



# ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL

12 Tamar St, Rangeway WA 6530  
PO Box 7156, Geraldton WA 6531  
Tel. (08) 9921 4166 Fax. (08) 9921 6753  
Email. [admin@stjohnsrway.wa.edu.au](mailto:admin@stjohnsrway.wa.edu.au)  
Web. [www.stjohnsrway.wa.edu.au](http://www.stjohnsrway.wa.edu.au)

## **2013 Annual School Community Meeting Wednesday 26 November 2013 Annual Principal's Report**

2013 has been a year of success and achievement in many aspects of the school. The fruits of the structure and processes that have been being developed over the last few years have been coming to fruition. The effectiveness of the processes in the school has been recognised during the State Government audit of our grant and attendance procedures and in the positive feedback during visits by members of the Catholic Education Office.

Our focus of whole school approaches has been rewarded with significant improved student outcomes and achievement, as reflected in the significant improvement in the students' achievements in State and National testing, which will be outlined later in the report.

The success and strong reputation of St John's School has attracted high quality staff. Our enrolment increases can also be credited to the strong reputation of the school, as promoted by our parents and school community. During enrolment interviews I ask, "Why St John's?" Invariably it is based on the high quality reputation in the community and/or the recommendation by St John's School parish/ carers and the parish community. The other reasons include comments about the high quality presentation of the school, the abundance of quality resources, the opportunity to develop in a wide range of aspects of the children's development and the focus on ICT...to name a few. When prospective parents and visitors walk around the school, they often comment that our students are clearly engaged and enjoying their learning. They also comment of the wonderful, warm atmosphere of the school and the welcome received from the students, staff and parents within the school.

During my Annual Report I will focus upon some of our achievements in our major areas of focus, and development within our 2013 Strategic Plan, in the areas of:

1. Catholic Identity; life and culture
2. Education
3. Community and
4. Stewardship

### **CATHOLIC IDENTITY; LIFE AND THE CATHOLIC CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL**

#### **Closer links between the Parish and School**

In response to our Quality Catholic School component review, one of our strategic plan goals was to **continue developing closer links with the parish by members of the Leadership Team and by the staff, beyond that which already exists through the Principal.**

The actions undertaken in 2013 to achieve this included:

- Scheduling the Sacrament of Confirmation to the regular 8.30am Sunday morning Parish Mass so that the students are initiated into their parish, within a parish mass.
- Students in the after school sacramental programmes are welcomed and included in the Sacramental preparation and celebrations of the Sacraments of Eucharist & Confirmation
- Invitations were extended to all parishioners to attend Sacrament of Eucharist and Sacrament of Confirmation brunches held in St John's School Hall after the Sacramental Liturgies

- The Staff/School Board/P&F Commissioning Mass continue to be held during Sunday morning Parish Mass early in Term 1
- The Annual Parish Morning Tea was again held in the St John's School Hall and assistance was provided by the staff and students with setting up and support of raffles. Parishioners present at the morning tea were invited to join the school at the Harmony Day Prayer service held at the start of the day.
- The Parish sacristan, Sis McDonald and Melissa Marquis, APRE, communicate regularly in regards to the assistance in setting up and in attending the school Masses
- Invitation to parishioners to attend Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary school Mass through the Parish Bulletin

### Year of Grace

The Year of Grace continued to provide the school with an important opportunity to reflect upon our Catholic culture and beliefs. It was also an opportunity to evangelise- bring the face of Christ to his people- for students, parents/carers and staff

Actions undertaken during the second half of the Year of Grace in Term 1 and 2 of 2013 included:

- The Year of Grace was the focus at various Friday Prayer Assemblies & Staff Prayers
- Ideas, activities, resources, ideas emailed and shared amongst staff to use with the children
- The inclusion of Year of Grace activity in weekly School Newsletter and a dedicated pin up display Board was located in the office
- A Staff Retreat focusing on the Year of Grace was held with Father Michael Morrissey
- Some Staff also attended the Sacramental Team Formation Day, which also focused on Year of Grace

During the last 5 staff days at the end of the year we will use the Quality Catholic School review process to review our existing **Evangelisation Plan**. School community input will then be invited early next year, before we formulate a new Evangelisation Plan for 2014-2019.

### Year 5 Religious Education Bishop's Assessment

This year we have celebrated a **significant improvement in our Year 5 Religious Education Bishop's Assessment** in which our **school average was 10% above the WA Catholic School average**. A huge congratulations is owed to all of our staff who work together to achieve the improved knowledge and skills in this most important Learning Area.

