



PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2016

ST ITA'S Parents & Friends Association and School Board

Mission and Religious Education

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

- St Ita's Religious Education Program was validated by BCE
- Meditation practices continued in each class with Prep to Yr 3 students participating in the *Calm for Kids* yoga program
- The focus for the year was *Opening the Doors to Mercy* – the students were encouraged to “Be Merciful” in their relationships with others; the staff participated in a twilight retreat session with Bishop Bill Morris with a focus on Mercy
- Continued to develop strong partnerships with our Parish
- Class Masses continued to enhance the Catholic faith dimension of our school
- Introduction of a set of Gospel Values by which we follow Jesus – posters in every classroom
- 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, Anzac Day Ceremony, Remembrance Day, Catholic Education Week Mass, Liturgy for Grandparents, All Saints Day, Prep 2017 Orientation Liturgy, Christmas Carols Evening, Yr 6 Graduation Liturgy, End of Year School Mass
- Participation in the Parish Sacramental Program – facilitated by the Parish and parent coordinator
- Attendance at Family Masses has continued to increase with parents organising the liturgy music
- Fundraising as part of the Social Justice Ministry: St Vincent de Paul, Day for Daniel, Caritas, Orange Sky Laundry and Project Compassion

Learning and Teaching

During 2016 the staff was involved in significant professional development opportunities to assist them to implement the Australian Curriculum and improve student-learning outcomes. The school successfully engaged in an External School Review Process.

- Engaged with processes, practices and tools to identify evidence of school and student learning.
- Implemented [Literacy Monitoring Tools](#) across the school to track student learning improvement.
- Developed a set of writing exemplar progressions across the year levels.
- Collaborated with BCE education consultants to analyze student learning data to inform further planning and teaching
- The 1:1 Device Program has been successfully implemented in Yrs 4 – 6. Yr 3 students all have access to a mini iPad.
- Significant funding allocated to the purchase of Literacy resources in the Early Years to support the teaching of phonics in line with the BCE Phonics Position Paper
- *Visible Learning* practices are embedded in the curriculum planning to maximize students' learning potential e.g. Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, Classroom Walkthroughs, and teacher showcases of quality teaching practice
- Implement differentiated curriculum experiences – the school's "Tournament of Minds" (Regional Champions) and debating teams experienced a high level of success.
- To support the introduction of the Technologies curriculum significant funding was allocated to Robotics for classroom use and STEAM Club
- Introduced a Kitchen Garden Program linked to the Australian Curriculum
- Health and Physical Education: A PE Teacher and sports coordinator was employed to enhance the delivery of the HPE curriculum
 - GET SET GO – swimming program in Terms 1 & 4
 - Interschool Sport in Term 3 (Yrs 4-6)
 - 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 Gather Festival 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
- The Pastoral School Board assisted the Principal to:
 - Review school policies and procedures
 - Examine budget expenditure
 - Assisted in setting of school fees schedule
 - Develop a Parent Opinion Survey
- 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 installation of the play structure on Jubilee Oval & Robotics Kits
 - Delivered a successful Gather Festival event
 - Maintained excellent services for Sausage Sizzle & Pasta weekly lunches
 - Establish strong parent networking through year level social gatherings, buddy families for Prep and pastoral care of families

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.

- iPads were purchased for all Yr 4 students as part of the 1:1 implementation program rollout
- Significant funding was allocated for library resources

- Technology devices were purchased for the early years' and Yr 3 classrooms to supplement existing resources
- Significant funding was allocated to the professional learning of staff aligned to the school's strategic plan and annual goals
- Successful application for commonwealth government funding to refurbish the Yr 1 classrooms and construct new student amenities
- Successful negotiation with the Parish to purchase the Parish Hall and transfer this asset to the school
- Construction of a kitchen garden and outdoor learning space

Conclusion

It has been a privilege to lead this community for the past eight years and I will take special memories with me.

I thank sincerely the members of the P&F Association 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