

Principal Report T1 2019:

A new school year brings a sense of excitement for all that is new and all that lies ahead. We very much rely on our P&F and our School Advisory Council and the way each of those groups encourages parents to support us. I'd like to outline where we are heading in 2019 in tonight's report.

Mission and Catholic Life

In the area of Catholic Life and Mission our goal is **to inspire faith through relevant and meaningful experiences** within the local Parish community.

We want the children to be more involved in the creation and design of liturgy and in their participation within it, especially through the Eucharist. Father Reinaldo and Father Francis are very much on board with this goal and are seeking to support us in it. Saturday afternoon masses and Masses with the Parish on feast days continue. Class masses have moved to 10 am during term time. This will enable the priests to talk more directly with the children and will allow us more creativity in the way class masses are organised and celebrated. In combination with this, the teachers will take part in professional development focused on engaging children in liturgy and on the Directory of Masses with Children. We will join three other local schools with an expert on children's liturgy - Fr John Fraunfelder.

The staff will be involved in further work on assessing learning in RE. We will incorporate our work on deeper thinking into the teaching of RE including assessment.

I wish to congratulate Christine Dunk for the work she did as Parish Animator concerning the Plenary Council. There have been 70 000 responses Australia wide. Broken Bay has one of the highest percentage of responses of any diocese in the country, The actual face to face response and attendance at workshops in our Parish was quite low. Hopefully people have made their own submissions in preference to attending workshops. This has been a wonderful chance for each of us to express our concerns and hopes to the Church for the future, many thanks to those who have used the rare opportunity to share their thoughts.

Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

Funding for the care of mental health in pre-schools and schools has received a significant boost across sectors nationally. The Beyondblue organisation has become the major provider for mental health resources in Australia and a new resource in the form of an online site called BeYou has replaced KidsMatter, MindMatters and other resources. BeYou is an online portal rich in resources and support for schools and pre-schools to implement mental health strategies.

The St John's Wellbeing Team is currently learning about the resource and is particularly interested in the support provided for our work in the area of Social and Emotional Learning, building resilience and in using the resources available to communities for this important area for our children. The Personal Development, Health and PE Syllabus has been renewed and is due for implementation in 2020. We will be getting to know the new syllabus during 2019.

In the short term, we will be launching our parent resource for Anti-bullying on the National Day Against Bullying Friday, March 15th. This will be an online brochure providing information to parents about what to do, what the school will do and what resource are available to assist with the issue. We want to be clearer about the processes we use when this situation arises.

Our Family Liaison Officer will continue to support families with parent education courses and personal support and we have been allocated another day per week for a school counsellor bringing that service to three days per week for 2019.

Teaching and Learning:

Our goal of authentic engagement in student learning continues to drive our work in this area.

A solid foundation in learning is essential in all subject areas. Our assessment practices help us to monitor that children are progressing towards expected targets and to be able to adjust our learning environments in doing our best to meet those needs.

During 2019 we want to encourage deeper thinking across the curriculum in order to increase engagement, promote a sense of challenge in relation to learning and do this in a way that caters for a range of abilities. By dedicating a generous amount of our time to understanding and encouraging thinking across the curriculum using a well recognised framework, we believe we can increase levels of student engagement in learning as well as improve our focus on purposeful learning.

Understanding thinking and how to apply it, can assist our students to develop the dispositions (attitudes, skills and understandings) they need to function as good learners and as active, interested citizens.

I invite our Assistant Principal, Natalie Ingram to introduce '**Cultures of Thinking**' to you tonight. This is a new initiative for our school that will be introduced in 2019 before being built upon in 2020. Natalie's presentation will be available on the Class Pages Parent tab for anyone who was not able to make the meeting tonight.

General Topics:

Our school playground is nearing completion. We are expecting it to be ready in the next week or so, weather permitting. This first stage of construction sees the introduction of a new play hill complete with tunnel, climbing wall, stage and sitting levels. The hill is an area for creative and passive play surrounded by native trees and grasses - a place to have fun, crawl, roll or climb or just sit with friends. We have installed a dry creek bed with bridges, native grasses and trees for shade. The creek bed will provide opportunities for exploration and imaginative play. There's a new shop front and cubby, performance platforms, a mud kitchen and a series of grinding rocks.

Recommissioning of the hall is at an important stage. Father Reinaldo has asked for the Parish consultation to be completed March 8th. Assuming the Parish agrees to the proposal, the CSO can then begin the process of developing a scope of works and engaging a construction company. While necessary repairs to the hall would be covered by the CSO,

things like a sound and audio visual system would be our responsibility. I think having a good quality projector, screen and sound system would be a very positive and useful addition to the hall. I ask the P&F to assist in raising funds of \$15 000 to help us purchase such as resource, pending approval of the proposal currently in front of the Parish.

Parent Information Nights / Goal setting will take place at the end of Term 1 - school interviews are set up and ready for this / mid-year reports and parent / teacher meetings will take place at the end of Term 2. We ask that all families have an adult or carer in attendance at these important events.

Our school musical, '**A Kidsummer Night's Dream**', will take place September 5th with rehearsal September 4th at C3 Oxford Falls. Our aim is to give every child in our school the opportunity to perform and be part of a major performing experience. This will be linked to our Creative Arts curriculum. Class parents will be asked to enlist help making of props; costuming needs; hair and make-up and promotion for the night via our normal school communication channels. We will begin preparations in earnest during Terms 2 and 3.

Please note that enrolments are now open for 2020. I ask that parents with siblings intending to enrol with us for 2020 submit their applications before the end of April. Any family with siblings submitting a completed '**Application for Enrolment Form**' by the end of April will not be charged the \$88 enrolment fee for 2020. Our Open Days will be held March 19th and May 7th this year.

In the meantime, the staff and I look forward to working with our parents during 2019 and we are grateful for the way so many of you have already supported our efforts and events. It's encouraging to see parents wanting to create positive connections with our school.

It is a privilege to be able to work with you in the Catholic education of your children.

Mark Bateman - Principal