

2021 AGM - PRINCIPAL'S REPORT



Good evening and a warm welcome to everyone.

These moments where we stop and reflect on the year that was are great opportunities. This is an opportunity for us to stop and remember our 'why'. Why are we here? What is our purpose? The mantra in Catholic Education in recent years has been 'Christ Centered, Child Focused'. I think all of us – staff and parents alike can answer that a huge part of our why is being motivated by wanting the best for the children in our care – child focused. I believe for staff who chose Catholic education, a significant part of the why is that element of being 'Christ centered':

'How can I serve you God?'

'How do I use my gifts and talents you have given me to serve you?'

And for families who chose a Catholic education there is also the answer to that 'why' that is considered in those two elements – Christ centered, child focused.

Whilst we have excellent staff who are generous with their time and talents, great programs in place for the benefit of our children – all of which help open doors and remove obstacles, what ultimately distinguishes us is that we are centered on Christ – that we are about the whole integrated person created in His image and likeness. What a huge privilege this is!

Being Christ centered also means we strive to bring Christ into all our relationships. Teachers to students, students to students, staff to other members of staff, teachers to parents, parents to parents – in exploring the life of our patron St John Paul II we hear him emphasise over and over 'relationships' – because it is in community we so often discover Christ and learn to let Him live among us and through us. Being in a smaller school means we are more easily able to be community – to be like family to one another. To know children's names in other classes – to know parents in our midst – our home away from home. So, while we celebrate our achievements this year...and they are worth celebrating – let's also take the time to remember and celebrate the big 'why' of what brings us together.

It's an honour and privilege to be here!

Religious Education:

St John Paul II Catholic Primary School community is centered on Jesus Christ and shaped by the spiritual gifts of unity, compassion and forgiveness. Our evangelisation plan provides us an opportunity to reflect on what our core business is as a Catholic school. We have prioritised providing regular enriching prayer experiences that focus on our relationship with Jesus in classes and as a school and bringing Bible stories to life.

We will continue to prioritise prayer but will be looking to introduce a new program throughout the school, 'Making Jesus Real', from 2022. We are also endeavouring to introduce a greater awareness of service and reaching out to the needs amongst us and around us.

We held a successful on-site staff retreat day this year with John Topliss. Our Retreat theme was 'Head, Hearts and Hands' - put simply, the more we come to know Jesus (head), the more we come to love (hearts) and want to serve (hands) – This will be part of our ongoing formation with staff.

We are grateful to have Fr Vinh's presence in our school community and for giving us his time to celebrate Masses with the school community. We thank Nicholas who has assisted Fr Vinh by coming around to classes each week for visits related to the themes in their Religious Education units and for leading classes through their Liturgies.



Weekend Masses celebrating First Eucharist and Confirmation were celebrated through the year and we look forward to celebrating the Sacrament of Penance with our Year 3 classes.

The excitement continues to build as we see the ground work proceeding for our new church. On our return to school next year we are sure to see significant developments. Hopefully, this time next year we will be celebrating the completion of the church building.

One of the activities that occurs in our school community which has proved to be an integral part of supporting the faith life of the school is our hymn singing sessions. We are grateful to the Anne Dalton and Deliah Perrera for their work in this area.

Throughout this year our school community has supported a variety of charities including Project Compassion, Lifelink run by the Archdiocese of Perth and Saint Vincent's Orphanage in Vietnam. The school is currently undertaking to help out the St John Paul II Care Christmas Hamper Appeal. We also supported charities with a 'fun' raiser coinciding with SJP2's Feast Day. Thank you to those who have generously supported these charities.

Education

We are now at the close of one three-year strategic plan and ready to begin a new one. Our aspiration to see the school's NAPLAN results move from below CEWA 'like schools' to above CEWA 'like schools' was realised in 2019, for the first time, in both Spelling and Writing. Continued progress has been seen in 2021 NAPLAN and confirmed in our PAT data. We will now be seeking to embed many of the practices that have led to improvement and ensuring consistency across the school in whole school practice.

