

2014 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The following report attempts to highlight some of the events and people who have shaped our 2014 school year. Our days together are based upon the teachings of Jesus and the learnings our students need to undertake in order to assist them to meet the challenges of the world into which they are growing. I trust that upon reading this report you will gain a small snapshot of the vast number of people who have contributed to our year and its achievements.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT: The continued roll out of the Australian Curriculum has involved our staff in developing their skills and knowledge, in order to ensure that our students have access to a contemporary, challenging and interesting learning environment. We have reflected upon the needs of our students and the means of catering for those needs and those areas of development that needed strengthening. Our focus has been always on the students and we have implemented professional development programmes for staff and new support structures for students. Mr Tim Cronin – our Assistant Principal Administration and Curriculum Support teacher - has led and guided us throughout the year in this area. I sincerely thank Tim for his commitment and dedication to his role and our school and thank him for assisting us all to come to grips with the changes we need to face in an evolving education landscape. Tim has been assisted in this area by Project and Curriculum Officers from Brisbane Catholic Education, our Learning Support team – Bernadette Crawley, Louise Wells, Helen Ryan and our Guidance Counsellor, Raelene Campbell. This year we had the great fortune of having two wonderful Teacher Librarians to assist us – Ann-Marie Furbur (now working in Germany) and Moira Meehan - a true blessing to our school. We also had support from Mrs Melitsa Apostolos, our ESL teacher, to work with our students. We thank these very professional people for the support and care they have given our students throughout the year. I thank Mrs Susan O'Farrell, our Student Welfare Worker, for her invaluable contribution to our school this year. I also sincerely thank Tim for taking on the Principalship of the school during my absence in term two. Many thanks for the generous support and assistance you have given me Tim – I appreciate your professionalism, energy and reflective advice. I have been able to rely upon you for helping in the smooth running of our wonderful school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: Within our school and parish setting, we endeavour to offer each child a real and personal experience of God in their life. Through our RE lessons, masses, liturgies, prayer celebrations, assemblies and most importantly our relationships, we let the children feel the presence and hand of our Creator in meaningful ways. Our RE syllabus allows us the freedom to teach about our faith and spirituality. Our living of the values we learn about allows us to live according to the teachings and example of Jesus our Christ. In this most important part of our school life we are so ably and wisely guided and supported by Mrs Sally Hyde our Assistant Principal – Religious Education. Sally supports and challenges us and offers very practical and prayerful opportunities for us all to meet our God in our everyday lives. Many thanks Sally for your dedication and determination and for your care of and interest in our children, staff and families. I sincerely thank Sally for her ongoing support, wisdom and down to earth advice - she has made my role as Principal so much more manageable.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: As a school community we value the development of the whole child, and we support the students in extending and enriching their cultural development through the following programmes. We are very proud of all our students who choose to involve themselves in our choir activities. This aspect of their development allows them to identify, develop and share their skills and talents. The choirs are key programmes within our school and offer far reaching benefits for all who participate. Mrs Marianna Moes is responsible for our in-class and extended lessons. In-class lessons centre upon singing, music appreciation and recorder playing (years 3-7). Marianna is also the Director and guide of our junior and senior choirs – with the junior choir being awarded 2 firsts and third placings, and the senior choir a first, a second and a third placing at the Wynnum Manly Eisteddfod. We entered a combined choir in the Catholic Colleges Festival and were

awarded silver for our performance. Our combined choir also performed at the Queensland Week Celebrations at Balmoral. A very successful year for our devoted choir members.

Our prep – year three students have the opportunity to develop their creative skills through their weekly art lessons taught by Michelle Ashford. I marvel at the quality and creativity of the varying works produced by our enthusiastic artists! Mrs Mary Morton has continued to awaken the joys of learning a new language for our years 4 -7 students. The Japanese lessons always focus upon learning elements of language as well as culture and our children are indeed fortunate to have the chance to experience language learning under the guidance of such a caring and passionate teacher. Dance is a very strong element of our school programme. Our students continue to not only enjoy, but excel at their dancing, having once again won Champion School at the Dance Fever Challenge. Many thanks to Mike Maguire, Helen Exley and Maureen Neal-Young for their enthusiasm, passion and guidance in this area.

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT: We are fortunate to have the services of Mrs Jane Weule as our Physical Education specialist teacher. Not only does Jane conduct weekly lessons with all our students, she also organises visiting sports skills clinics, our inter school carnivals and our inter-house carnivals across a number of sports. Our students have the chance to learn skills, drills and games and experience a variety of sports which lead to fitness and fun. We also participated in two gala sports days for all years 4 -7 students this year. These were a huge success and I thank especially all the parents who came along to help make the day so much fun for our students. Thanks Jane for your interest in and support of all our students.

This year Nagle won the inter-house swimming carnival, as well as the cross-country and athletics carnival – a clean sweep – well done!! Times are-a-changing though, with Kelly and Raymond closing the gap at each carnival. The new team allocation method will see the teams more evenly matched in the near future.

