



ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY 2024 REPORT

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – ONDINE KOMNICK

Good evening, everyone and a special welcome to our School Advisory Council members, our P&F executive committee members, special guests, Father Sam and Deputy Mayor James Rowe, our parents and carers and last but certainly by no means least, our wonderful staff.

You are all very welcome to our Annual Community Meeting. This report provides an opportunity for me to reflect on all our achievements in 2024 and to take a sneak peek into 2025.

I have been told that this year, I should keep this speech short and sweet. I have always believed that a sign of good leadership is the capacity to listen to others, so at the end of this report, you be the judge.

This is my fifth year of principalship at Our Lady of Mercy Primary School and they say time flies when you are having fun. Certainly, when I look back at three years of leading through a global pandemic and then two years of normality, the time has gone by very quickly, made quicker by I suspect by our determined 'heads down' approach to achieve great outcomes for our students.

Let's now journey back to the start of 2024 to reflect on and celebrate some of the outstanding achievements under the four pillars of Catholic Education.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Year on year we continue to grow a strong relationship with Our Lady of Mercy Parish, and I regularly attend Parish council meetings as this connection with parish is central to our Christ centred, student focused approach. Building a sense of community and connectedness to our parish community is central to our identity and members of the parish are always interested in what is happening at school and continually offer their time to assist us in any way they can. Our school works closely with the parish sacramental coordinator Jenny Watts, in preparing Catholic children to receive their Sacraments and we have a strong working relationship too with staff from Mercy College, in coordinating each Sacramental celebration.

We have held many fundraisers this year including our PJ day to raise money for Wheelchairs for Kids, Crazy Hair Day which raises funds for LifeLink, Mercy Day stalls to support Father Sam's charity initiatives in Africa and our Christmas hamper appeal to raise funds for St Vincent de Paul. Through our staff free-dress Friday initiative, we have raised money for various charities selected by staff. These important social outreach programs provide us with an opportunity to support those less fortunate than ourselves by being the face of Christ in our community.

Class Masses are a regular feature of our termly calendar and each new term commences with a Mass where we give thanks for the blessing of our school community. Fr Sam pays a visit to the class preparing the Mass and we thank Fr Sam for his ongoing commitment to our school as our faith leader and friend.

This year our staff faith development day was on Christian meditation. In previous years, staff were professionally developed in the science of how meditation calms the amygdala, which assists in helping to use our thinking brains. The day was about putting a Catholic lens on meditation and turned out to be a deeply meaningful day for staff, with many of our educators, implementing learnings from the day with their classes, giving children the opportunity to meditate after lunch to get ready to learn. A highlight of the year is always our staff Paschal Meal where we prepare our minds and hearts for Easter with the re-enactment of the Passover meal. This tradition started by our long-standing staff member Rossana Alviani, was continued by Sue McPhail and Sharon Young, who in Rossana's absence this year ensured that this important tradition was celebrated. The Paschal Meal celebration by staff, speaks volumes to the culture of our school and the sense of who we are in this place.

EDUCATION

One of my very favourite pillars and the core business of being a school.

We have been working hard over several focus areas this year. As a leadership team we have tried to ensure that we have more regular and focused Cluster meetings where teachers have an opportunity to engage in professional learning and discussions. Next year this practice will be further refined to include one day out at the start of each term for our Cluster leaders to prepare Clusters for the term. Cluster leaders for the first time this year were included in our SIM (School Improvement Meetings) and our Cluster focus in 2025 will be on working towards achieving our school improvement goals. Next year we have included a special focus on the Early Years working with consultants from CEWA to develop an Early Years philosophy and to work on setting and achieving our National Quality Standard goals with CEWA support. The upper Cluster will continue to work on our school's Reading Model for Years 3-6, having embedded paired fluency this year. This year our senior Cluster leader and Literacy Advocate went into classrooms to support the practise of paired fluency. Our focus next year will be on vocabulary.

In our OHI survey last year, our teachers asked for a greater leadership presence in classrooms. I am proud to say that this has been a priority we have achieved as a leadership team. Each teacher has had each leader view a lesson and provide feedback. There is much to celebrate in this area. Across the school we have seen a refinement and further embedding of our High Impact Instructional practice and engagement norms and my best days have been when I have spent time in the classrooms. I come out from a lesson with my heart full for the excellent foundation that we are providing our children, as I know without a doubt that our students are getting the very best education here. Our teachers ought to be incredibly proud of their achievements in delivering learning to such a high standard. Often, lesson feedback has included one to two pages of STARS which are celebration points in a lesson, but equally as professional people, our teachers have been open and willing to receive feedback to ensure constant improvement, because we know that a teacher has the greatest impact on student learning outcomes.

Another process which we truly embedded this year and for which we can be justifiably proud is our People Performance Review process. Teachers have met with leadership in Term 2 to set goals and to discuss student data. Feedback from leaderships viewing of lessons will inform teaching goals for next year and student data discussions have also led to identification of areas for improvement in

teaching practice. Follow up data meetings will happen in Weeks 7 and 8 of this term to celebrate outstanding achievements in teaching and individual and collective student growth.

