

# St Munchin's Catholic School

## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 24 November 2020

St Munchin's has experienced a very different year due to COVID-19 which as meant that teaching and learning has been modified to comply with COVID-19 regulations and protocols. Despite these necessary adjustments, we continued to review and reflect on our practices and make improvements as required, to ensure that we enhance and implement, engaging, challenging and rewarding learning experiences. As we note the achievements and outcomes of the students' learning and growth experiences throughout the year, we recognise that there was a period from March to June where the delivery of teaching became predominantly On-Line. Through careful planning and selection of appropriate strategies and programs, we worked diligently to ensure that the learning program covered the curriculum requirements as closely as possible and student- teacher interaction online facilitated best practice and achieved optimum outcomes. Student progress became difficult to monitor and assess as face-to-face contact had to be modified to adhere to COVID-19 expectations. Mid- year reports reflected less outcomes which were able to be reported on and NAPLAN was suspended for this year. Internal assessment, anecdotal observations were maintained to assist us in making accurate judgement on student learning and achievements.

Positive partnerships and relationships between home and school are defining factors in the achievements of all community members and in particular, our students, who possess very different and diverse needs. This partnership is recognised and evident by many of our families and many more families continue to become further involved in their child/ren's education. Parents/Guardians are the primary educators and as such need to work closely with the school to nurture the development of the child. We invite further involvement and welcome the interest and participation of community members. During COVID-19, this was certainly strengthened as the onus was on parents and carers guiding and supporting students with their on-line learning from home during the period mentioned. We congratulate and thank you for the fantastic work of our community.

The Catholic Education Systems strategic direction is as follows: Catholic Education Western Australia is a Christ-centred community of engaged learning environments, inspiring all to actively live the Gospel.

**The four domains include:**

***Catholic Identity- Inspiring Christ-centred Leaders***

## ***Education- Catholic Schools of Excellence***

## ***Community-Catholic Pastoral Communities***

## ***Stewardship- Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable System Schools***

As a school, we continue to provide avenues that encourage and engage students to strive for excellence and aim to reach their full potential based on their unique qualities and individual talents. St Munchin's continues to reflect on and further develop educational standards and learning initiatives. This involves best practice in teaching and learning to meet the individual needs of all students. Our mantra Be Safe, Be respectful, Be Responsible and Be a Learner is articulated and encouraged on a daily basis continues to be a positive framework guiding students and teachers and community members.

### **Catholic Identity, Evangelisation and Religious Education**

Catholic Identity is central in all we aspire to at St Munchin's School. Our Catholic Identity is what defines us as a Catholic School striving to reflect the teachings of Jesus and Gospel Values. We continue to embrace opportunities to celebrate our Catholicity. The way we prepare our students, our interactions, our duties and responsibilities, must reflect Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus Christ. The level of communication must be open, honest and transparent to maintain respect and the dignity of the human person.

We were unable to celebrate Liturgies as a large group initially and the Sacramental program was delayed somewhat, but fortunately we eventually celebrated all of the Sacraments and the children have completed the Sacramental programs.

Class and whole school masses take place regularly. Classes pray daily, and at school assemblies. The staff meet on Wednesday mornings for prayer and reflection.

Our Religious education units are the basis of our faith formation and development and our Catholic traditions and practices.

As a Catholic School, part of our mission is to assist the less fortunate and marginalised in our community and throughout the world. By praying for and fundraising to contribute to Caritas, the Archbishops Lifelink appeal and St Vincent de Paul we aim to do our part through Discipleship. We have continued to fulfil this commitment despite COVID-19.

Through the spiritual leadership of Fr Philip and his commitment to the Parish and school, we celebrated of our Catholicity through well attended school masses, commitment to the Sacramental programs and Parent Information evenings for Sacramental Preparation. Fostering these during these difficult times has been challenging but very important avenues in our faith formation that continue to connect to faith being lived, practised and

witnessed. Fr has visited classes and spoke to the students about a number of topics. He also spends time with the staff on formal and informal gatherings.

We thank Fr Philip for his commitment to the school and parish and for his diligent, hard work throughout 2019. In my many years as an educator, I have worked with many parish priests. Fr Philip's gentle, genuine, sincere manner and approach, create a very conducive, common and complementary partnership, in aiming to achieve the work of the Catholic Church in the Parish and School community.