This year we continued to maintain a focus on early intervention in the early years through the mini lit program run by Mrs Rae Murphy. We offered a stem program run by Mrs Jodie Deurloo for the middle and upper students. As well as continuing to offer these support programs we intend to use Mr Bigwood to oversee a support program for numeracy in 2022.

Shine Time was introduced this year. Shine Time has provided an excellent opportunity for students to explore and develop in areas of interest. Students from Year 3 to 6 were able to choose to be part of the school band or dance group. Other students in Year 3 to 6 were able to rotate each term to explore other areas including robotics, cooking, craft, design and magic tricks.

Classroom visits will continue to help support consistency. The distributed leadership model incorporates a collective efficacy approach and continues to empower staff and drive change.

I thank staff for their willingness to embrace change, which is always evolving, and support each other through the process. Our staff work so well as a team and work hard to care for one another's wellbeing in what is often a demanding environment. I'm confident this will continue in order to build on improved results.

Play Group

Our Friday morning play group continues to be popular with parents and members of the community. A huge thanks to Joan Ring who provides wonderful opportunities for pre-school children to listen to and discuss stories, do a craft activity and have an indoor/outdoor play session. Parents also appreciate the opportunity to work with their child as well as socialise with each other. I'd particularly like to acknowledge and express gratitude on behalf of the school community to Joan and Mrs Edwina Cannon who volunteered to provide an extra day of play group in Term 4.

Performing Arts:

Our main participation in performing arts outside of the school community this year was One Big Voice. The choir numbers swelled to 37 in anticipation of this extremely rewarding experience for all of the children involved. We even



had three students selected to do individual parts, one who was also invited to be part of the studio choir. The choir's excellent participation reflected the culture of singing within our school community which we look forward to enjoying more of when classes sing carols on our upcoming P&F Christmas Picnic Evening.

Many other performing arts activities took place throughout the year including the Harmony night performances, the Battle of the Bands, Indonesian performances and our wonderful dance group. We are grateful to the staff who give of their time and talents to provide these performance opportunities to our children.

Sports:

In the sporting arena, students competed in cross country and athletics carnivals at school and were taken to swimming lessons.

Students from Year 3 to 6 had various opportunities to compete in the interschool arena. Interschool events including swimming, an athletics carnival and three lightning carnivals.

A big thanks must go to Mrs Jane Cullen for organising not just the main sporting opportunities but also the extra-curricular activities after school. Thanks also to the teachers who helped organise teams, assisted with training and officiated or supervised at events.

Library

The school library has had another great year of events and fundraising.

The Book Fair added to a most enjoyable Open Night in June where \$2250 was raised which gave us a commission of \$675 to spend on new library books and resources. A new compactus was purchased adding to the functionality of our library. Mrs Murphy's daughter, Jorja, came in organise a variety of World Ocean Day activities for students.

The Big Book Swap was held at the end of Term 3. Students donated their unwanted books and \$250 was raised. All proceeds went towards the Indigenous Literacy Foundation for the purchase of books and resources.

The library held its annual Book Week in August. The Theme this year was 'Old Worlds, New Worlds, Other Worlds' Throughout this jam-packed week children and teachers enjoyed dressing up as their favourite book characters and participated in competitions and book week related activities. Mrs Murphy and her offsider Mrs Jenny Baxter had us all in stitches as they entertained us at the parade. Mr Raftos also made an interesting appearance. We enjoy these opportunities to laugh together as a community.

The library is also open during lunch times providing children an opportunity to engage in computer, reading and game activities.

Thanks Lyn and Rae for the work you do in presenting the library as an interesting place to be!

Social Worker

I thank Tracy who assists children and families in the St John Paul II school community with issues that may impact on a child's learning or a child's overall functioning.

Aside from 1-1 support, some of the programmes and activities operating this year included Keeping Safe, UR Strong- Friendology, Seasons for Growth, Grow Your Mind and small groups offering the opportunity to enhance a sense of belonging and connection.

A sensory Integration Program – Coordinated by the School Chaplaincy Worker, Jenny Baxter, continues to support students who have additional sensory needs.



Thanks to Tracy and Jenny for continuing to deliver a complex service that responds to the difficulties that many children and families are facing.