We will continue to strive to be on the cutting edge of the Science of Learning and we commit to developing our middle leaders to ensure that we are always implementing best practice. To this end we have enrolled Krystie Clark and two of our Cluster leaders, Jordan Challis and Prya Calleja into the MasterClass at Teach Well, so that they can continue to lead the refining of High Impact Instructional Practise in our school.

DATA

We set ourselves some bold goals by which to measure the effectiveness of our school improvement targets. We aimed to move student proficiency in Naplan by 5 percent each year and to achieve a .4 effect size for 80 percent of classes in 2024 which will increase by .1 effect size each year until the end of 2026. A .4 effect size means that for one year's worth of teaching, our students attain one year's worth of growth in Reading and Mathematics.

Last week we completed our standardised PAT testing and I am pleased to inform you of the following results:

In Mathematics, 70% of our classes were achieving above a .4 effect size with the minimum effect size being a .62. This means around a year and a half worth of growth for a year's worth of teaching at a minimum in 70 percent of our classes.

In Reading, 100 percent achieved a minimum .4 effect size with many classes achieving above a .4 effect size.

Next year the bar rises slightly as we strive for a .5 effect size in 80 percent of classes, because we know that this is achievable with effective instructional practice and we also know that our students are certainly capable of the challenge and have the ability to learn and grow.

In Naplan we achieved a 5 percent growth on last year's score in Year 3 Reading, Spelling and Grammar and in Year 5 Spelling.

In Year 3 Reading last year we were only above Similar Schools and this year we are above Similar Schools, CEWA, State and National.

In Year 3 Spelling we maintained being above Similar Schools, CEWA, State and National, like last year's results.

In Year 5 Spelling, we were above Similar Schools, State and National and equal to CEWA.

In Year 3 Grammar we were above Similar Schools and CEWA and last year we were only above Similar Schools.

In Year 5 Reading, Grammar and Writing we maintained being above Similar Schools like we did last year.

In Year 3 Writing this year we were above Similar Schools and last year we were not above anything.

As you can see there is cause for celebration at these outstanding results. The sky is the limit, and we will strive to improve each year by the targets we have set ourselves.

We can attribute these great results in growth to :

- The embedding of High Impact Instructional Practice across the school
- The implementation of daily reviews/warm-ups
- The use of engagement norms and
- Accountability practices across the school

We have provided many opportunities for our students to grow their knowledge and skills through extra-curricular activities. A group of Year 6 students under the guidance and leadership of Mrs Sadlo, through the City of Wanneroo's Leadership program, have come up with an idea to develop a community space between the Year 1 and Year 2 classroom blocks. This project commenced with the planting of a tree in this area which will soon be paved. We are hoping that in time we will be able to purchase benches for families to sit on, while waiting to collect their children, and for classes to gather for outdoor classroom learning opportunities. Our Year 6 students will present their project later this month to councillors from the City of Wanneroo. Our Choir students participated in One Big Voice under the direction of our Music teacher Ms Anna-Maria Agnello and Mr King, our Physical Education Teacher has provided children with many opportunities over the year to participate in external sporting events, a highlight of which was the Soccer Tournament for both girls and boys.

This term we started our very first OLOM bookclub, which has been incredibly popular with 26 students signing up. Bookclub was initiated and is being led by Mrs Leah Bowring who also runs an Aboriginal cultural group, called Dadirri for our Aboriginal students. Our librarian Mrs Roma Mahr, has opened the library at lunch time for those who want to read or do some mindful colouring. We thank all these staff members for their commitment to our school by providing these extra-curricular opportunities.

Next year we are hoping to grow our clubs, so watch this space.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of Mrs Penny Henery as the Aboriginal Key Teacher in our school. Mrs Henery has planted a bush tucker garden this year and applied and was successful in receiving a grant and will next year be working with the Aboriginal consultants at CEWA to establish Aboriginal Education goals in our school.

COMMUNITY

Our vibrant P&F must be recognised for their efforts in building our community and in planning for friend and fund-raising events. It is becoming more challenging to get families to volunteer their time for the many events that the P&F run. This leaves the bulk of the planning, resourcing and running of events to a handful of dedicated P&F committee members and regular P&F meeting attendees. We acknowledge and thank these amazing people for so generously giving up their time to serve our school community. Having said this, we have seen some new people volunteer their time and we thank them and are very grateful for their help.

OUR LADY OF MERCY PRIMARY SCHOOL

We continue to maintain a close working relationship with the Roseworth Child and Parenting Centre, which provides an opportunity for our school to network with representatives from the City of Wanneroo, the Koondoola Child Development Centre and the Smith family as well as with schools in this area, who share common experiences and challenges.

