



St Columba's School

Bayswater

Annual Community Meeting

Principal's Report

24 November 2021

Welcome to the St Columba's School, Bayswater, Annual Community Report for 2021.

Throughout 2021, our school community continues to grow in building strong foundations in faith, wisdom and peace. These enable us to find our connection and grounding. It is through others, the earth and ourselves that we are able to live with purpose and humility. Catherine McAuley calls us to be shining lamps, giving light to all around us. With this as our mission, we are charged with the responsibility to be witness to this in all we do, in all we say and in all we believe.



I wish to thank Fr Andrew, our parish, our Catholic School Advisory Council and Catholic School Parents WA for their continued support throughout 2021. Fr Andrew continues to bring a gentleness and kindness to our parish/school connection. With the support of Jennifer Debono, our Chair, and all members of the Catholic School Advisory Council, we have once again worked together for the wellbeing of all in our school community. The team is outstanding in their commitment to the operations of our school and the people who walk through our gates. It is with gratitude that we thank Jennifer Debono for her commitment to the position of Chair over the last three years. Jennifer leaves St Columba's School community with many fond memories. We know Jennifer will forever be a St Columba's person. We will not be surprised if we see her back at the starting line of our athletics and swimming carnivals.

The Catholic School Advisory Council has focused on the following throughout 2021:

- The planning and resourcing of funds for the canopy/walkway outside the Year 3, 4 and OSHC classrooms. Over the past five years, a focus on building up reserves to self-fund the project has been a priority. \$400 000 has been committed to the completion of these works in 2022.
- Ongoing maintenance across the classrooms continues in carpeting across Year 3 and 4. The Year 2 classrooms will have carpet installed in January 2022. Window and door treatments to be installed across the school to ensure increased security in line with lock down and safety procedures.
- Continued maintenance to playgrounds and the oval. This includes playground work throughout the ECE, boats, cargo net, logs and trees.
- Management of leases including new MacBooks for teaching staff, iPads for students/staff and new photocopiers.
- Staffing management to meet the needs of the students.
- Financial management to ensure a sound position at the end of 2021 and moving into 2022 on-going operations.

A close relationship with the Catholic School Parents WA, led by Tanya Armstrong, has ensured a focus remains on what was most important for our students. Special thanks to all members of the Executive and all members of the CSPWA for their support for what we do at St Columba's School. The Executive completed their first year in 2021 and will be continuing into 2022. The high attendance at CSPWA meetings, along with the high mutual respect across the meetings, is appreciated.

A big thank you to all our parents for their support over the year with fundraising for our kids at St Columba's School. The CSPWA continue to build funds for current and future projects:

- Class Budgets and Resourcing \$14 500
- Reading resources (PP to Yr6) \$10 000
- Library Books \$2 000
- 4 x Faction Tents \$5 000
- 20 x 3m Aluminium benches for seating throughout the school \$10 000

A total of \$41 500 has been contributed to the school from CSPWA.

Our St Columba's School staff continue to focus on the wellbeing of our students and their families. High connection and a willingness to provide the best for their students is what drives our staff each day in their work within the teaching and learning programs. I thank all our staff for their dedication to their students and very much look forward to 2022. Our staff are committed to be people of the Mercy spirit and the St Columba's way of being. It is about service to others and ensure the care of those within our community is at the forefront. All our decisions are made in the best interest of our children. For that, I am extremely grateful. We thank all our staff for continually looking to improve outcomes for our children and to foster positive relationships with our families.

At the end of the 2021 school year, Megan Dwyer, will be retiring from St Columba's School. We thank Megan for her contribution over 13 years, twelve as Assistant Principal. Megan is committed to our St Columba's families and the education and wellbeing of our students. A passion for liturgy and the faith formation of our community will be remembered with gratitude. We wish Megan and her family many wonderful moments and blessings as new adventures open up into 2022. Sue Doble also retires at the end of this year after 16 years of service. Sue has a long history here at St Columba's, having been a student here. We thank Sue for her contributions to our community and wish her an abundance of happiness into the future. Megan and Sue will always have a special place in the hearts of the St Columba's community.

Natalie Smith, who leaves us after three years of teaching Year 1. Nat just loves the kids; it is as simple as that. A passion for wellbeing and bringing out the best in her students is what drives Nat. Nat will be focusing on her own family and pursuing a variety of roles in education in the future. We know there are many bright things ahead for Nat. Mitchell McGivern will be leaving us as he returns to his teaching position in Wyndham. We thank Mitch for all he has brought to St Columba's School during his three years and are grateful he was able to return to be with us in 2021. We know Mitch will continue to impact positively on the lives of all those he meets. All the best for the future, Mitch. Danielle Rebelo leaves us to take up a new teaching position at Kings College in Wellard. Danielle has been appointed to a Pre-Primary class which is where her love for teaching is founded. We thank Danielle for her contributions throughout 2021 and wish her an abundance of good things into the future.