## **Education**

Our staff at St Munchin's are very receptive to growing and developing in their roles be it teachers, education assistants and other staff. Due to COVID-19 the necessary opportunity to further develop and enhance Technology to deliver the learning program On-line has now become a continuation with aspects maintained and embedded in teaching and Learning throughout the year

Focus areas in curriculum for 2019 include, further development of the Australian and Western Australian Curriculum, Numeracy, Literacy and ICT- particularly in the use of devices as education tools and on-line teaching and learning platforms. This is an ongoing process and each year we focus as a whole staff on appropriate processes and strategies in integrating Technology throughout the curriculum. The guidance of Mrs Stockley, key teachers and outside specialist support from Itdynamics and the Catholic Education Office Leading Lights Team provide valuable support to staff. Professional development for individual teachers has been minimal due to Covid-19 but this has resumed somewhat this term. The whole staff participated in Talk4writing which we are trialling with the students and noting very successful outcomes and improvement in story writing.

Our focus on improving Literacy standards continues to strengthen. Data indicates improved student outcomes individually and as a whole school.

As part of improving our Literacy standards this year, we continued to focus on spelling strategies in all year levels. In the early years we have implemented the Letters and Sounds program and the marked development of the students is very pleasing. The Reading Recovery Program continues to gain momentum, so to, Levelled Literacy Intervention and the Extending Mathematical Understanding program. In 2020, MiniLit intervention will be introduced for students in upper primary. These programs assist and support students at risk in these areas. The support staff in Mrs Petta, Mrs Taylor and Mrs Loh add much support to teachers and students with intervention strategies and ideas.

Miss Harrison co-ordinates the Inclusive program for students with Disabilities and works with teachers, students, parents and consultants to ensure that their learning and social emotional needs are catered for.

We continue to further develop the co-ordination of curriculum areas with key teachers participating in workshops in Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, and Early Learning.

Our specialist programs are an integral part of learning and are extremely well received by students. These teachers include, DeVries, Mrs Gonzalves and Mrs Holden in Music, Mrs Crimp in Library, Mrs Stockley in ICT and Mrs Sartorelli in Science. The specialist programs contribute to providing a curriculum that is diverse and covering a number of Learning areas. I also acknowledge Mrs Iacobelli's contribution with a comprehensive Italian program across the school.

The "STRETCH "crew Extension program for Yrs 5 and 6 is co-ordinated and facilitated by Ms Mackin and Mrs Petta. We are very pleased with the outcomes thus far and the program will continue into the future.

The Quality Improvement Plan to address National Quality Standards continues to have extensive work by teachers and assistants in Kindergarten to year 2. I thank all the Early Learning Staff for their involvement and contributions and their strong commitment to enhancing the Early Learning program and environment. The work covered in the Early Learning areas indicates a strong commitment from the school and staff in ensuring quality learning, growth and development, as well as embedding sound strategies in the whole school curriculum.

### **Accountability- Student Assessment and Reporting/Compliance**

One of our ongoing forms of accountability is the assessment of students so as to gauge their capabilities and to gather solid data evidence on student progress and development. This data evidence is used by the school for planning improvement in teaching and learning and to cater for the academic and personal growth and development of the students.

Assessment tasks are explicit and meaningful catering for the children's varied learning styles and provide diagnostic information for future planning. Reporting to parents is purposeful, varied and reflects the child's whole development. This have been modified this year as mentioned previously and hopefully will continue as usual from the beginning

Further examples of standardised and formal assessment include ACER Maths and Literacy, Progressive Achievement tests, On-Entry Assessment in Pre-primary, Word Recognition testing, Phonemic Awareness testing, Mathematics Assessment Interviews, Observational surveys, Anecdotal recording keeping and teacher devised assessments. Brightpath

Assessment continued this year specifically for writing genres from PP- Yr 6 and will continue to explore this further.

Reporting to parents this year has been through modified written reports at the end of semester one but full written reports will be distributed at the end of the year.

SEQTA provides our attendance record of students and in the future, and the management in the storing of student data, which will provide valuable information to our student profiles.

Speech Assessment and Occupational Therapy Screening has now become an important aspect of student assessment. The results of the screening not only assist in early intervention but also help the school recognise students who need further development. KZ Speech is the company that we have established a contract with and the Speech Pathologist and OT come to the school to work with the students at a much-reduced cost to families.

OSHC continues to offer a very enjoyable, diverse program, which covers all National Quality Standards. Ongoing development of the centre in ALL aspects has led us to meeting the requirements of NQS. Thanks must go to Rebecca Curtis and her staff for the wonderful work they carry out in providing this valuable service to our families. Numbers continue to grow and the students are always engaged in very meaningful tasks based on their interest.

Vacation Care at St Munchin's OSHC has become viable once again, and will continue into the future.

### **Discipleship/Stewardship**

Pastoral Care is the role of all members who belong to a community. At St Munchin's we continue to be blessed to have so many caring, committed and willing people who have the best interests of the students and other community members at heart. Due to COVID-19 this was certainly highlighted as the community came together in support and assistance of one another. From supervision of drop off and pick up, assistance with fee payments, respecting and maintaining COVID-19 protocols such as regular cleaning, using hand sanitiser etc.