2014 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

- **YEAR 7 TO SECONDARY:** This year marks a massive change on the Queensland education landscape – one that will bring our students more closely aligned with students in other states. 2014 will be the last time that we will have year 7 students at our school. We have worked with our year seven and year six students in order to prepare them for their transition into secondary school. Saying goodbye to our year six students will be a sad first for us as well.
- **PARISH SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATIONS:** This year there were 94 children from our school and Parish who undertook their preparations and participation in the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist. Whilst the Sacramental programme is organised by the Parish, we at the school support the candidates for the sacraments, through our teaching and learning activities in RE. It appears that 2015 will see another large number of children undertaking the Sacramental programme through the Parish.
- **OSHC RETURNING TO SCHOOL SITE:** Next year we will see the return of our before and after school care service back to our site. The service has operated at the corner of the State School for the past seven years and it will be great to have them here on site – thus eliminating the crossing of roads each morning and afternoon.
- **BUILDING PLANS PROJECT:** Over the past year we have been working on the planning of the construction of covered pick up zones, a new storage shed and an extension to the undercover area in the quadrangle. Sadly our development approval has been stalled in Council but the project will continue and be completed in the first half of 2015.
- **P&F GALA CASINO DINNER:** As part of their role in promoting the social life of our school community, the P&F Association organised a wonderful Dinner Dance evening for parents and carers. The evening had a casino flavour and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Funds raised at such events go to support the work of the Care and Concern Committee and other student focused projects.

- **ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL PROGRAMME:** Our school was accepted into this programme, which is funded and organised by the Brisbane City Council. It has proved to be very popular with the children and they are always keen to have their passports stamped each week. The years 6 and 7 bus programme and the scooter programme were additional programmes we offered the children through the Active School Travel programme.
- **RESURFACING MAIN OVAL:** Our P&F Association funded the installation of artificial turf on our main oval. This has been a God send for our students – although it does get a wee bit warmish on these hot days!!! Such an initiative cost a great deal of money and I thank the P&F, and all parents, for providing this great improvement for the children.
- **PARENT PORTAL AND SCHOOL APP DEVELOPMENT:** This year, in partnership with Brisbane Catholic Education, we have been developing our Parent Portal and a St Ollie’s School App. These two features will be activated in 2015 and will be the most direct way for us to communicate with our families. We will still maintain our Website, Facebook and Twitter accounts as well.
- **MINI-VINNIES:** Our years 5 -7 students formed our first Mini-Vinnies group this year. They undertook the task of raising funds in order to assist those in need. Their efforts were phenomenal – they raised \$2885. The funds were passed onto our local chapter of SVDP, Centacare and the SVDP main office. Well done children and a special thanks to Mrs Penman and Mrs O’Farrell for all your guidance and assistance to the children.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: It is wonderful to see just how many parents and carers assist the children and staff through their involvement in classroom activities, excursions, as Class Convenors, sports training, motor programme, reading, tuckshop, working bees etc etc. This assistance is vital in ensuring that we provide the best possible learning experiences for our students in partnership with our families. Our Parents and Friends Association once again worked hard this year in order to improve resourcing for each classroom; staffing support; purchasing of equipment for P&F functions; grounds improvements through Working Bees; and the major project of installing the artificial grass on the main oval. Thank you to Mrs Michelle Verna and the Executive, and all committee co-ordinators, for your leadership and generous assistance this year. Your combined efforts certainly made for a busy and enjoyable year.

Many yummy thanks to Ingrid Englert and her band of supremo chefs extraordinaire who cater so deliciously for our students and staff each week in our Tuckshop. We have all heard of someone having to occasionally eat “Humble Pie” – well I had “Humble Steak” and it was embarrassing but very tasty – thank you ladies!! We also thank John Lacheca for the weekly sausage sizzles he, Robyn Wills and Elizabeth Rowlands have organised for us all to enjoy! We thank Margherita Fox and Lisa Farrugia for running our Secondhand Uniform shop and Lisa Hill for assisting our student with their School Banking.

Our School Board members have had another very busy and vitally crucial, planning year this year. Their involvement in policy review, budget reviews, development and implementation as well as their involvement in our major building projects, which will see the Outside School Hours Care programme return back on site in 2015, continues to be an invaluable assistance to me. Many thanks to each Board member for the honesty, openness and goodwill brought to our monthly meetings.

Each year we say farewell and thanks to those families whose children will not be with us due to moving on– we wish you every blessing and happiness in your new schools, homes etc. and thank you for the time you have shared with us and the trust you placed in us to work with you to support your children over the years.

PARISH SUPPORT: Our school is not an island within the Cannon Hill community. We exist through the Parish and because of the will of parishioners in seeking a Catholic Education for their children. We work in partnership with the parish and we thank Mrs Carol Hewitt, our Parish Secretary, and Sr Gen Levinson our Parish Associate, Roel Siebelink and his fantastic Outside School Hours Care team, who provide such a safe and supportive service for our children and families, and Sr Gentle and her team at the Centacare Community Connections centre for their willingness to work in with us and support our students and families each day.

