



ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL

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Annual Principal's Report 2014 Annual School Community Meeting Wednesday 26 November 2014

Each year I sit to write the Annual Principal report, I am amazed at how quickly the year has flown and all that we have been able to achieve together.

The Prayer reflection from Archbishop Oscar Romaro reminds us that
*"It helps now and then to step back and take the long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision."*

This has been seen as true as I, and we as a Leadership Team, have reflected on the year and prepared this report outlining our achievements for 2014. I acknowledge and thank our Leadership team – Melissa, Emma and Damien for their input and assistance in preparing the 2014 Annual Report.

In both our 2014 Strategic Plan and this report it is also true, as stated in our prayer reflection that *No set of goals and objectives includes everything-* and you will be pleased to hear that neither will my report! The report will give an overview and insight into the main foci and achievements for 2014. It will not, and cannot, report on everything that has happened and all that we have achieved this year.

2014 continued and built upon the success of 2013. This year has been a very positive year, in which our collaborative, whole school approaches, our work and the initiatives of the last few years have flourished, resulting in a year of success and achievement in many aspects of the school.

The effectiveness of the processes in the school have been recognised in the positive feedback received during visits by members of the Catholic Education Office and invitations for the school to be involved in some of the new CEO system initiatives.

Our focus on whole school approaches has been rewarded with significantly improved student outcomes and achievement, as reflected in the noteworthy enhancement of students' results in State and National testing and in standardised assessments at school and CEO system levels.

The success and strong reputation of St John's School has attracted and retained high quality staff. A number of our staff have achieved promotional positions in the last two years. The most recent being Mrs Melissa Marquis and Mrs Gina Burns, who have been appointed as Principals within the region, commencing in 2015. Melissa has been at St John's School as Assistant Principal for the last four years. In that time she has proven to be a talented leader and an asset to our school. She will make a wonderful Principal for St Mary's School.

Damien O'Malley who joined us at the beginning of this year has been appointed as ongoing Assistant Principal RE from 2015.

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 the answer received is that the choice is based on the high quality reputation of the school within the community and/or the recommendation by St John's School parents, carers and the parish community. Other reasons given include comments about the high quality presentation of the school,

the abundance of quality resources, the wide range of opportunities offered to students 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 comment on the friendliness, the lovely manners and excellent behaviour of our students. They also comment on the wonderful, warm atmosphere of the school and the welcome received from the students, staff and parents within the school.

During a recent visit by the Director of School Improvement from the Catholic Education Office, Mr Tony Curry commented about how very impressed he was by the level of detail known and the ownership and pride shown by our Head Boy, Heath Smith and Head Girl, Ruby Whitehurst, when he had asked them about what had been improved in the school over the last couple of years. He, and I were, even more impressed as I hadn't prepared them to respond to the question!! It is however wonderful to hear our students noticing and taking pride in the improvements to our school. This was also evident recently by the number of comments made by the children about the renovated gardens and flowers in the undercover area.

During my Annual Report I will focus upon some of our achievements in our major areas of focus, and development within our 2014 Strategic Plan, in the areas of:

1. Learning
2. Engagement
3. Accountability and
4. Discipleship

LEARNING/EDUCATION

National Quality Standards (NQS)

During 2014 the Early Childhood team, Emma Pollard and teachers from Kindergarten to Year 2, have undertaken a number of Professional Development opportunities to deepen their understanding of the expectations of the National Quality Standard. They have also been supported by school visits by an Early Childhood Consultant from CEO. A Quality Improvement Plan, addressing each of the standards, is being written and reviewed by teachers from Kindy to Year 2 and is due for completion by Term Four 2015. Evidence as to the implementation of each of the standards has started to be documented, collected and filed. An Early Childhood Charter, stating the philosophy, beliefs and structures from Kindy to Year 2 is also in the process of being written and reviewed.

Implementing the Australian Curriculum

Implementation of the WA Australian Curriculum has continued. This year has included the focus on the newly developed areas of Geography and History.

Investigate Spelling Development and Programme Across the School

The teachers have worked collaboratively to develop and implement a whole school Spelling overview which includes phonemic knowledge, etymological knowledge, morphemic knowledge, visual knowledge and rules/generalisations knowledge from Kindy to Year Six.

