

## **ST PIUS X CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL - MANNING**

### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

**29 NOVEMBER 2011**

2011 has been a year with some very different events taking place. The most exciting one being the BER Project which is almost at completion will see a new Administration Centre, a new Multi Purpose Room and a new Kindergarten on the school site. The patience of staff, students and parents in accepting the inconvenience in the short term is commendable and I thank you all, as this has made daily routines easier to manage.

This year we have continued to plan and implement many engaging and challenging activities for our students to scaffold onto their overall personal development. Providing a secure, safe and encouraging learning environment is paramount. Our school community continues to support and assist staff and students in an exemplary manner in many and varied avenues in our teaching and learning programs and in the personal and spiritual development of the students.

The positive partnership between home and school is one of the defining factors in the achievements of all community members and in particular our students.

The Religious Dimension in the school and our Catholic Ethos is the foundation of all work carried out by community members. Based on Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus Christ and Catholic traditions, we continue to further develop in Faith and Friendship.

In today's society we are being challenged to keep abreast of modern initiatives and adopt them as practical aspects for future learning and development so that we are skilled and knowledgeable contributing members of society.

Developing and maintaining an independent, confident, happy and well-balanced lifestyle are aspects always considered in all we do at St Pius X. We therefore strive to develop and implement a well-balanced curriculum covering all nine learning areas.

We continue to encourage our students to strive for excellence and aim to reach their full potential based on their uniqueness, individual talents and abilities.

St Pius X continues to carefully reflect on and further develop educational standards and learning initiatives which reflect current best practice in teaching and learning so as to meet the individual needs of students.

In doing so we hope to foster and nurture the spiritual, pastoral, educational, physical, social, emotional and cultural needs of all our students, assisted and supported by our parents.

## **Catholic Identity**

Our Catholic Identity remains central to our ethos. All we engage in and participate in, and the manner by which we conduct ourselves, our duties and responsibilities, must reflect Gospel values. We strive to establish open and honest communication and develop and maintain relationships which are conducive to successful accomplishments and achievements.

Our Catholic Identity is closely linked to our Evangelisation Plan which spans 2009 - 2012. 2013 will see a review of the Plan to ensure all aspects are current and appropriate.

St Pius X continues to embrace opportunities to celebrate our Catholicity. We come together in prayer regularly, attend mass as a school and in classes regularly and participate in the Virtues and Making Jesus Real program. Our Religious Education units are the basis of our faith development and provide us with content and knowledge and practical examples of our Catholic Traditions.

Our work for the Missions, St Vincent de Paul Society and local outreach groups assist us in our stewardship towards others less fortunate than ourselves in our community and worldwide.

The School and Parish are integral components of faith development and community building. The Sacramental Program, Special Children's Liturgies, Feast Day celebrations and Parent workshops continue to foster strong and positive relationships between school and parish.

As always Father Thomas continues to be ever willing to lead us in our spiritual needs and development. His pleasant, warm and approachable manner makes it easily for us all to recognise him as our spiritual leader. The staff, students and parents are appreciative and thankful to Father Thomas for his readiness to assist whenever required.

I extend thanks to members of The Parish Pastoral Council, Liturgy Committee, Music Ministry, Altar Serving Committee, Legion of Mary, St Vincent de Paul and the Youth Ministry. Their assistance and support is valued as complementary work to that of the school.

## **Curriculum**

We have commenced familiarisation of the National Curriculum set to be implemented in WA in 2014. The teachers are incorporating aspects in their current teaching and learning programs. More work will be carried out in 2012 with two Professional Development days dedicated specifically to the National Curriculum. Many more opportunities have been planned for individual teachers in the four core areas of English, Mathematics, Science and History.

## **National Partnerships' Program**

In the past two years we have received some funding to focus on learning areas which require whole school development. In 2010 we focused on Numeracy in the Space strand specifically the Attributes of Shapes, This year Literacy was our focus. We considered Grammar and Punctuation through writing. Focus areas were chosen based

on whole school performance data over the past three years using a variety of assessments such as NAPLAN, ACARA, WAMSE, EASYMARK and Teacher constructed assessments.

The NPP has also seen the development of key teachers in literacy, numeracy, and early learning that provide support and share information gained at professional development sessions.

The outcomes of the above initiatives and strategies have produced very pleasing results overall.

### **Specialist Programs**

Once again these programs are well received and well delivered by a number of staff. Physical Education, Music, Library, Numeracy and Literacy and Italian assist in providing a balanced curriculum, developing skills and talents across the learning areas. Independent Music tutors enhance this for students interested in learning to play musical instruments such as guitar, piano and drums.

### **Resources**

Our wonderful P. & F have once again donated many dollars to supplement resources covering all aspects of the curriculum as well as the general well-being of the students. The biggest injection of funds expended has been on the air-conditioning of classrooms.

