

Final Principals Report 2018

As I reflect on the year that has been, I am filled with great pride and a sense of fulfilment. We have achieved so much this year and I'd like to extend my sincere appreciation to the staff, parents, School Board, P&F, CEWA, the parish and Katanning community for their support and willingness to go above and beyond to make our school the best it can be for our students.

This report written as per Catholic Educations Strategic Direction: Learning, Engagement, Accountability, Discipleship.

Learning:

Early on, we looked at nine high performing schools across the state and examined the programs and initiatives they had in common. We identified the need for explicit teaching, systematic synthetic phonics in the early years, and to have low variance teaching, or a common approach to teaching, across all year levels. We further explored the science behind learning to read and have further developed our understanding for the five components of reading instruction, being: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

We have implemented this understanding in the classroom with the support of Joe Ybarra from DataWorks. DataWorks is an American research company that specialises in supporting schools in understanding the science and research behind learning and helping them to adopt proven effective practices. Joe has visited our school on two occasions, once to train our teachers, and again to model effective instruction lessons to our teachers. Our teachers have set termly goals and, in small steps over the year, have developed some very successful teaching practices. We will continue to develop these areas in 2019.

We have also had Jan Flemming, Curriculum Consultant, from CEWA Bunbury visit our school on several occasions. More recently, she led our staff in National Quality Standard (NQS) professional development. She has given us valuable insight into areas for improvement in the early years, both to meet registration requirements and to be able to offer the best program we possibly can for our students.

This year we also trained Mrs Poett and Mrs Sugg in the Macquarie Literacy Program. The two programs offered, MiniLit and MacqLit, are evidence based and offered to individuals requiring literacy intervention in a small group setting. They have proven extremely successful and can be attributed for the exceptional growth in reading we have seen this year.

Academically we also had a number of students compete, and have success, in external competitions like the Kojonup Speech and Drama Festival, Australian Mathematics Competition and the Vi Baham assessments. A special mention must go to Jed Kowald who was a finalist in the Vi Baham.

Engagement:

Improving community engagement has been a major focus this year. The P&F, School Board and wider parent community have been critical in what we have been able to achieve. The P&F have worked tirelessly over recent years and managed to save significant funds which allowed us to embark on many new initiatives this year. The School Board has shown great faith and support in me and much of our success this year can be accredited to their willingness to be bold and stand alongside me as we've tried new initiatives. There is also a number of parents outside of the two official school groups who have been instrumental in our achievements this year, I'm not going to name them, but to them I offer my appreciation. I would also like to thank our staff for their support this year. I said to our staff, "I don't expect you to help, but I can't build community without you." They have constantly gone above and beyond the expectations of their roles and I cannot thank them enough.

Reflecting back, there really is so much to talk about in this space, so I'm just going to name them: The oval redevelopment (including walls, pathways, fencing, gardens, nature playground, musical equipment, buddy bench, opening day), P&F Sundowner, Family Tree Planting Project, Linda Stade Visit, Cyber Safety Night, Mums and Bubs, School Board P&F Meet and Greet, School Board P&F Mid-year night out, Kindy Transition Program, Harmony Day, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, Katanning Show, Book Week, Open Night, Choir Performances, P&F Fundraising events and nights out etc.

This year we also sought approval to change our registration to include a Three-Year-Old Program. The Minister for Education has approved our application and we are now registered as a Pre-Kindy to Year Six school. Ms Bearcroft will be coordinating a parent involved playgroup style program on Wednesday mornings from 8:50 – 10:50am next year.

Mums and Bubs will be offered again next year on Monday mornings. Being able to offer something to young families is going to be critical to our continued success as a school.

Accountability:

At the beginning of the year I outlined a new staff (teacher) appraisal process. The process is aligned to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards and includes regular class observations, growth coaching and goal setting sessions, along with termly planning meetings with myself. Next year our Educational Assistants will also be involved in a similar growth process. Whilst the focus of the appraisal process is about developing teacher capacity, it is also a requirement of registration.

This year the school passed an Asbestos audit. Whilst there were some traces of asbestos found, there is no danger as it has been well maintained and painted.

CEWA has contracted to Deloitte to manage all operating and financial requirements from Catholic schools. Our school has undergone a number of checks and audits this year, and whilst there have been some recommendations our school has presented very well thanks to efforts of Mrs Robinson. Thank you, Helen.

The school will undergo a major registration audit next year. The audit will include elements of teaching and learning, capital works and planning, finance, policies and processes, implementation of the child-safe framework etc. As a staff we have already addressed many of these areas.

This school also contracted Stephen Dunn to write and train our staff in Crisis Management and Evacuation. We held our first evacuation drill recently, and whilst there were some points to improve on, we were happy with the time we were able to evacuate and account for everyone. Part of this policy includes the new sign in process where everyone must collect a lanyard from the office before visiting the school. This identifies people as registered visitors of the school and helps to ensure the safety of our students. It is also a requirement for audit next year.