Radical Reader Programme

Mrs Connolly in the library and Mrs Kerr, our Reading Recovery Teacher, introduced a new reading program for students who have reached Level 20 and enjoy reading novels/chapter books. The children are loving sharing their reading progress and interests with each other. The Years 4 - 6 had the opportunity to design a character to assist with the promotion of the new Radical Readers Program.

Numeracy Co-Teaching

This year Numeracy Co-Teaching was introduced. Based on our investigation of research into best practice, each class, from Years 1 – 6, has been provided with one session of a Numeracy Co-Teacher each week. The structure of the co-teaching has varied in each class to suit the needs of the class, teacher and students. The benefits have included: increased teacher student ratio, increased

professional dialogue between teachers, shared pool of curriculum knowledge, shared student knowledge and increased targeted teaching.

Hattie

Our focus over the last few years has been on school improvement and improved student outcomes. One researcher who has been doing widely respected work in this area is John Hattie. Hattie has analysed 138 research studies regarding the best possible influences on student achievement/learning. Hattie's research enables us to analyse and be in a better position to support student learning, achievement and progress.

Hattie's research outlines that students learning progress can be enhanced by:

- teachers being able to articulate the explicit purpose and learning intentions for the students
- outlining the outcome expectations and specific success criteria for the students
- giving clear specific feedback to students about what they are learning, how they are going and what they need to learn next.

Understanding and implementing the work of John Hattie enables us to develop students who 'are successful, capable and competent learners' (National Quality Framework Guiding Principles). The implementation of Hattie's research regarding best practice has been a primary focus for development this year, which will be a continued focus next year.

Science Curriculum

In 2014, the school has been committed to embedding the new WA/Australian Science Curriculum and ensuring that the Science Learning Area is adequately resourced. The Primary Connections Science Resource Kits, which are fully aligned with the Australian Curriculum, have been purchased to support the delivery of the Science curriculum. The high quantity of materials ensures increased student participation and increased levels of engagement and enthusiasm from students.

Special Needs Education and Learning Support

Special Needs Education and Learning support have been a focus for staffing and Professional Development throughout the year.

The Early Intervention Programme has continued to operate within the Pre-Primary to Year 3 classes. During Literacy Dedicated Time, Mrs Emma Pollard has supported classes from Pre-Primary to Year 3. Her role is to work alongside the classroom teachers, co-teaching and helping to support students at risk and those requiring extension. Reading Recovery sessions in Year 1 and 2 for students who require extra support in the development of their reading is provided by Mrs Christine Kerr.

The Early Intervention Programme has been combined with a whole school agreed approach of sequential desired outcome across the year levels. From the analysis of our assessment data, it can be seen that the Early Intervention programme is being very successful and the programme is value adding to enable students to progress at or above expected levels.

Each week 45 minute Learning Support blocks of time are also provided within the Year 4-6 classrooms by Mrs Emma Pollard, as Special Needs Learning Co-ordinator. Emma also oversees that throughout the school that Curriculum Adjustment Plans are reviewed and revised by staff and that Individual Education Plan Meetings are scheduled and held in Term 1, 3 and 4 with all stakeholders.

This year the new government, mandated initiative 'National Consistent Collection of Data' (NCCD) was undertaken for the first time during Term 2 and 3. Staff received Professional Development on the requirements related to the NCCD and provided all necessary documentation.

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.

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

Literacy, Numeracy, Reading Recovery, Early Years, Special Needs, Australian Curriculum, Scripture Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School and Information Technology.

This year part of our Professional Development has focused on understanding the particular needs of children who have experienced trauma and how to provide effective structures and support for them.

Early Childhood teachers have engaged in 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 Quality Standards for Early Childhood.

Student Assessment Data Analysed

Over recent weeks the Leadership Team and staff have been analysing this year's National, and State and standardized testing results. We are extremely pleased and proud of the progress being made within the school.

In analysing the Pre-Primary **PIPs** data, two students exceeded well above their expected level. The rest of the students' result indicates that the students have performing close to expected progress.

The **NAPLAN data** for the 2014 Year 3 cohort shows that St John's has achieved expected growth for Reading, as compared to WA Catholic schools.

The following table shows the growth made by the Year 5 class compared to their average Year 3 results, which shows growth significantly above National, WA Catholic School and Similar WA Catholic School growth.