### Fund raising

Parents and students have continued to be generous in their support for fundraising for Catholic and charities, including the Mission the appeals for the fundraising for the Cathedral appeal, for which we are very grateful.

## EDUCATION

### National Partnership programmes

In 2013 we were involved in a new National Partnership Programme priority to assist targeted children at risk within one year Level. We incorporated the funding and the programmes within the continuation of our Early Intervention Within The Early Years, which operates in our Pre-Primary to Year 2 classes.

In Literacy Dedicated times, Miss Gardner, as Learning Support Coordinator and Special Needs Coordinator, has supported classes from Pre Primary to Year 2. Her role is work with the class teachers to co-programme and co-teach within the room, to help and support students at risk and those requiring extension.

This year, as part of our funding condition, we were required to track the progress of the Year One students. The results showed that over this year there has been a **70% difference between the**

**numbers of children identified as at risk at the beginning of the year to the end of the year.** This is a significant achievement within the space of one year!

The National Partnership Funding for Mathematics enable Mrs Pollard, the Key Numeracy Teacher to was an additional teacher one day a week during the Numeracy teaching block. The funding, combined with Special Education Funding and school funds, assisted with the financing of the teacher assistants in the rom. The additional support and intervention has achieved **21.8% difference between the numbers of children identified as at risk at the beginning of the year to the end of the year.**

### **Curriculum teams formed**

The teaching staff formed Curriculum leadership teams for the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. At the beginning of the year both teams worked separately with consultants from the Catholic Education office to develop whole school approach and implementation in their area. In English, the focus has been on implementing the Australian Curriculum in the area of English and on Spelling. In Mathematics the focus has been on data driven instruction and problem solving.

### **Implementing the Australian Curriculum English**

Teachers have been further investigating the Australian Curriculum in the area of English.

Actions undertaken in 2013 included:

- All teachers planned and implemented the Australian Curriculum in the area of English
- The teachers participated in Professional Development which focused on planning for the English learning area using the web-based Curriculum Organiser programme
- The Australian Curriculum in the English was further explored in Professional Learning Committee Meetings
- Australian Curriculum English Content Descriptors are used in Individualised Education Plans
- Spelling an area of focus, investigating the question - How do we ensure students accurately express and develop ideas in spelling?
- 

### **Investigate Spelling Development and Programme Across the School**

Actions undertaken in 2013 included:

- The development of a set of commonly agreed Spelling Beliefs for St John's School
- Staff reflected upon their current practice in relation to living out the agreed Spelling beliefs and identified areas in which each individual and as a collective group, may seek to improve.
- The teachers have work collaboratively to develop a whole school Spelling overview which includes phonemic knowledge, etymological knowledge, morphemic knowledge, visual knowledge and rules/generalisations knowledge from Kindy to Year Six. This will be ready for full implementation in 2014.

### **Numeracy**

This year in Numeracy we have continued the school's **Gender Mathematics programme** for students in Year 3-6 for the Measurement and Space strands. Targeted support for this Learning Area has also been delivered through Key Numeracy Teacher intervention and the National Partnership Programme.

**MAI testing** (in the areas of Counting and Place Value) were conducted by classroom teachers in Term One, generated detailed individual and class profiles and showed student achievement relative to growth points.

Professional Development was delivered to staff to focus was on how to **analyse the 2013 MAI and 2012/2013 Easy Mark data** in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of class cohorts and individual students. These were then linked to the curriculum to enable teachers to develop instructional programmes that catered for the identified needs.

### **Mathletics**

The online programme, Mathletics has continued to prove itself to be an effective tool in engaging and motivating students. It also has the added benefit of allowing teachers to track student achievement and target specific needs

### **Science**

All new Primary Connection Science teacher resource books were purchased this year, aligning each programme with the Australian Curriculum. These books cater for students from Pre-primary to Year 6 and ensure that each of the strands within the Australian Curriculum are covered.

In 2014, the school is committed to ensuring the Science Learning Area is adequately resourced and that further Professional Development is undertaken within this Learning Area to implement the Australian Curriculum in the area of Science.

### **Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) – Teaching Practices and Evaluation and Planning**

During Term Three, teachers reviewed the QCS **Teaching Practices** component. From the review we are striving to create more opportunities for shared classroom practice and collaboration among teachers, through continuing Peer Enhancement Visits and setting up structures to allow ideas and resources to be shared.