Learning Centre

Our aim at St John Paul II is to give all students the support needed to participate in education that fully develops their knowledge, skills and understandings. We endeavour to ensure that all students gain the most out of their school experience physically, socially and academically.

The learning Centre is in its sixth year of operation. It provides a facility where students with special needs have access to practical learning opportunities alongside mainstream learning. It provides opportunities to incorporate the sensory requirements, behaviour management strategies and self-care of the individual students where necessary, so as to maximise their learning and participation within their class.

Our learning environment is an active example of our school's commitment to be an inclusive community which supports the student and family while promoting compassion and acceptance within the whole school community.

Students attending the learning centre range from Year 1 to Year 6 and have varying cognitive abilities. Each student works according to a carefully designed individual education plan which caters to their specific needs and ability. The plans are developed in consultation with the classroom teacher, educational assistant and disability support coordinator.

The additional support provided by our educational assistants and the implementation of a modified curriculum also enables students to be supported in their regular class.

The success of the learning centre and the work within the classrooms to support all students is testament to the hard work and commitment of all our educational assistants and teachers.

IT

At St John Paul II, we have a continued focus on digital literacy and skills. The ICT team is working towards students being given the opportunity to become innovative creators of digital solutions, effective users of digital systems and critical consumers of information conveyed by digital systems.

This year staff have received ongoing training through PLC sessions and Tech Time sessions, to upskill themselves in the latest technological programs and devices accessible here at St John Paul II. Thank you to Miss Jade Alaga and the ICT team for working with staff to incorporate such things as coding, Dash & Dot Robots and Spheros. The ICT Team has also redistributed iPads around the school and provided the Learning Centre with dedicated iPads for students with special needs.

Thank you to Mr Nic Bigwood and Mailyn for all their ground work in setting us up to begin a new role out of iPads which will begin next year and continue each year after that as we work toward giving all students access to iPads.

Office Staff

What would we do without this incredible team? The leadership team work very closely with the office staff. Schools are complex organisations and we are so thankful to Di, Lea and Jo who continue to demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to perform a wide range of tasks to keep things running smoothly.

Mailyn oversees the finances and has worked so hard to submit a balanced budget in a tough financial climate with increasingly complex system wide demands. Mailyn's assistance on the front desk in supporting office staff when required is also much appreciated.



Groundsman

Rod joined us late last year and has come at a time when the workload has increased exponentially. As well as the many odd jobs, maintenance issues and general keeping of the grounds, Rod has been involved in the redevelopment of our playground, adding boats and vehicles to play areas, setting up new fencing and much of the preparatory work around the school needed with the church and presbytery sites being prepared.

To help cope with the huge workload, Rob has had the much needed assistance of Richard Poole this term.

Vickey and Nic

I would particularly like to thank our Assistant Principals, Nic and Vickey this semester in particular, but throughout the year. I am very appreciative of the huge role they play as part of the leadership team of the school. Thanks, Vickey for stepping in again with little handover, hitting the ground running.

There is a great deal of behind the scenes work that both Nic and Vickey's roles encompass. They are constantly juggling meeting needs of students, staff, parents and system - they do it generously and nearly always with a smile.

Staff

Staff members have displayed on many occasions their commitment and dedication. They continue to take on current educational and other initiatives, to further enhance their own teaching skills and to implement "good teaching practices" for the benefit of our children. They also support, through their attendance, Parish events, the sacramental programmes and many school functions, such as graduation, tonight's AGM and school community events like the upcoming P&F Christmas Picnic.

Our teacher assistants do a great job turning their hands to whatever is required. Whether it's working in the class or with specific children, their ability and readiness to get on with the job is appreciated by all.

I take this opportunity to thank all staff members, both teaching and non-teaching for their dedication and commitment to the children at our school. We are very fortunate to have such a strong staff who work so well together.

School Advisory Council

CEWA Ltd commenced operation from 1 January 2021 at which point our school board began its transition into the School Advisory Council. The School Advisory Council give generously of their time and help to share the decision making of the school.

We thank these members for their support and assistance. I would like to say a huge thank you to all School Advisory Council members whose regular attendance at meetings and support is much appreciated.