NAPLAN Year 5 2014 comparatives with their Year 3 results

	St John's School Average growth	National Average Growth	WA Catholic Schools Growth	Similar WA Catholic Schools
Grammar and Punctuation	101	81	88	93
Writing Persuasive	94	53	62	47
Reading	141	81	83	80
Numeracy	128	92	101	90
Spelling	116	84	89	98

In Literacy the value added residuals indicate we have performed better than expected compared with similar Catholic Education Schools. Each year we have value added beyond the expected average, nearly St1 standard. All areas of Literacy show that the school has performed better than expected when tracking cohorts from 2008 – 2014.

Our Easy Mark Reading Assessments show that the Year 4-6 classes are averaging higher than the State average stanine in Reading, as seen below.

Easy Mark Reading

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	
Average Stanine	4.0	4.3	4.4	5.8	5.6	6.3	* State average stanine is 5.0

Numeracy

The data for the NAPLAN in Numeracy shows that while we are in the normal range it is further away than the Literacy for the WA Catholic School average. However, intervention within Numeracy at St John's includes the co-teaching Mathematics support; MAI and data to assess and set termly outcomes for identified groups, which are now making positive gains in student achievement.

Easy Mark Mathematics

The average stanine for Year 4 and Year 6 are above the State average Stanine of 5.0 and the Year 3 cohort is just below the expected average.

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	
Average Stanine	4.2	4.1	4.9	5.5	4.8	5.2	* State average stanine is 5.0

ENGAGEMENT/COMMUNITY

Student Well-Being

As a staff we have continued to embed Restorative Practice in our daily procedures, language and conversations with the students.

To also further address student concerns regarding inappropriate social interactions in the playground, the staff have worked to develop a whole school scope and sequence to develop social competencies and resilience. This has been aligned with the General Capabilities from the Australian Curriculum and the Fruit of the Spirit programme.

Personalised Learning Plan – 3 Way Interviews

Personalised Learning Plans continue to be implemented and refined in the schools practices with meetings with teachers, parents/carers and staff held in Terms One & Three. This year we have focused and refined our processes to be able to better track and report on the achievement of the Literacy and Numeracy PLP goals.

Cultural Awareness

St John's School has offered opportunities this year for staff and students to continue to develop their awareness of the local Yamatji Aboriginal Culture. Both Harmony Day and NAIDOC Day celebrations included cultural incursions and guest speakers to further develop students and staff cultural competencies and engage students in learning about 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.

Mrs Lauren Hewitson, our LOTE teacher, has applied for and been successful in receiving a number of grants this year. The grants enable further development of her knowledge which can be imparted to our students, as well as increased funds to buy additional resources to promote Indonesian in our school. In January, Lauren will be spending 21 days in Indonesia undertaking intensive language development through an Australian Government sponsorship fellowship. We are also awaiting news to see if Lauren has been successful for St John's to be a host school for an Indonesian teacher for a few weeks next year.

Lauren had a group of dancers perform as part of this year's community Harmony Day celebration at Maitland Park. We congratulate Lauren for her work, success and all of the cultural experience she shares with St John's School.

ITC Communication – Facebook

This year we have endeavoured to use ITC communication, including Facebook, to connect with and engage members of the school and wider community. We have received lots of positive feedback about the initiative.

Student Leadership/Ministry

The Student Council and Ministry continue to evolve and provide students with an opportunity to develop and show leadership while having a voice in appropriate school based decision making and activities. At the beginning of the year the Student Council attended the GRIP Leadership Day.

Rangeway Child Parent Centre

During this year the Rangeway Child Parent Centre Board of Management was formed and I was fortunate to have been asked to be a part of it. The Centre which is being built on the Rangeway Primary School site will be offering a range of programs and services for our families and the wider community.

ACCOUNTABILITY/STEWARDSHIP/ADMINISTRATION

ENROLMENT

In 2014 we commenced the year with 224 children. We currently have 222 students enrolled, with a confirmed enrolment of 232 for 2015 with still more coming through the doors wishing to be interviewed. At this stage, our 2015 Year 3, 4 and 5 classes are full, with only limited places available in most other year levels.

ITC Infrastructures, hardware and resource provision

ITC has been a heavy focus this year. This has included:

- Change to a new ITC company for technical support , with whom we are very happy
- Improved infrastructure with wireless connections and speed. This allows for complete roaming Wi-Fi in and around the school
- Updated Teacher laptops which cater for the need for increased speed to access internet, and to use with interactive whiteboards
- Change over from CEO hosting schools' internet to our own provider has required some infrastructure, software changes and staff training
- Purchase and installation of two Apple TV systems for PP and Kindy
- Purchase of 12 Chromebooks and Management system with a license. These will be used for the staff PD at the end of the term then and others will be used in the Year 4-6 classrooms next year.

