and Mike Saunders re-nominated for their positions and nominations for the remaining two positions were received from Yohan Vales de Menezes and Jacob Delfos.

**THE 2017 ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL BOARD CONSISTS OF:**

Marissa Dawson - Continuing from 2015  
Elisa Rangitoheriri - Voted in for a further 2 year term  
Michael Saunders - Voted in for a further 2 year term  
Scott Shepherd - Continuing from 2015  
Yohan Vales de Menezes - Voted in for his first 2 year term  
Jacob Delfos - Voted in for his first 2 year term  
Ex Officio Members:  
Fr Peter Joseph - Parish Priest  
Peter Yensch - Principal  
Daniel Nancarrow - P&F Representative  
Laura Giovinazzo - Parish Representative

**Congratulations to all of our 2016 Board Members.**

**8. Close of meeting:**

8.00pm.