P&F

To the Parents and Friends Association I also offer my thanks. The P&F provide valuable support to the school, not only financially, but also at a social level drawing the community together. I would like to just reiterate how powerful these community building activities are. The disco, run for fun colour explosion and end of year family Christmas picnic are events that not only excite our children, they also enable us to come together as a community and celebrate who we are as a community.

I thank Jenna for her role as president earlier this year.

A big thanks goes to the executive – Sam, Jo, Suzannah and to all who have supported and helped the P&F, be assured that your efforts are appreciated.



Many of our members are long time members who have given so much to our school community over many years. I want to acknowledge all that you have done and thank you.

Volunteers

SJP2, like most schools, requires and appreciates the assistance of volunteers. Whether in the uniform shop, library, doing the children's banking, on rosters in the classrooms, assisting with excursions and camps, sport training sessions, carnival days or in many other ways, your assistance enriches the spirit of community and gives valuable support to the school.

Fr Vinh

I would like to express my thanks to Father Vinh, for his work and assistance in the spiritual guidance of the children. I know he has been working very hard overseeing the church development, along with his many other commitments.

Sr Tuyen and Sr Duyen continue to be an invaluable link between the parish and school communities and we are very blessed to have their assistance.

Staff Leaving

(Casey, Angela, Lyn, Jess, Georgia, Jashu, Kelsey, Angela – Moira, Christina)

As is often the case, there will be a number of staff changes at the end of this year.

Casey Bakunowicz who was on secondment in 2021, has accepted an Assistant Principal role at St Denis for 2022. Casey took on leading a variety of learning areas within our school, helping to drive many of the initiatives that have led to positive change here. She will be an asset to St Denis, as she was here.

Mrs Angela Chamberlain has been offered a secondment for next year and will return in 2023.

Ms Lyn Paraszczyn will be looking forward to being on long service leave for 2022. It is going to feel very strange not seeing you next year Lyn – one of the constants in our school community who has played significant leadership roles and a variety of teaching roles here.

Mrs Jess Cook left earlier this term on maternity leave and will not return til at least 2023.

Mrs Georgia Allison has also opted to take leave for 2022 and will return in 2023.

Our social worker, Tracy Bryan, will be departing at the end of the year. Tracy has contributed so much in the time she has been here and will leave big shoes to fill.

It is with sadness that we farewell staff members who have played valuable temporary roles at St John Paul II in 2021.

Jashu Buddhia has done a fantastic job in the temporary Education Assistant role in preprimary this year. Jashu, we cannot adequately convey our thanks for what you have done in our school this year, and in particular in preprimary. The children, staff and parents who have worked with you will miss your calm and peaceful presence and the high standard of your work.

We were extremely fortunate to come across Mrs Kelsey Robinson's CV late last year. Kelsey did an amazing job in Kindy for the first half of the year and then stunned us again with the way she has taken on the music teaching role. You have been such a huge asset to our school community and we will certainly miss having you on staff in 2022.

I would also like to acknowledge Angela Tedesco (Year 2/3P), Moira Watson (6P) and Christina Smith (6P) who took on short term temporary positions at various points in the school year. We are very blessed that you were



able to make yourself available to take on these roles which you have conducted to a high standard.

There will be some new teaching staff joining us in 2022 which we look forward to announcing in the coming weeks.

As you can hear we are going to be missing some of the stars of our team next year. Fortunately, this is a team with some good depth – but those leaving us will still certainly be missed.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the school community for the support given to me, particularly this semester in Chris' absence. I have been well supported by our very capable staff, encouraged by parents and fortunate to work with the children in our school who bring a smile to my face every day.

We look forward to seeing a sun tanned and rejuvenated Mr Chris Lamb to lead us in 2022. Hopefully the purple and white paint in his office will be dry on his return.

Thank you for coming here tonight and I wish you in advance a blessed and joy-filled Christmas, a summer break that brings opportunities for rest and renewal and many blessings, for you and your families.

Don't forget to come along to the Christmas Picnic – it will be a lot of fun!

Thank you.

Yours in Christ,

Tim Maxwell

Principal

17 November 2021