Natural Playscape

Our Natural Playscape project has been led by Jane Smith, P&F and Emma Pollard, who investigated the philosophy and purpose behind the Natural Playscape designs. Their investigation included Professional Development and visits to natural playgrounds in Perth and discussions and visits to local schools here in Geraldton. They then investigated companies, organised quotes and selected a company that best suited our vision and needs. We have received the draft design and budget. We are awaiting news to see if we have been successful in gaining an additional grant from Royalty for Regions so that we may be able to complete Stage One and Two of the project by the end of Term 1 2015.

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 Undercover area toilets were renovated, with new piping installed.

The IT room and the Art room are now cool and breezy, thanks to the updated reverse cycle air conditioning. Some other minor refurbishment took place in the IT room, including new carpet and additional electrical points.

Uniforms

This year, after a collaborative process with the school community, we are updating the school sports uniform. We thank everyone for their involvement and feedback which has facilitated a fabulous new sport t-shirt design.

We also thank Di Doust Cramer and Di McColl who facilitated the McDonald Grant for Cricket shirts. The team looks fantastic and are wearing their new cricket uniform with great pride.

We have also successfully trialled a new pre-order system for the ordering of uniforms. This has enabled a more efficient ordering of stock and a reduction in the amount of finances invested in holding stock. We thank parents for their cooperation and support of the new system.

Canteen in 2015

Under our Government funding requirements, school canteens must run at a cost neutral or nil cost to the school finances. That means the income needs to cover both the running costs and wages.

Over the last few years the School Board, Canteen Manageresses and I have endeavored to achieve the cost neutral budget by increasing costs of items, changing and limiting the menu and requesting parental assistance to enable less preparation and clean up time to reduce wages cost.

Achieving cost neutral has been made more challenging due to the number of public holidays and pupil free days falling on a canteen day. This results in the cost of wages but no income. In 2015 eight Monday's income will again be lost, due to public holidays and pupil free days.

Unfortunately, despite our endeavours, we cannot achieve a cost neutral budget for the three days of operation. As such, in 2015 the canteen will not be operating on Mondays. In 2015 the canteen will be operating on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Mrs Jane Smith will continue in a fulltime capacity in the combined roles of Canteen Manageress and Education Assistant.

Staffing

At the beginning of the year we welcomed Mrs Theresa Crothers (Kindergarten teacher); Ms Tracy Hopkins (Year Two teacher), Miss Erica Lee (Year 3 Teacher) and Mr Damien O'Malley (Year 6 and ITC Teacher). Damien has proven he is multi-talented also stepping into the Short Term Assistant Principal role during Term 3.

During the year we have welcomed to our staff and school community, Mrs Lucinda Ruiz (Education Assistant), Ms Lesa Ferguson (cleaner) and Mr Tim Wood (Ground- maintenance person) to our staff.

During the course of this year we have had staff leave for personal and other reasons, Mrs Helen Yates, Ms Tracy Hopkins and Mrs Vicki Cook. Mrs Leeanne Morcom recently retired after 24 years and we will honour her at the End of Year Concert.

At the end of this year we farewell Mrs Melissa Marquis, who will take up the position of Principal of St Mary's School, Northampton. We thank Melissa for her organisation and her commitment to the students, parents/carers and staff during her time with us. We know that she will do an excellent job in her new position as Principal.

Also leaving us at the end of the year is Mrs Sue Connolly who is moving to Bunbury to be closer to family. We thank Sue for her tireless commitment and all she has shared with us during her time at St John's and wish her well for the future.

At this time of the 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. The staffing will be advertised in the Week 9 newsletter.

Extra- Curricular Activities

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

The children have been engaged in and 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. The Year Six Camp

3. Swimming Lessons
4. Eagles' Cup
5. Harmony Day celebrations
6. Culture Performance at Maitland Park
7. Scitech
8. Hockey, basketball, cricket and football coaching clinics
9. Year Six NAIDOC Week St Lawrence's School Visit
10. Year 4/5 Excursion to view World Cup Trophy
11. Incursions – including Musica Viva, Paint Storm & NAIDOC Day Sean Choolburra

DISCIPLESHIP/CATHOLIC IDENTITY;LIFE AND THE CATHOLIC CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL

Closer links between the Parish and School

Our commitment to developing and maintaining strong links and relationships with the St John's Parish has continued during 2014.

