

St Anthony's School

Principal's Report - 2019



IT has been an eventful year for our school. The teamwork shown by teachers, parents and students has ensured that our challenges have been met successfully and the educational and spiritual growth of our school has continued to develop.

There is a very strong Parent's & Friend's Association in this school. My sincere appreciation is extended to Mrs Kate Price and her executive committee. Their enthusiasm and commitment to the school has been shown on many occasions. One of these being our recent Open Night, which was an outstanding success. The P&F once again organised food vans which added a great village dimension to the evening. Thanks to the financial backing of the P&F, the dancing program allows individual classes to perform on stage. This year P&F contributed to the resurfacing of the basketball courts.

The Board's wise counsel and advice has been a greatly appreciated this year. They have successfully presented a Capital Development encompassing roof restoration and plans for the administration block to the Catholic Education. My sincere appreciation is extended to Phil Bastian and fellow board members

I am delighted to acknowledge, the sterling work of parents in supporting the education of their children. We receive assistance from parents with class programs, the play pod, the sports program, catering, celebrations and excursions.

As a school, we have implemented a number of strategies to enhance student learning. A key area of professional development this year has been the Talk for writing programme.

Given that student learning is a shared responsibility between parents and teachers, so many parents are working, and family life is becoming busier, the school will continue to explore ways to digitalize information through

avenues such as Seesaw. Discussions next year will look at instructional videos as an option for guiding parents through the Talk to write process.

In 2019, St Anthony's has continued to build on the integration of technology throughout the school. This year, two co-curricular before-school Robo Clubs have operated and have provided robotic instruction for over 45 students from Year 3 to 6. A term-by-term Year 3 and 4 group that focused on basic coding skills and a semester-by-semester RoboClub for the Year 5 and 6's. This RoboClub focused on advanced coding skills, robot design and solving real-world problems by entering two Competitions, RoboCup Junior and the First LEGO League.

This year saw the commencement of a lunchtime Coding Club for Year 1 and 2 students. A staff who rotates term-by-term and is supported by volunteering Year 6 students facilitates this Club. Students develop their coding skills using the web-based programming platform called Scratch. Students learnt to login into Scratch and to animate their name by coding letters with audio, movement and colour.

As the MakerSpace has developed this year, digital technology has found itself parallel with all robotic and coding resources stored in the Library. This year we have added to our technology resources with Makey Makey devices, storybooks that focus on the safe use of technology, MicroBits and storage trolleys. This has enabled classroom-based activities to expand with students creating interactive posters, peripheral devices such as Makey Makey fruit bongo drums and pickles pianos and much more.

As a part of the Technology Key Teacher program staff have had access to modelled technology lessons in their classrooms and ongoing support to better integrate technology into everyday classroom practice so that students are engaging in meaningful and relevant technology lessons.

Next year will see some adjustments to St Anthony's 1to1 iPad program with the Year 4 students using school-owned devices that will be stored in the classrooms.

Our Extension program will continue in 2020 in a similar format to this year - weekly sessions of approximately 90 minutes for small multi-age groups with a flexible term-by-term intake depending on student strengths and interests.

Our current Year 4 teacher, Kirsty Pitman, who has completed graduate studies in gifted education, will coordinate it. Term focus areas are still to be finalised but are likely to include creative writing, Opti-Minds, media studies and maths problem solving. Selection of students will be by teacher nomination, in conjunction with the results of the annual group testing by Tanya Atherton.

I acknowledge with great appreciation the capable and dedicated staff of Saint Anthony's; Sarah Potts and Melissa Vranjes our Assistant Principal's; Rachel Prendergast, Soli Gentile, Chris Barret and Philippa Wicksey ; Chris Schelfhout, our Sports Coordinator; Boris Pavicevic and Frank Ierace for grounds and maintenance; Cecelia Smith in the Uniform Shop; Diane Verson our Social Worker; Administration staff, Gina Hall and Aurelia Cooper, Marg Smith our Library Technician; Geraldine Lockyer Music; IT housekeeping Cathy Armstrong and to all the teachers and Educational assistants thank you for your dedication and hard work. This year we have continued to reflect on our teaching practice and explore programs and approaches that will expand learning opportunities for each child. Diane Verson, the school social worker's expertise is greatly acknowledged in this area.

I also wish to acknowledge Ann Lynch and Karen Hepworth and their dedicated team at OSHC on their success and fine reputation.

We have a strong connection to the Parish and are indeed fortunate to have the energy and supportive presence of Father Leonard. The Salvatorian charisms nurture our school community.

Students have again this year approached their studies with interest and enthusiasm. There have been many achievements in each class and together we have experienced many proud moments. The athletic teams were great participants in interschool competitions and we have continued to develop the leadership ministries and the challenges of their roles.

This year some staff sent through their final farewells: Melissa Venema, Lucine Franklin, Agnes Weymouth and Boris Pavicevic. I thank each colleague for their valuable contribution they have made or are making to the school and wish them every success and happiness as they continue on life's journey.

In 2020 we will welcome Genevieve Valkoff to our staff and look forward to her contribution to our school.

On a personal note I would like to sincerely thank the staff for their care and understanding of each child. There has been times when we have worked together to get some great outcomes and there are some still to be reached. In conclusion we look forward to the coming year and pray that all families are blessed with prosperity and peace.