

PRINCIPAL'S 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

The 2017 school year didn't quite start out as planned with me being absent for the first six weeks, however, I would like to thank Mrs Savage- Morton, who cut her holiday short to ensure a smooth start to the school year. I was pleased that Mr Kelly, and in fact all the staff, gave Kaye strong support at that time.

It was also the first time in decades that we commenced the school year without Mrs Byrnes, Mrs Carter and unfortunately an unwell, Mrs Menezes. Although their years of experience were missed, I would like to commend and congratulate all the staff on their dedication and hard work, ensuring a smooth transition for students into their new year levels. The qualities and work ethic of our staff is quite amazing including many of our recently employed staff.

At a time when enrolment in a number of schools is declining St Joseph's remains a school of choice. Applications and enrolments remain strong and the school has an outstanding name in the community. It is quite encouraging to hear the excitement on parents voices when they are offered a place for their child after being on the waiting list for a period of time.

Certainly our resources and facilities are of a high quality, however to add to this is the fact that we are extremely fortunate to have St Norbert College as our neighbour who through Fr Peter and until recently, Annette Morey are so generous in their support of our school. Few people would understand the value of this support to St Joseph's. Fr Peter has driven this close rapport between the two schools and is keen to see the close links continue through the appointment of Mr Harvey, as principal of St Norbert's College.

ANNUAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Learning and Engagement

2017

This year there has been a real focus on using AITSL standards to provide feedback to teachers on their classroom practice. This has been carried out through classroom observation by Mrs Morton and also through shoulder to shoulder coaching by Mrs Hoyne, our newly appointed Literacy Coordinator. Mrs Hoyne has made a major contribution in supporting us to meet many of our school improvement goals. We have continued to develop and document our whole school approach to literacy and track our continued success in spelling.

We have achieved our 2017 ASIP goals by striving to improve teaching practice, continuing to implement Leading Lights (Office 365), teachers grading writing tasks according to Brightpath, introducing a Data Wall and a whole school commitment to Reading Running Records. The Reading Resource room is all but finished.

One 2017 goal that was not met was to engage parents in the understanding of skills and strategies that are necessary for strong student comprehension achievement. This will be looked at more closely in 2018.

We continue to attain good results in our NAPLAN and once again achieved above the National Average in all 10 assessed areas.

Year 3	School 2016	School 2017	Australian
Reading	432.1	452.4	431.3
Writing	442.5	442.2	413.6
Spelling	443.5	439.5	416.2
Grammar and Punctuation	462.2	475	439.3
Numeracy	420.9	441.4	409.4

Year 5	School 2016	School 2017	Australian
Reading	503.2	507.6	505.6
Writing	513.9	487.0	472.5
Spelling	561.0	536.3	500.9
Grammar and Punctuation	576.6	545.8	499.3
Numeracy	543.2	518.1	493.8

Through analysis of our NAPLAN results and other data collected during the year, we set our **2018 Learning and Engagement Goals**. The goals are

- Develop a school based reading comprehension strategy; scope and sequence.
- Utilise peer teacher collaboration on the modelling of Explicit Teaching.
- Increase and centralise science resources and re-evaluate science practices.
- Improve student keyboard skills.
- Identify a unified approach to communicate with parents in the Early Childhood setting.

Our Western Australia Bishops' Literacy Assessment continues to achieve above average results with the Year 5 cohort achieving an average of 61.1% percentage compared to the all school average of 56.5%.

2017 Accountability

The main initiative in 2017 was to ensure that all staff understood and signed off on the new Code of Conduct, which aligns itself with the TRB document on Teacher's Professional Boundaries. With child protection, an important focus in 2017, the school has implemented the Keeping Children Safe Program throughout the school. We were able to align this with the Protective Behaviours program that we already ran in the school for many years during term 3. We are fortunate that Christine Pittman has been accredited to train school staff in the Keeping Children Safe Program and is a knowledgeable source of information.

In preparation for the 2018 Audit we have maintained staff LEAD teams which have formalised a lot of data required for the Audit process.

We did plan a mental health retreat for staff in 2017 but it didn't go ahead. Unfortunately we were unable to find a suitable venue.

In 2018 under Accountability one of our priorities will be to ensure all staff are familiar with the new and current school based policies that have been updated for the Audit process. One goal prior to the Audit is to ensure all IEPs and CAPs are electronically maintained and up to date. The Audit will be carried out on May 24 and the school will subsequently respond to any identified areas of need before the end of the year.

2017 Discipleship

In 2017 we met two of our Discipleship goals with a greater understanding of the most recent Encyclical Letter, 'Laudato Si.' The staff attended professional development on the Encyclical and regular information from the Letter was shared through the newsletter. We also presented our first Catherine McAuley Award in recognition of the Mercy Sisters and their values. Unfortunately there has not been much progress on the Coolock Centre but there is still another meeting taking place next week.

Our goal for **2018 Discipleship** is to strengthen and deepen the staff's understanding and knowledge of faith in the areas of prayer, bible stories and contemporary issues facing Catholic teachers today. The school will also develop a new Evangelisation Plan with John Rose and the Leadership Team attending Professional Development on the General Directory For Catechesis.

The 2017 School Year

At the commencement of the 2016 school year I reminded the staff of our great heritage, as we entered our 101 years since the opening of St Joseph's Primary School. I spoke about the Mercy values that were incorporated into our school prayer. I invited staff to think about the pioneer sisters who first opened the school in atrocious conditions, travelling long distances and in unsuitable attire. The conditions were so poor that one of the sisters died of pneumonia, due to her work at the school.