Also in Term Three, teachers reviewed the QCS **Evaluation and Planning** component. Teachers had an opportunity to view and discuss their own and others' teaching and learning programmes, allowing for professional dialogue and reflection. Our continued aim is to ensure we are using research that reflects 'best practice' when developing our strategic priorities.

### **Professional Development**

We continue to research and trial strategies where staff, as a professional learning community, are engaged in dialogue to constantly learn and improve their practice – something that can only pay dividends for our students. Research shows that one of the best ways to enhance student achievement is to enhance teacher skills and capabilities.

Within the last weeks of 2012 the teacher devised an agreed process to enhance their professional skills and dialogue in which peers observed their teaching and give feedback. The **Peer Enhancement** process was implemented in Term One 2013 for Classroom Teachers and in Term Three for specialist teachers. The process encompasses pre visit discussion, observation visits with clear focus, post visit discussion and goal setting. It is planned to develop and introduce Education Assistant Peer Enhancement in 2014.

Staff have attended a variety of Professional Development as a whole school, individual teachers and small groups in a variety of areas including:

Literacy, Numeracy, Gifted and Talented, Reading Recovery, Early Years, Special Needs, Australian Curriculum, Sacramental and Religious Education, Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School and Information Technology.

Early Childhood teachers have had a special focus on further enhancing the developmental play based education approach, the Early Years Learning Framework and being involved in network meetings, in preparation for the implementation of the **National Standards for Early childhood** which will be implemented in 2014.

Christine Kerr attended the International conference for Reading Recovery teachers, which was held in Melbourne and brought back many of her learnings to share with the staff.

### **Extra - Curricular Activities**

Our staff and parents are to be congratulated for the time they spend developing our students' talents beyond the normal school timetable. This has included the training for Sports Carnivals and weekend sporting teams, Music and Performing Arts opportunities, Art displays and competitions.

The children have participated in a variety of experiences to widen their learning. These have included excursions and incursions such as

1. Year 5 and 6 Leadership Camp
2. Harmony Day and NAIDOC Week celebrations
3. Scitech
4. The Year Six Camp
5. Swimming Lessons
6. Hockey, basketball and football coaching clinics
7. Kindy excursion to the HMAS Sydney memorial

We have attained pleasing success in primary purpose of increased student achievement, as evidenced by our results in the NAPLAN and WAMSE assessments

## **COMMUNITY**

### **Student Well-Being**

All staff attended a Professional Development day at the beginning of 2013 to receive training about the implementation of Restorative Practice within the school. Restorative Practices is a behaviour management style that focuses on repairing harm and restoring relationships. Restorative Practice posters have been placed around the school and within classrooms for staff to use as cues for affective statements and restorative questioning.

Our school bullying policy and procedures are currently being updated and reviewed to ensure that the principles of Restorative Practice are reflected within the documents.

To assist in further embedding the Restorative Practice approach within the school, Professional Development will continue to be delivered to staff in 2014.

To also address student concern regarding unsafe behaviour and inappropriate social interactions in the playground, especially flowing from the Downball games, a staff and student representative committee was formed. The committee investigated and reviewed the games, its rules and procedures. The process proved very successful, with the students now taking responsibility for the management and 'umpiring' of the game. The process gave a forum which enabled students to voice their concerns and frustrations with some of the social dynamics of the school. This enable many of the issues to be addressed and resolved.

### **Personalised Learning Plan – 3 Way Interviews**

Personalised Learning Plans continue to be implemented and refined in the schools practices Meetings with teachers, parents/Carers and staff are held in Terms One & Three.

### **Cultural Awareness**

St John's School has offered opportunities this year for staff and students to continue to develop their awareness of the Aboriginal Culture. Both Harmony Day and NAIDOC Day celebrations included incursions that engaged students in Aboriginal customs and traditions.

Teachers also continue to strive to make relevant and meaningful links to the Aboriginal culture within their teaching programmes across the curriculum

## **STEWARDSHIP/SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

### **Enrolment**

We commenced the year with 216 children. We currently have 226 students enrolled, with a confirmed enrolment of 226 for 2013 (some changed in children but same numbers), with still more coming through the doors wishing to be interviewed. At this stage, our 2013 Year 2 and 3 classes are full with some places available in other year levels.

### **School Presentation and Maintenance**

The enhancement of the presentation of the school has continued to be a focus this year, although to a lesser extent than in the last couple of years.

During the December holidays, the Pre-primary storeroom was converted to storeroom and more toilets which now have outside access while the children are playing outside.