STEWARDSHIP

We continue to have schools come to our school to see our teachers and education assistants deliver our MultiLit suite of literacy programs from K to Year 2 as well as in support. Every visitor has acknowledged the outstanding educational outcomes we are delivering at our school.

From next year every Catholic school will be audited for three consecutive years with a non-auditing year in the fourth year. In 2024, we will be audited on the Education pillar. We are well placed to pass this audit. The Staff Space that Sue Griffin developed, and which was launched this year, ensures that we work compliantly every day, so we are well placed to undertake a yearly audit.

Our new school uniform has been positively received by both students and families alike. Our uniform supplier commented that our new uniform has been one of the quickest uptakes in their history of uniform changes, which is why they ran into a few supply issues at the start of the year.

A sneak peek into 2025 – Michelle Sadlo has volunteered to become our Sustainability Advocate and we are working with Michelle on formalising some goals around Sustainability in our school. As a school we need to heed both the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor as Pope Francis' encyclical Laudate Si encourages us to do.

STAFFING

We have a few staff leaving us at the end of this year and their service and commitment to our school will be appropriately celebrated at the end of this term. We thank Mel Brown, John Croxford, Hannah Thomas and Sandie Summers for their service to our school community. We wish all these wonderful people the very best for their new adventures and thank them for their passionate dedication to our students. We very proudly grow our teachers at OLOM and their ability to secure positions at other schools, speaks volumes to their engagement with our instructional practice model and data processes. Let's give them all a round of applause.

We welcome:

Antonia Muto who will step in for Alison Ryan who is taking maternity leave and Teresa Farrell who has been employed as the teacher for our STAR class. Antonio is here this evening, and we warmly welcome him to our school. Antonio is going to be a great asset, with a vocational heart for education and school communities.

In 2025, I will be taking the first semester off as long service and professional renewal leave. We welcome Luke Sirroli who will be Principal for Semester One next year.

FAREWELL

Tonight, we need to farewell one Advisory Council and long-standing P&F member Andrea Ludvick. Andy has served in many roles over the years, the last one being as P&F President. She has served

with commitment and loyalty despite a busy family and work life. We would like to present Andrea with a gift of our appreciation for showing the Mercy value of Service over many years to our school. Andy epitomises the work ethic of Australia's first Saint, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop who said, 'never see a need without doing something about it'. Andrea has worked tirelessly in many roles, serving as:

2014-19 secretary of P&F

2020-23 President of P&F

2024 Vice President of P&F

2015 Advisory Council GM

2016-2020 AC secretary

2021-2023 P&F rep

2024 AC GM

Totalling 11 years of service to our community. She deserves a very big round of applause.

We also farewell Mrs Olive Wingco who is stepping down from the P&F Committee. Over 8 years she has served as a Treasurer and general member. We thank Olive sincerely for her service too.

IN CLOSING

In closing there are a few groups of people I would like to thank.

Firstly, to Alison Ryan. Alison, we are going to miss you so much. I know this is not farewell, you will only be gone for a year, but the deep care and love for the work you do and the people you serve, is a hallmark of your leadership and I can't thank you enough for being an absolute rock of support and strength through all the challenges we have faced together as a team of two. You are like a yacht with a strong hull, determined and poised in the face of any storm. We can't wait to meet Baby Ryan, he has many aunties and uncles at school to love him and support you through this wonderful new adventure you about to embark on as a parent.

To Krystie – all I can say is that God heard our prayers and sent you to our school. I know you are the right person for this special place because you have a heart full of love for our students and families and so much care and consideration for the wellbeing of our staff. Thank you for jumping in feet first and for not giving up on us even through some of the most challenging days. You have the strength of kindness, joy, perseverance and a level head to serve this amazing school community. Thank you for your dedication and love for our school.

Both Alison and Krystie's determination to achieve school improvement goals while ensuring that our staff and students wellbeing is always front and centre of mind, is a wonderful example of their servant leadership. I am truly blessed to lead alongside two people who show great patience and capacity to love and serve others.

Secondly to our passionate, dedicated and selfless Education Assistants and Teachers. Thank you for the outstanding work you do every day, and for giving so much of yourselves to your calling, so that our students can flourish. The media is full of stories about the challenges faced by educators, and no

doubt most of them are true, but you persevere through these challenges with courage and a focused determination to see your students grow and we are truly blessed by your presence in our school.

Last but certainly by no means least – the rest of the team that makes our school tick. You know who you are, and you are pivotal to the smooth functioning of this place. Your daily commitment to making this school of ours the best it can possibly be for all who work and learn here is admirable. We want you to know that you are seen and appreciated too.

OLOM is a unique and special place. To the families who make this community such a great one, we thank you for your partnership and for entrusting your children into our care. With our Christ centred, Child Focused approach to education in the most holistic sense of that word, we continue to strive to ensure that each child grows and flourishes setting the foundations for a prosperous future.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your loved ones a happy and holy Christmas. May celebrations of the birth of the Christ child, open our hearts to His presence and His peace over this festive season.

Thank you.