I also invited the staff to look at the wonderful facilities and the wealth of resources that we had at the school and to think about the pioneer sisters whenever something didn't quite go their way. Maybe the air conditioning wasn't quite working or the Smartboard globe had burnt out or their desk was too small. I invited the staff to strive to make St Joseph's a giving community. Not just a community where we are employed but a community where we have the opportunity to contribute positively to the lives of the children who come here each day.

I can genuinely see the staff try their best to support the students by doing little extra things that make this a great school. A great school that not only has high demand for enrolment but also where teachers and assistants are keen to gain employment. Apart from what takes place in the classroom each day there are many other events that make me proud to be the Principal of St Joseph's. They include;

- Our Parish Sacramental Program is second to none, due largely to Fr Peter and the parish and school team that support him, including the combined parish school choir, the classroom teachers and the catechists. The celebrations of our Sacraments are the envy of many other parishes. The recent participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation by our parents was quite a significant moment and a great example for our children.
- We have, for a number of years, run our Year 6 Leadership Groups to further engage our students with all Year 6 children belonging to a group. Each year, 15 - 20 staff put their names down to be with these leadership groups. Time spent with the groups is usually the staffs own time.
- Every Tuesday several staff give up their lunch break to run the very successful gardening club, which has some very healthy produce.
- The Performing Arts continues to be a priority for our school with children successfully participating in Bible Reading, Monologues, Creative Dance, Liturgical Dance, Choir and Liturgical Choir. We are strongly supported by the St Norbert's music department who enter our instrumentalists and singers. Many of these performances require hours of preparation outside school time, which the staff do willingly. I am most appreciative of the six staff who gave up their Friday night to be back stage for the Creative Dance Performance at the Conference Centre. What was also impressive was the fact that 13 staff came along in the audience to support the children.
- Two to three times a week Mrs Pittman runs the lunch bunch out of her office for children to have a break from the playground. This is very successful and is supported by our school chaplain, Miss Palermo.
- Our NAIDOC celebrations this year were beautifully prepared and presented to our school community. This develops a real cultural awareness and reminds us of the traditional land owners on whose land we stand tonight.
- Several of our new staff have placed Science on the agenda the last two years by ensuring that we celebrate Science Week with children who are given the opportunity to participate in all types of experiments.

- The Australian Maths Competition goes from strength to strength with large numbers of children participating in it each year. Again well over 100 students participated this year.
- It is also difficult to overlook our sports program. Who thought that St Joseph's would become the school everyone wanted to beat. This year we had successes in swimming, cross-country and athletics. It was great to see over 90 students represent the school at the recent athletics carnival; however it is important that the focus remain on participation rather than winning. The yellow shirts and the yellow caps purchased by the P & F adds a great deal of pride to the school. This year there have been over 14 different staff involved in assisting the students train for the events.
- To add to the school success, just last Wednesday, 6 of our children won the first Interschool Spelling Competition for Year 5 and Year 6 students.
- The year 6 children also had a very successful camp, which they thoroughly deserve as they have been a wonderful group of children, however what really made me happy was the fact that 13 staff visited the camp over the week, many in their own time.
- I think a final example of staff giving that little extra for the children is the staff dance. Although it may be difficult to believe, we do rehearse for this, and it does require staff to come together on a Friday afternoon for 7 or 8 weeks between 3.30 and 4.00pm not to mention the time spent choreographing the dance. Although we do get some enjoyment from it, on most Friday afternoons it is the last thing we feel like doing.

Although the Mercy values may look a little different to 100 years ago the staff willingness to give, is very much alive and strong at St Joseph's.

I would also like to acknowledge others who work tirelessly for the children of our community. We have had an extremely active and successful P & F over the past few years with Dan as an outstanding President but he has had some great helpers and two of them are finishing this year, Katie and Sarah.

We have one person finishing on the School Board this year and that is our Chairperson, Marissa Dawson. Marissa has been on the School Board for 6 years and has seen considerable transition in the school over that period. Marissa spent quite a deal of time this year being part of the panel for the appointment of the new Principal, John Rose and the effort that goes into this process and the responsibility it carries cannot be underestimated. I thank Marissa for her Board leadership but also all the Board members for the contribution they make to the school.

When I see the contribution staff make to the school it is disappointing when we have to say goodbye to quality workers and quality people. Maureen Carter we will farewell after the Thanksgiving Mass. Georgia Laird and Liana Ottobriano have each been with us for about the same amount of time and have both shown the school what dedicated and hardworking professionals they are. The speed with which they were picked up by other schools is a real indication of their talent. I know they leave a little reluctantly and we reluctantly say goodbye to them.

Due to some changes in funding arrangements, we no longer have an allocation for an Aboriginal Teacher Assistant and consequently Geri Martin will leave us at the end of the year. Geri is a quality person who has a lot to offer to the education system and will be missed. Kathlyn Tay has been working in the Kindy for almost two years and as a trained teacher has done a lot of relief for the school as well. Kathlyn has been a maternity leave replacement and is leaving us to pursue her teaching career. We wish her all the best. Candice Learmonth has been assisting in the area of special needs this year and as we are losing some children Candice will also be finishing, however we hope to see her around the school in a number of capacities next year. Mr Smith will not be here at the start of next year for the first time in 41 years but would prefer not to be acknowledged. We also wish Tennille all the best for the upcoming birth of her new baby. Tennille has already made herself available to come and help with the organisation of our interschool carnivals next year.

Finally I will have an opportunity to say farewell at the Thanksgiving Mass but in the mean time I wish you all a safe end to the year and thank you for being such a supportive and wonderful community to be a part of.