The storeroom space lost in the conversion was replaced by the large new ECE shed. The play area was extended, with the fencing shifted to go outside and beyond the new shed.

The bike paths were finally fixed and new pathways into the ECE centre were put down. My thanks to two of our most generous families who donated the labour to have this long awaited project completed.

The canteen is now cool and breezy, thanks to the new additional air conditioning and air vent to resolve the issue of heat in the canteen.

During the coming Christmas holidays, the undercover area toilets will be renovated, with new piping installed.

### **Staffing**

At the beginning of the year we welcomed to our staff, Mrs Emma Pollard as Assistant Principal Administration. Emma has proven to be a wonderful leader who is multi-talented, as the teacher of Blue Earth, Mathematics and Administration relief and as Year 5 teacher for term Three.

During the course of this year we had a number of staff join the staff, for short and extended time, including:

- Leslie Jones joined to cover for Sherie while she is on maternity leave.
  - Lauren Hewitson as Cultural studies teacher
  - Kristen McCaullay has replaced Sue Connelly in the Library who is on leave
  - Elaine Battilana joined as a temporary Kindergarten teacher.
- All have added to our staff.

During the year Mr Patrick Matthews and Tony Scally had Long Service Leave and we thank Meaghan Francis, (Admin Relief and Blue Earth), Janyne Brand and Michelle Scott (Year 4 Class) who covered their roles

During the year we have had staff resignation from Helen Ritchie and Karen Scarpuzza.

The great and sometime sad thing about having high quality, motivated staff is that they at some point move on to new challenges. At the end of this year we farewell

- Ms Panda Gardner who will be leaving us at the end of the year, having been appointed as School Curriculum Consultant for the Kimberley region with the Catholic Education Office
- Mrs Kathy McCagh has accepted a full time ITC position at Nagle Catholic College from 2014 and we wish her well for her exciting new role.
- Charlotte Inwood is going to pursue her career in Naturopathy and
- Pam Knight retires to pursue a list of plans and adventures.

We thank these talented professionals for their commitment to the students, parents/carers and staff.

Next year we will welcome:

- Theresa Crothers, an experienced Kindy Teacher who will join our staff as Kindy teacher
- Tracy Hopkins who will join the staff as a Junior Primary teacher

Some of our temporary staff will also return in 2014:

- Lauren Hewitson as LOTE Indonesian and Music teacher
- Deeanne as Special Needs Assistant

At this time of year people often look to the future. It needs to be stressed and understood that the staff allocations are, like most things in life, subject to change as the need, circumstances and life

situations arise. At present we are still in the process of completing our staffing for 2014. After they are finalised, hopefully by the last week of term, we will announce the staffing for 2014.

In conclusion

On behalf of the school community and myself, I would like to thank:

### **The School Board**

Our thanks to Graham Cook (retiring Chairperson), Ryan Robinson (Treasurer), Donna Nevill (Secretary), Father Robert, Amber Ward (P&F Representative), Rob Goodfellow, Jenny Porter, Brett Morrison and Renee Doyle and Michelle Cassin who resigned during the week for family reasons.

I thank the board for their work and commitment to providing the best possible staff, resources and facilities to the St John's School community. I have appreciated being able to pick up the phone, send emails and meet with you to run things past you for your advice and assistance in the financial and building management of the school.

### **The P&F Committee**

My thanks to the P&F Committee, Katie Winton, Ursula Boreham, Nancy Kirby, Jane Smith and Amber Ward and members of the Parents and Friends Association, for their fantastic efforts in the fundraising and community opportunities they have provided for the school community. For the small size of the group they have achieved an amazing amount during this year. We look forward with excitement to the renewal of our St John's School fete.

### **To the Staff**

On behalf of our St John's School I thank our wonderful commitment, talents and dedicated staff. I thank each one for the countless number of things they do beyond their roles to provide the best possible learning achievement and environment for each child within our care. They are a highly professional team of teachers and support staff.

I thank all staff members for their hard work, dedication and long hours throughout the year.

My thanks to Louise and Lauren for their help in the smooth running of the office and school.

My thanks to our Assistant Principals, Mrs Melissa Marquis and Mrs Emma Pollard, for their leadership and commitment to the continued growth and development of St John's School and all they have done to bring that about.

Through the dedication, commitment and good will of staff, students, School Board and the Parents and Friends, I believe, this has been a year of continued progress, success and achievement.

At the end of the year we can be very proud of the achievement of all at St John's School as we have lived out our vision of faith, in God, in ourselves and others.