Ms Bearcroft recently underwent a contractual Assistant Principal performance review. The review, which was completed by an external reviewer, proved extremely valuable and provided the school with some meaningful insights in moving forward. I am happy to announce that Deb will be staying on as Assistant Principal at St Patrick's next year. Congratulations, Deb!

Discipleship:

This year we have had 24 students involved in the sacramental programs offered through the parish. Our staff have shown great commitment to preparing our students for the sacraments and supporting them on their faith journey. With Fr Francis's guidance and support in leading the faith life of the school each of the sacraments this year have been successful and a positive experience for all involved. A specialist thanks must go to Ms Bearcroft and Mrs Poett. Thank you, ladies!

The St Patrick's School Choir has gone from strength to strength this year. This group of 26 students from Years Three to Six perform as part of important sacramental celebrations in the St Patrick's Parish. The music ministry is an essential and uplifting part of any Liturgy. Our choir students continue to serve in this ministry with dedication, enthusiasm and pride.

The St Patrick's School Choir has been invited to perform at numerous events within the Katanning community. This year the choir performed at Harmony Festival, Katanning Show, Remembrance Day and as part of a Children's Theatre Night at the Town Hall. They have been invited to perform at the upcoming Christmas on Clive, Carols on Clive and The Concert in the Park in 2019. They are regular performers at Bethshan, which is a highlight for the students, as they are always made so welcome by the residents. In this small act of service learning they experience the wonderful feeling of doing something for others that makes a real difference.

As part of developing a sense of social justice the children are made aware of the role of two important Catholic Charitable Agencies; Caritas and Catholic Missions. These charities support the poor and suffering in Australia and globally, whether it is emergency relief or ongoing material and spiritual support. This year the students have participated in Project Compassion during Lent for Caritas. The Year Six students organised a school disco to add to our donation to this worthy cause. In October St Patrick's school participated in Socktober, where crazy socks were worn and we created a faction money snakes. Our aim was to help the people of Myanmar (formerly Burma) 'sock it to poverty'. Thank you to the parents

and caregivers for enabling your child to donate to these causes and in their own small way make a difference to those less fortunate.

Staff Movements

Mrs Melissa Matthews – Mrs Matthews will be taking the next three years off with maternity leave. Her Year One's have flourished under her guidance this year and we wish her all the best for the future and the safe arrival of her fourth child.

Mrs Keona Picket – Keona will not be continuing on in her role as Aboriginal Liaison Officer at St Patrick's next year. We thank Keona for her commitment to our school and wish her all the best for the future.

Mrs Nerrida Campbell – Nerrida will not be returning next year as previously planned as she will be continuing on with her role at her current school. We thank Nerrida for her efforts over the years and wish her all the best for the future.

Mrs Mollie Anderton – Mollie is returning to Perth to be closer to her family next year. We wish Mollie all the best in her future endeavours and thank her for her commitment to our school over the past two years.

Mrs Tara Punch – Tara will not be continuing on in her Physical Education role in 2019. At this time, she is focussed on spending more time with her family and her commitments to her community dance program. We thank Tara for her efforts this year and wish her all the best for the future.

Mrs Sue Anderson – Sue will be taking long service leave in 2019. We look forward to her return in 2020.

Mrs Felicity Clegg – Next year we welcome Felicity to our team. She will be leading the Physical Education learning area. We are positive that she will be a valuable asset to St Patrick's.

Mrs Kiara Newman – Kiara will be taking on the role of Year One/Two teacher next year. She has been teaching for four years and her energy and experience will be very much welcomed next year.

Fr Francis will be leaving us mid-year. In his place will be Father Gerome Dalipe, who is currently the Associate Priest St Joseph's Busselton. We thank Fr Francis for his leadership and wish him all the best for the future.

Moving forward

We have 82 enrolments Pre-Primary to Year Six, 8 Kindy enrolments and 10 Pre-Kindy enrolments. We have 3 new enrolments next year too, one of which is a family returning to us.

Carissa Lawrence will be leading a Year 5/6 extension program next year. The selected students will be chosen based on their high academic scores across standardised testing and their performance in a lateral thinking assessment. The program will give students the opportunity to use the skills and knowledge gained through school to solve real world problems.

Next year we have plans to makeover the Kindy/PP area and will need P&F support both in fundraising for and in building.

We are currently looking at our fee structure for 2019 and will advise parents of this shortly. We are also looking at processes to support parents in making regular fee payments. Whilst fees only make up a small percentage of our total income, they are an essential component, allowing us to provide for our student's things that we otherwise may not be able to. They also ensure that our service is fair and equitable to everyone.

Next year, under the lead of Felicity Clegg, we will be restructuring the way we organise inter-house sports carnivals. At a school level, we will be competing in year groups as opposed to ages. Unfortunately, KISA (Katanning Interschool Sports Association) is not in agreement as yet so our interschool teams will be selected based on a combination of times and carnival results. We see this as a move towards best and common practice.

Thank you



Andrew Gammon - Principal