

Principal Report – Parents and Friends, Term 2, 2022:

Teaching and Learning:

The teachers and staff at St Johns are focused on helping your child to be the best they can be, especially in learning. Last term I introduced the 'Collaborative Coaching Project' (CCP) to you. While the teachers continue their good work across the curriculum, we set a goal to improve the results we are seeing in Spelling across the school Kindergarten to Year 6. CCP brings grade teams together for an hour each week throughout the year, to work with our Collaborative Coach, Mrs Thom, our Assistant Principal. The teams have been working together to analyse the results of assessments and identify where to focus their teaching for the children in their classroom over two-to-three-week periods. We use the new English syllabus and a resource, 'Effective Spelling' (Christine Topfer), to help us identify strategies, next steps then ongoing assessment linked to the issues we are seeing.

This work is helping us to deepen our own knowledge about teaching literacy and it gives us a helpful lead in to working productively with the new English K-2 syllabus.

In other areas, our high ability learning groups are working well and we have introduced a support program for children experiencing challenges with reading – Minilit and Multilit are highly structured group support programs being run by our diverse learning teachers and assistants to improve reading skills. These run-in tandem with targeted support programs within classrooms to assist our children's learning.

Religious Education and Formation:

Warringah Parish completed Confirmation introductory sessions with Parents and Children last week with programs beginning on weekends over four weeks. The programs will run on site at St John's as they did two years ago. Parents and children will work together during the programs, facilitated by volunteer parents, to prepare for receipt of the sacrament on 25 June 11:30 am St John's or 2 pm at St Kevin's.

We have been running prayer assemblies on Monday afternoons with parents and guests welcome to attend and class masses have started up once again with the support of our priests. We are working with Fr Resty to plan a Family Mass this term.

Student Growth and Wellbeing:

As we move further away from living with COVID restrictions, there is a need to revitalize our Positive Behaviours for Learning approach (PBL). While our Year 3-6 children know our rules and behaviour expectations well, it is newer territory for our Kinder to Year 2 children. A PBL teacher team meets regularly to ensure that we have a continuous focus on PBL with our students in the classroom and on the playground. The result will be a clearer understanding of behaviour expectations and a consistent way of working and learning with each other.

Other areas:

Our work on planning to replace the playground equipment is underway and we have three proposals we are considering. These will be appraised and prioritised before going back to Catholic Schools Broken Bay for final approval and project planning.

It is great to see events and gatherings slowly returning to St John's. Night of the Notables, our recent Mother's Day morning, prayer assemblies, our planned Trivia Night, Year 5 and 6 trip to Canberra and end of term parent/teacher/child interviews all provide opportunities for parents to engage with St John's on many levels.

We would appreciate feedback on recent changes to our communication with you. We have moved away from weekly newsletter to a weekly Compass communication showing coming events and Merit Award recipients. We have introduced a bulletin twice a term which focuses on learning across the school and we have introduced regular classroom communication via Compass about learning. The changes are aimed at focusing more on learning, streamlining communication, and using the tools we have at our fingertips more productively.

Enrolments for 2023 are open. We have held two Open mornings and one Open Evening with Kindergarten 2023 Enrolment meetings beginning next week. Attendance at all events was strong and we look forward to meeting our new 2023 children and their families.

Best wishes for the remainder of the term.

Mark Bateman – Principal