



PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2014

ST ITA'S SCHOOL BOARD

Mission and Religious Education

Religious Education at St Ita's comprises of two separate, yet complementary, dimensions. The first is the **learning and teaching** of Religion in the classroom, and the second is the **religious life of the school**, which includes 4 components: Prayer & Worship, Religious Identity & Culture, Social Action & Justice, and Evangelisation & Faith Formation.

The following describes the school's achievements within the Mission and Religious Education dimension of the community:

- The new Religious Education curriculum was implemented by the class teachers
- Meditation practices continued in each class with Prep and Yr 1 students participating in the *Calm for Kids* program
- The focus for the year was *Gratitude* – the students were encouraged to keep a Gratitude Journal; the staff participated in a retreat day with a focus on Gratitude
- Welcomed Fr Lam Vu and the Capuchin Friars to our community
- Class Masses were reintroduced
- Whole school liturgies and prayer rituals included:
 - Opening School Year Mass, Ash Wednesday Mass, Holy Week and Easter liturgies, Mass of the Assumption, Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, St Ita's Feast Day, Anzac Day Ceremony, Remembrance Day, Catholic Education Week Mass, Liturgy for Grandparents, Prep 2015 Orientation Liturgy, Christmas Carols Evening, Yrs 6/7 Graduation Liturgy, End of Year School Mass
- Participation in the Parish Sacramental Program and visit by Bishop Joseph Oudeman to St Ita's School
- Attendance at Family Masses has increased
- Fundraising as part of the Social Justice Ministry: St Vincent de Paul, Day for Daniel, Caritas and Project Compassion

Learning and Teaching

During 2014 the staff was involved in significant professional development opportunities to assist them to implement the Australian Curriculum and improve student learning outcomes.

- The Geography curriculum was successfully implemented
- The 1:1 Laptop Program was successfully implemented in Yr 4 – St Ita's was chosen as a showcase school for visiting teachers entering into the 1:1 program
- Provided professional learning on curriculum differentiation with a particular focus on Gifted & Talented education
- Professional Learning and implementation of Numeracy program RoleM in Prep -3.
- Significant funding allocated to the purchase of Maths resources to implement RoleM
- A successful partnership with a professional learning community from another school continues to develop to share and further advance quality teaching practices e.g. collaborative planning, lesson study and Consistency of Teacher Judgement of student learning
- Purchase of PATR and PATM online assessment tools to gather literacy and numeracy data across the school
- *Visible Learning* practices were implemented to maximize students' learning potential e.g. Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, Classroom Walkthroughs, and teacher showcases of quality teaching practice
- Implementation of a whole school approach to the teaching of reading comprehension skills
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Plan was developed
- Implement differentiated curriculum experiences – the school's "Tournament of Minds" (National Champions), Junior Tropfest (National Finalist) and debating teams experienced a high level of success. Days of Excellence opportunities provided for students.
- One of our students was awarded the People's Choice Award in the Brisbane Catholic Education 2014 *Prize For Art* Competition. Over two thousand entries were received from Catholic Primary Schools and fourteen of our students were in the finalists' shortlist. This achievement is a reflection on the wonderful Visual Arts Program at St Ita's.
- Health and Physical Education:
 - GET SET GO – swimming program in Terms 1 & 4
 - GET SET GO – ball and games skills in Term 3 (P-3)
 - Footsteps Dance in Term 2
 - UQ Sport in Term 3 (Yrs 4-7)
 - AFL Auskick, Soccer, Water Polo, Cricket & Lawn Bowls clinics.
 - Intra and interschool carnivals – Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming
 - Play is the Way activities

Professional Practice and Collaborative Relationships

The strong partnerships that exist between home and school have been fundamental in each student's overall development. Teachers are readily available to meet with parents to discuss and work collaboratively to address educational and social issues that arise within the school. The mutual respect that exists between parents and staff is to be commended.

The Pastoral School Board and P&F Committee have both been extremely supportive of the school's strategic plan and vision.

- A very professional and successful school and community art show gave the students an opportunity to showcase their creative talents and brought the community together in a spirit of collaboration and celebration and was a great success
- Readiness for School and Occupational Therapy screening for all Prep students
- The Pastoral School Board assisted the Principal to:
 - Review school policies and procedures
 - Assist with the Implementation of the 1:1 Laptop initiative
 - Examine budget expenditure
 - Assisted in setting of school fees schedule
- The P&F assisted the school and community to:
 - Build community spirit through a range of social events for students and parents
 - Provided a strong forum for community and parent feedback
 - Raised funds for the completion of the Pool Complex amenities and shade
 - Delivered a successful Art Show
 - Maintained excellent services for Sausage Sizzle & Pasta weekly lunches

Strategic Resourcing

St Ita's School is thriving with student enrolments maintaining stability and with waiting lists in the Early Years' classes. This is a healthy sign and allows for our school to continue providing quality educational and personnel resources for the students of St Ita's.

The development of the School Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016 has been written to ensure the school continues to provide quality education and remain true to our vision and mission.

- Apple TVs were installed into all classrooms
- A shade structure was constructed on River Terrace
- The pool amenities complex and shade structure were completed
- Upgrade of the teachers' laptops – MacAirs
- MacAir laptops were purchased for all Yr 4 students as part of the 1:1 implementation program
- Extra security lighting was installed in Merici Place

- Significant funding was allocated for library resources
- Technology devices were purchased for the early years' classrooms to supplement existing resources
- Upgrade of technology infrastructure – increase in band width & wireless connectivity
- Significant funding was allocated to the professional learning of staff aligned to the school's strategic plan and annual goals

Conclusion

I thank sincerely the members of the School Board for your support and for your wisdom as we work together in partnership to make just decisions to not only move our school forward but also to retain and nurture those values that are an important part of the charism of our school.

Maureen Thomas
Principal