The year began with Staff/School Board/P&F Commissioning Mass held during Sunday morning Parish Mass. Parishioners were also invited to join the Staff, Board and P&F for a sausage sizzle after Mass.

The Annual Parish Morning Tea was held in St John's School Hall. The parishioners love seeing the staff and senior students assist them and enjoy sharing conversations together.

The Sacrament of Eucharist and Confirmation are celebrated within Parish Masses. This has enabled the parishioners, students and their families to celebrate these two very important liturgical events together. Parishioners were also invited to attend the brunches held in the Hall at the conclusion of the Masses.

Evangelisation

During this year we have reviewed, revised and formulated our 2014-2019 Evangelisation Plan, which articulates how we will live our vision and mission.

At the end of Term Three the Leadership Team attended the New Evangelisation Conference with Archbishop Timothy Costello, Bishop Justin Bianchini and Sister Virginia Bourke, which was very inspirational.

During the year, the staff shared a retreat in which we focused on developing a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. We delved into the history and background of the Hebrew (Old) Testament and the Christian (New) Testament. The retreat was thoroughly enjoyed by the staff and it enabled a deeper understanding and connection with the Scriptures for our own faith journey and what we can bring to our students.

Fruit of the Spirit

This year we have revitalised the Fruit of the Spirit programme within the school. The programme is based on Galatians 5:22. Through the gift of Baptism (and the Sacrament of Confirmation) we are called to live and grow in the nine Fruit of the Spirit. As we live out the gifts of our Baptism and Confirmation we strive to allow the Spirit to dwell within us and to become part of our daily lives. This can be achieved if we continually reflect on the nine Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Trustfulness, Goodness, Gentleness and Self-Control. Each week as a school we focus on bringing forth one of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Fundraising

Parents and students have continued to be generous in their support for fundraising for Catholic Missions and charities, including the Communio Market Day, Catholic Mission's Socktober Appeal, Wheelchair for Kids in Term 4, the Pyjama Drive for the school in India and the fundraising for the Cathedral appeal, for which we are very grateful.

In conclusion

In conclusion, the success and achievement reported upon did not just happen. It took the collaborative commitment of numerous people within our St John's School community. On behalf of the school community and myself, I would like to take this opportunity to thank:

The School Board

My thanks to our school Board members of Stephany Keeffe (Chairperson), Father Michael, Brett Morrison, (Vice Chairperson), Ryan Robinson (Treasurer), Amber Ward (P&F Representative) and I thank co-opted members: Kym Trenfield (Secretary) and Anita Chadwick.

Thank you to our members who retired during the year due to personal and work commitments: Rob Goodfellow, Jenny Porter, Donna Nevill, Father Andrew and Scott Rubery.

I have appreciated being able to pick up the phone, send emails and meet with the Board to run things past you and have assistance in the financial, planning and resource management of the school and thank you for the time and work you give for the betterment of our school.

The P&F Committee

My thanks to the P&F Committee, Katie Winton (President), Nadine Heitman (Vice President); Jane Smith (Secretary) Nancy Kirby (Treasurer), Amber Ward (School Board Representative) and members of the Parents and Friend Association, for their fantastic efforts in the fundraising and community building opportunities they have provided for the school community. For the small size of the group they have achieved an amazing amount during this year.

A special mention and thanks to Jane Smith, our 2014 Fete Committee Chairperson, who did a fantastic job at coordinating the stall coordinators. Everyone has commented and agreed that the 2014 Fete had a fantastic community, enjoyable feel to it. Jane has also worked with Emma Pollard in leading the Natural Playscape initiative. We thank Jane for her tireless commitment to St John's School community.

To the Staff

We have the most amazingly, talented and generous staff and I thank each and every one of them for the countless things they consistently do over and above their roles for the good of the students, each other and the school community. They are dedicated, flexible and as well as being generous, are a highly professional team of teachers and support staff.

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

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

My thanks again to 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.

Upon reflection, 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 and achievement for our students and the school community.

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.

To conclude with a return to our prayer reflection- this year

"We lay foundations that will need further development."

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest."

As we move to a new year in 2015, I give blessing for all that has taken place along our journey in 2014 and present the attached 2015 School Improvement Plan Overview in which

'We plant the seeds that one day will grow...knowing that they hold future promise'- in 2015.