

## **Principal's Report – Term 3, 2022**

### **Teaching and Learning**

Since we last gathered, we have seen further ease of restrictions in place for parents and carers in relation to their ability to be involved at school. Parents have been able to attend school for events such as prayer assembly, merit assembly, parent-teacher-student mid-year interviews, assistance with our athletics carnivals and excursions and with canteen. We've been able to run playgroup sessions, sacramental preparation and celebrations and will be holding 2023 transition days very soon. Life has been running very normally at St John's. This is important to us as it increases our ability to build stronger connections between home and school.

On 19 August we held our first Parent Engagement Session at the beginning of the school day. Parents were invited to visit their child's classroom to experience, first-hand, our approach to the teaching of Spelling. Mrs Thom hosted a brief but informative session to explain our approach to parents who were able to attend. When parents understand what and how their children are learning, they in a better position to be able to support them to be the best learners they can be. Feedback from the engagement session was positive. We are conscious of parents who are not able to make the sessions and have been trying to reach everyone through our Facebook and Instagram posts; our Compass class communications and our Strength and Gentleness editions.

I invite parent feedback on our approach to parent engagement. We are especially interested in ideas and suggestions for being able to encourage effective parent engagement concerning children's learning. Messages to [sjan@dbb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sjan@dbb.catholic.edu.au) or a telephone conversation are welcome.

### **Coming events and fundraising**

From 2023 NAPLAN will be conducted in March with results being delivered much closer to sitting the actual tests. Up to this year, the tests have been run in May with results being delivered originally in October, this year in August. The move to earlier assessment and delivery of results will mean that schools can act earlier. We will be working with our Year 3 and 5 children to follow up on results once we have analysed the trends of the 2022 data. We will begin working with our Year 2 and Year 4 children on familiarising them with aspects of NAPLAN leading into 2023.

Our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary plans include two events. One for the children, the other for parishioners and parents. The P&F is organising a 60's Cocktail Dress Trivia Night at Manly Leagues Club, 22 October. There is a raffle in conjunction. The school will be organising a 60's Mission Day, 28 October which will include a 60's dress up day for the children; a school liturgy (parents welcome to attend) and our mission day activities for the children. Fundraising from the Mission Day will go to Catholic Mission as it normally does.

The P&F is also busy organising this year's Father's Day breakfast 2 September with an associated raffle. What will and can be done with the funds raised from the Trivia Night and Father's Day events?

The diocese is developing guidelines for fundraising in systemic schools. The diocese believes that parents should not fundraise for capital works such as building, site improvement or repairs and maintenance. These are seen as a system responsibility. A reviewed and reshaped facilities department is managing the physical aspects of school improvement on a system wide level. St John's has just had its Kinder, Year 1 and satellite classes repainted. Further work is planned for 2022 through the facilities projects.

The change in thinking has caused us to reassess and redirect some of our fundraising goals. We had planned to keep our fundraising for additional fixed play equipment to add to our play area. This is considered capital works and therefore is not consistent with current requirements. As parent fundraising should be focused on the things that would be additional to our essential needs, we will be directing funding to:

- Large yard games for the children to play during break – Jenga, Connect 4, Bean Bag Toss. We will need about \$2000 for this equipment.
- Any additional funding will be directed to the purchase of readers for our K-2 and 3-6 classes. Ideally, \$2000 would help us to purchase and replace existing resources in this area.

**School Mission Focus:**

A new Catholic Charter has been developed by the diocese. It makes a clear statement about our beliefs as a Catholic community and our purpose. It will be introduced to the school staff over two twilight sessions in coming weeks. We will also introduce it to the School Advisory Council and seek their advice on the introduction of the Charter to our community.

We recently held discussions with the Palm Grove Retirement Community, Narrabeena. Discussion centred on how the school could help engage with the residents at the Community facility but also by bringing them to us. We will be working on a making Christmas cards together this year as well as an art competition that will involve the residents in judging and displaying the pieces. Miss Dunk presented a care hamper to the staff of Palm Grove and some beautifully written letters from the children to the residents.

**Conclusion:**

My thanks to all parents who continue to support our efforts to reconnect and rebuild our community after the significant disruption caused by COVID. I wish to especially recognise the tremendous work and effort of our staff as they cope with the demands on their energy and time as we move back to a more normal rhythm of life. Teachers are so important to the lives of your children and they deserve to be strongly supported in being recognised and supported for the amazing work they do every day.

I look forward to celebrating our 60 years of Catholic education with our parents and children during our two major events in October. I hope you can join us!

Mark Bateman – Principal