

Saint Patrick's Catholic Primary School

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2022



"Having faith does not mean having no difficulties, but having the strength to face them, knowing we are not alone." *Pope Francis*

2022 has certainly been an interesting one for schools, as well as the rest of society, as our state was stricken by the COVID-19 pandemic in the early part of the year. We have also faced the challenge of several staff members taking leave for various reasons throughout 2022. While this has meant a year of managing change, one thing has remained the same- the way our school community approaches challenges with optimism, creativity and determination. It has been an enormous credit to the students, staff and parents of our school community that we have been able to collectively and resiliently cope and indeed thrive despite the challenges presented to us. Pope Francis reminds us that we can always turn to our faith as a Catholic community for inspiration in trying times- advice that has certainly held us in good stead throughout 2022.

We have achieved a significant amount in the educational domain in 2022. Our main teaching and learning focus area has been Mathematics. While preserving the aspects of explicit instruction that we still believe are critical to learning in Mathematics, we have been able to incorporate the 'Launch, Explore, Summarise' lesson structure in Mathematics, which has greatly increased student engagement in Mathematics, while providing students with greater opportunity to collaborate and think creatively within this learning area. We look forward to further embedding this pedagogy in 2023. In literacy, we have had a focus on guided reading and have worked closely together as a staff, with support from literacy consultants, to ensure our reading instruction aligns as closely as possible with best practice. We continue to focus on inquiry learning in early childhood and have spent time also developing our skills in delivering the Digital Technologies curriculum. I am sure you will agree that it has been a busy, but exciting year in terms of our educational goals.

There are far too many highlights of 2022 to mention them all, but a few do stand out for various reasons. The Year 5/6 Camp in March was postponed to November, but when we could eventually depart, it was thoroughly enjoyed by all. This camp is always a great opportunity for the Year 5/6 group to grow closer, as they develop resilience and leadership skills. Miss Montgomery and I certainly enjoyed the week, as it enabled us to bond with these students in a different context. Their attitude on camp was an absolute credit to them. I commend the students also on the way they continued to be inspired by Mary MacKillop to be people of service, as they showed generosity and kindness in the way they participated in community service activities for MacKillop Day. I encourage our students to continue to develop the ethos of 'Concern for Others'. We enjoyed the 'Options' program for the first, while a highlight of the year was our school mascot, Patrick the Python, spending time in the homes of some of our students who have strongly reflected our MJR values. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our students at the Interschool Athletics Carnival- taking home the Most Improved Shield was certainly a good reward for effort. A special acknowledgement also to Mrs Sarah Wilkie, who volunteered an enormous amount of time and effort in facilitating our thriving Mini-Stars playgroup each week. This year, we had record attendance and I have no doubt that Mini-Stars has been the biggest factor in enabling us to recruit a large kindy cohort for 2023.

We are very fortunate at Saint Patrick's to have an amazing group of students to teach and guide- while no child is perfect, we have greatly appreciated the high standard of behaviour, respect and compassion that Saint Pat's kids always demonstrate. I particularly acknowledge

our graduating Year 6 students, Adam Edwards, Macey Marwick, Fritz Penaverde, Cindy Htoo and Cruz Rigani. I thank them for their contribution to the culture of our school and wish them well for their future endeavours- they have been a wonderful leadership group.

All of us with children at the school should count ourselves very fortunate to have this wonderful group of staff members teaching our children. Each and every member of staff cares deeply for the students, while showing the utmost professionalism and dedication at all times. At Saint Pat's, every staff member happily contributes more than their fair share to ensure that we all enjoy a thriving school with engaging lessons and fun events and activities. I cannot thank them enough for their support this year once again. I would like to acknowledge a couple of staff members in particular. Mrs Denise Bowen leaves us at the end of 2022, as she pursues a new challenge. Denise has done an incredible job with her students over the last couple of years, which has been evident by the tremendous progress these students have made with their learning over the two years. Denise, thank you and we will miss you greatly. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Mrs Megan Lydeamore and Mrs Sarah Wilkie, who have worked so hard together to ensure that we have a superb Kindy/Pre-Primary learning environment- these students have had a wonderful first experience of schooling. I would also like to acknowledge Miss Jayde Wolfe, who once again was only too willing to step up and fill a role when we needed someone- thank you Jayde. A special mention also to Mrs. Lyn Byrne, who we loved having on staff earlier this year in the absence of Mrs. Robinson. Lyn, you have worked tirelessly and we will always be indebted to you for the way you have embraced your opportunity this year. Lyn, you will always be welcome at St. Pat's and we wish you the best for the future. I must also acknowledge Mrs Helen Robinson, who has again be the glue that holds everything together at St. Patrick's. Helen, I know it has been a difficult year for you and we are all so thrilled that you have been able to return to work and continue to contribute to our school in your trademark efficient and dedicated manner. In 2023, we look forward to a number of new staff members joining us. I have no doubt that these quality recruits will continue to enhance the reputation of our great school.

I must also acknowledge the wonderful parents in our community. You not only support your child's learning and the class teachers so strongly, but you also commit your time generously to ensure that our little school enjoys all of the same experiences of a larger school. I am very grateful for your support. To the Edwards family, we wish you all the best as your youngest child graduates. We thank you for your active involvement in our school, through membership of the School Board and coordination of the Ram Sale to name just a couple of contributions. You will always be a special part of our Saint Patrick's family. I should also acknowledge our P&F for supporting the school so strongly again in 2022 and we look forward to planning together for further school improvements in 2023. Thank you particularly to Cathy Chambers for her enormous amount of work in our school canteen, as well as all members of our P&F Executive for your commitment.

I wish to acknowledge the ongoing support of Father Marlon and our Parish. We have enjoyed another year of partnership, with many memorable Sacraments and Masses throughout 2022. We will continue to work together to cultivate our Catholic identity in the coming years.

May you all have a safe and holy Christmas and enjoy a well-deserved holiday period with your family.

God bless,

Brett Wilkie