We especially thank Fr Mark Percival for his continued support of and interest in our school. As our Parish Priest Fr Mark is always ready to share in the prayer and liturgical life of our school and is a strong supporter of our School Sponsored masses each term. I thank Fr Mark for his trust in us, and in myself especially, as we work together to make our parish community stronger and more supportive for us all. Thank you Fr Mark for your wisdom and advice over the past four years, I have found you to be a man centred upon bringing the kingdom alive in our parish and always willing to spare me time for planning and advice.

SCHOOL OFFICERS: The following staff members have once again provided our students and teachers with invaluable assistance, care and attention throughout the year. We sincerely thank them for their energy, skills and dedication and their willingness to help wherever and whenever needed: Vera Blake, Janette Blaney, Marion Brandenburg, Yumiko Child, Nedina Davies, Melissa Dunn, Carolyn Forde, Carmel Hegarty, Pamela Jory, Anita Lewis, Theresa Macri, Julie Mitchell, Eddie Murray, Sandra Roberts, Geraldine Robertson and Wendy Simmons. Thanks also to Larry Bromley for working hard to make our grounds not only look great but also in ensuring the safety of our students daily through the myriad of odd jobs and projects you undertake. I also thank Ros Rowe for her tireless efforts around the school this year. Ros takes pride in St Ollies and works hard to keep our school neat and tidy for us all. Thanks Ros we appreciate your dedication and efforts.

I wish to express my gratitude to the very professional and talented ladies in the School Office. We are fortunate to have such knowledgeable, approachable and efficient ladies organising all those important aspects of our administration that keep our school running smoothly. Chris Norman, Belinda Kruger and our finance wiz - Cheryl Spethman - are worth their weight in gold and I thank them for keeping me informed, on task and organised each day. I also thank our volunteer newsletter assistants – Justine Sparrow and Molly Flanagan for coming up each week to help distribute this vital information tool to all families.

TEACHING STAFF: I am always pleased to tell people that we are blessed here at St Ollies in having very caring, very professional and dedicated teachers working with the children each day. Teaching today calls for people to be willing to continually undertake professional development in order to keep pace with the changes to curriculum, pedagogy, student protection laws, Government reporting requirements and Brisbane Catholic Education system priorities. I thank each teacher for your support and understanding this year and for your selfless efforts in meeting the learning needs of your students and colleagues. I feel honoured to have shared this year – my last year in my ministry and profession - with each and every one of you.

FAREWELL: This year we say farewell and all the best to Mrs Louise Wells, Mrs Susie O'Farrell and Mr Shane Griffin as they move onto the next stage of their careers. Louise has been a true asset to our Learning Support team and has always shared her knowledge and skills with us all. We will miss you Louise – all the best at Kangaroo Point. Susie has been our Student Welfare Worker and we wish her all the best as she takes up a full time position at St Benedict's, Mango Hill. We will miss all your energy and tireless efforts in supporting the families and children here at St Ollies. We wish Shane every joy as he takes on the Principalship of All Saints Catholic School at Tumbarumba.

I know that Shane will be a very effective and caring leader and I thank him for all he has contributed to St Ollies over the years.

WELCOME: We warmly welcome Miss Vanessa Tierney to our staff next year. Vanessa is a graduate teacher and we look forward to her sharing her enthusiasm, passion and excitement with us and all the children.

I also take this opportunity to welcome Paul Blinkhoff as your new Principal in 2015. Paul is truly looking forward to leading St Ollies and he brings with him a love of learning, a deep faith and a sense of humour that will enhance our school in the years to come. Welcome Paul – I know that you will enjoy being a member of this special school and parish community.

CHILDREN: Our days here are focussed upon the children in our care. It has been a true honour and pleasure to share the last four years with so many wonderful children. Their energy, friendliness, honesty and openness has made each day here a true joy and adventure. The privilege of sharing their successes, tears, laughter and love of life and learning will stay with me as a fond memory for many years to come. Have a wonderful Christmas holiday children – remember there is no such thing as “I’m bored!!” – it’s just a lack of an idea that you need to work on!

YEAR SIX and SEVEN STUDENTS: We are facing a mass exodus of some very talented, caring and valued students this year. As you all go on your way to High School, I can only thank you all for the leaders you have been and the difference that your presence here has made to our school. January 2015 will be an exciting and nervous time for you all, but please know that our prayers and thoughts will be with you all. You leave us many memories and I trust that you take with you a sense of being valued, important and sadly missed by all of us at St Ollies. Good luck and remember to let your light shine in your new school.

MY FAMILY: Finally and most importantly, I once again thank my loving (and very understanding) wife Jan and our children for the support they have provided me this year and all my years in education. I know that without them with me, the task would have been so much more difficult to face. I look forward now to many, many hours spent devoted to supporting each and every one of them in any and all ways I can. You all have my gratitude and love and my anticipation of many happy hours together.