Our school social worker Mrs Hodgson is always ready to assist and support students and families who have a need. This interaction is confidential and is only shared with leadership if deemed necessary.

The Rainbows Program to assist students who have experienced some sort of trauma in their lives continues to gain momentum. We once again have received funding through the National Chaplaincy Program for the next 2 years.

We continue to add the extensive pool of resources we already have at St Munchin's. Apart from academic resources, we continue to enhance student facilities and carry out planned maintenance to provide excellent facilities to maximise our learning environment.

In the Early Learning Area, the Play Areas continue to be further developed, and we plan for new play equipment for the front as funds become available.

The P and F have raised funds that have been distributed throughout the school fulfilling teacher wish lists and requirements. This is a wonderful and generous achievement by the committee under this year's circumstances. Many thanks to parents and caregivers for their continued support.

## **Community**

The Parents and Friends have held several events, both fundraisers and social. These have been well supported and attended. This is one avenue where caregivers can be involved. They can participate in a small or larger scale depending on family commitments.

Our Community is so culturally diverse and we need to continue to celebrate and nurture this diversity.

St Munchin's is indeed very fortunate to have so many people who have contributed to our many achievements during 2019.

The School Board supports the principal, staff and students in a consultative role. I extend my sincere gratitude to School Board members led by Luke Bresland- Board Chair and P and F representative, Secretary Lisa Harrison and Joe Musitano, Daria Weber, Mike Hutcheson, Derrick Ingram, Gaylia Evans and Fr Philip and Richard Serrano , Parish Rep

We sincerely thank all members for their commitment, dedication and contributions throughout the year.

The hard work of the P and F committee of Janene Neale, Zoe Bresland, Caroline Surtees and Moira Park, all the regular attendees to meetings and all the families who supported them in some way throughout the year is truly appreciated. All volunteers are to be commended for their community spirit and for the work and interest in raising funds for the

school and in particular the students. Thanks to Kelly Skinner and Tammy Hodges for co-ordinating the School Banking and Aleatha Lin for Scholastic Book Club.

I thank all our parents for their commitment to our school and for their crucial support of our home school/ partnership. Our volunteers in the Canteen, Reading Book exchange, Weekly Banking, Excursions, Incursions, Classrooms and sports events have all demonstrated commitment to our school through action and enthusiasm. Without this support, we would not be able to achieve all round education with our children.

Thanks Katrina Vanderwel and her volunteers, for managing the canteen and all the work carried out in maintaining the service for the students and families. This is a testament to the good service, fantastic food and Katrina's commitment. It would be wonderful if we could have a few more volunteers in 2020.

#### Students

I thank the students for being here and bringing the school to life with their

- Energy and enthusiasm
- Their innocence and honesty
- Their perseverance and accomplishments
- Their willingness to learn and their friendship
- Their beautiful smile
- Their laughter and happiness

#### Staff

The strength and vitality of any school rests with its staff. Whether they operate in the classrooms, in the grounds, library or office, all contribute their skills to advancing the education and well-being of our students; I thank each and every one of them for giving their time and energy to enriching the lives of others.

St Munchin's is blessed to have such a dedicated, committed, caring and collaborative staff that always have the needs of students at the forefront.

I continue to be appreciative of the work carried out by our Assistant Principals, Miss Harrison and Mr Musitano who execute their roles and responsibilities in an exemplary manner. Their support to the Principal, staff and families enhances all work carried out at St Munchin's.

I am especially grateful for the support of our office staff- Mrs Yozzi and Mrs Campbell, for their seamless collaboration and enormous contribution to our school and community. I

thank each one of them for their support, their efforts and hard work. Their attention to detail and knowledge of our families provide the backbone for all that we do.

Sadly, we say good-bye to Mrs Yozzi at the end of this year as she heads into retirement to spend more time with leisurely activities and family. Ev has been the bursar at the school in excess of 27 years. She leaves big shoes to fill. We wish Ev the very best and we will miss her.

St Munchin's School is abundantly blessed with very good people. As a leader, I have the privilege and honour to work with the community and strive to practise and live the values introduced by the Mercy Sisters so long ago. We strive to live out the values inspired by the sisters of Excellence, Justice, Service, Mercy and Compassion. The teachings of Jesus and Gospel values continue to be the foundation we base all our work on.

On behalf of our staff and students I wish all our families, the blessings of Jesus, a safe and joyous festive season and a refreshing holiday break and we look forward to working with you in collaboration in 2020.

Rob Romeo  
Principal