### **ICT**

In 2011 a sub committee was set up consisting of four parents and two staff members as mentioned in the Board Chair's Report. A great deal of discussion, research and planning has led to a recommendation for implementation of a Plan to maximise student learning and engagement, and to ensure that the reasoning behind the plan meets the appropriate needs of teachers and students.

### **Student Assessment and Reporting**

An important aspect of our students' education is the monitoring of standards and student progress.

Apart from the National Testing that occurs in year 3 and 5 (NAPLAN), many other diagnostic tools are used to gather information on student performance and progress. Some examples of these are EasyMark Testing in Reading, Writing, Spelling and Mathematics, Progressive Achievement Tests in Vocabulary and Comprehension. In the junior primary level Performance Indicator Testing in Language and Numeracy, Word Recognition and Phonemic Awareness Testing and Mathematics Assessment Interview for the EMU program. (Extending Mathematical Understanding)

We continue to utilise parent interviews, written reports, portfolios, learning journeys, work samples, test books and formal results from NAPLAN, WAMSE, and RELIGIOUS LITERACY to report to parents on student progress and achievements.

This year the formal means of reporting twice yearly at the end of each semester has been based on an A-E scale as mandated by government. This seems to have been successful based on the feedback received from parents.

The level of interest from parents in the achievements and progress of students, along with the support and affirmation, are reflected in the students' level of engagement in schooling, their receptiveness and eagerness to further develop.

### **Quality Catholic Schooling Review**

From the beginning of 2011 Catholic Schools are to review 5 components of Catholic Schooling in WA.

A five year plan was constructed at the beginning of 2011 and this is subject to change if the need arises. Some of the components require community involvement either as a whole at random choice or by volunteering to take part.

The trial component in 2010 was 'Engaging with Families' which returned very positive responses. The outcomes of all the reviews are posted on the school website.

Components reviewed this year are Teaching and Learning Practices, Student Assessment, Student Well-being, Staff Well-being and Special Needs Students.

Final findings will be posted on the school website for community information.

### **Parental Involvement**

The strong support, assistance and involvement that St Pius X receives from our parent body and extended family members is a much appreciated and valuable resource to our school, staff and students. It is evident that the total development of our future leaders and contributors to society is important to all members of St Pius X community.

The School Board supports the principal, staff and students through its consultative role. It has been a pleasure to share a common interest with the members and the sharing of ideas and talents indicate the strong commitment of the members who volunteer their time and skills for the benefit of all. I thank current and continuing members for their contributions and support throughout the year, particularly the support offered the Assistant Principals and staff in my time of absence.

Thanks to Duncan McPherson as chair who has led us admirably in this role for the first time this year.

A special thanks to Lee Stothard for his services and contributions as he ends his time on the Board and in the school.

Without the marvellous and exemplary contributions and hard work of the P. & F. Executive and many sub committees, class representatives, canteen co-ordinators and volunteers, uniform shop co-ordinators, costume shop co-ordinators and the many parents who assist in the classrooms and excursions, and sporting events, the comprehensive range of experiences enjoyed by the students would not be possible. To all outgoing members we thank you and value all your contributions and appreciate your interest in the well being of the school community.

## **Highlights for 2011**

- Our faith experiences and practices continue to provide us with many reflective and spiritual moments
- Our students excel in sporting events, the performing arts, internal and external competitions. Our profile in these areas has been lifted.
- Results in Quality Catholic Schooling, NAPLAN and National Partnerships Project have been rewarding and affirming of the positive work carried out by teachers, generalist staff and students.
- Phase One of the ICT Plan is progressing very well
- Contentment of students and parents is very evident in the ethos of our school.
- Completion of BER Project

In closing, I wish to thank our Leadership Team members in Nik Hofmeester and Mac Callisto, who execute their duties and responsibilities, competently, thoughtfully with the best interests of all community members - particularly the students - at heart. All staff for their tiring efforts in assisting the students to reach their potential and their commitment to Catholic Education in general. St Pius X is blessed to have such a wonderful group of individuals who work collaboratively and who love working with the students and care for one another as a team.

At the forefront of the school is our very competent, friendly and extremely efficient secretary/bursar in Margaret Tatasciore. Margaret's, forward thinking attention to detail; friendliness and smiling face are an absolute asset and are much appreciated and admired by all. Thank you Margaret for all that you do and for the special gifts you bring to the school and support given to me personally.

As leader of St Pius X, I continue to count my blessings in having being appointed to this position 6 years ago and am thankful for the wonderful people I have had the opportunity to work and socialise with.

Special thanks to everyone in the school community for the prayers and well wishes extended to me and my family during my illness.

On behalf of the staff and students I wish you and your families the blessings of Jesus Christ for the coming of the Festive Season and we look forward to 2012 as another, busy and rewarding school year.

Robert Romeo

**Principal**

29 November 2011