Deb Klatt, our Assistant Principal, has made the decision to move back into a full-time classroom teaching position at the end of this year. We thank Deb for her commitment to her position as Assistant Principal and the contributions to the growth and wellbeing of our students and staff. Deb's first passion is classroom teaching. It is with excitement we welcome Deb back into the role of a classroom teacher.

As we head towards the end of another year, we also wish to recognise one of our long serving staff at St Columba's School. Ali Martin completes her 40th year of teaching at St Columba's School, Bayswater. Ali's passion for St Columba's School and its people continues to be borne out in the number of children she taught returning here with their own children.

Inspiring Christ-centred Leaders

Religious Education and Faith formation are the primary purpose of Catholic schools. In partnership with all parents, the school and parish work together to assist the children to develop knowledge of their Catholic faith. The explicit teaching of Church doctrine and traditions, through the Religious Education Units of Work, which are mandated by the Bishops of Western Australia and the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, are the resources from which all lessons are planned.

Throughout the year, our St Columba's students have supported a variety of charities including the Mercy Missions, Like Link program, Caritas, Project Compassion, Catholic Mission, Wheelchairs for Kids and St Vincent de Paul. During our Mercy Mission Day, over \$3 706 was raised in support. These funds will be distributed to all the organisations we contribute to in our outreach programs. Without the support of our families, students and staff, we would not be able to improve the lives of those vulnerable in our broader community. The impact is far reaching.

Again, in 2021, the sacramental programs of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation, were celebrated in collaboration with our parish family. The workshops and celebrations were meaningful and connected with our children as they committed fully to their connection to Jesus and to the broader Catholic Church. We thank all staff and parents for their engagement in creating liturgies that were celebrations of joy.

Review of Priorities 2021

- Continue to prioritise the link between the school and parish. [achieved]
- Align the school motto with the Mercy values. Develop five phrases/sentences to make them meaningful and easily recalled by students, staff and parents. [achieved]
- Build leadership capacity within staff. [achieved]

Bringing this mission alive in our Mercy Values has been a large part of the 2021 school year. With a commitment to bringing the Mercy Values alive in our school. These Mercy Values form the foundation on which we continue to build the Mercy Spirit of Catherine McAuley and the life of St Columba.



Priorities 2022

- Sharing through prayer and observations how Jesus is present in all that we do.
- Continue to form connections between the school and parish community.
- Quality Professional Development throughout the year.
- Appointment of staff to middle leadership positions in 2022.

Catholic Schools of Excellence

We have very experienced and passionate staff members at St Columba's School, who go about ensuring high standards of teaching and learning for our students. The on-going focus on literacy across our writing has seen growth across the school. The focus on writing and alignment through the Promoting Literacy Development program from Kindergarten to Year 6, has also impacted positively on building the confidence of students in their writing skills. We continue to maintain a focus on sustaining this trend into 2022. Further analysis of data, and the use of this data to inform teaching and learning, will be a priority in 2022.

Review of Priorities 2021

- Improve writing skills across the school through investigation of writing programs and shared practice. [achieved]
- Promoting Literacy Development (PLD) - Evidence-based program focusing on teaching Structured Synthetic Phonics (SSP) from Kindergarten to Year 6. [achieved]
- Developing a whole school Scope and Sequence for Mathematics and English Kindergarten to Year 6. [partially achieved]

2021 NAPLAN Data

NAPLAN is a test held nationally assessing numeracy and literacy. These are one-off tests that give a snapshot of how schools are tracking in these areas. As with all standardised tests that are one-off in nature, the results must be taken in the context of all other assessments a school may do. This includes the everyday teaching and learning program, plus the many varied assessments that may take place.

I wish to commend our students for their efforts during the national testing and the positive approach from parents during the weeklong tests. In the table below, performance against the national average is provided. As staff, we will continue to focus on engaging our students in their learning and creating excitement around being the best they can be within our classrooms. I would also like to acknowledge the work of our staff in supporting our students in their learning and development as well-rounded young people.

In 2021, we have continued to focus on our teaching of Writing. Our assessments indicate some encouraging gains across NAPLAN results, standardised testing and in-class assessments. Numeracy will be the curriculum focus in 2022 within our teaching programs. We will continue to have one eye on the last four years focus areas of Spelling and Writing.

	YEAR 3		YEAR 5	
	State	St Columba's	State	St Columba's
Grammar Punct	421	455	497	541
Numeracy	395	402	489	508
Reading	426	464	505	541
Spelling	410	428	503	529
Writing	426	455	481	514

Priorities 2022

- Fully embed Promoting Literacy Development Program and tracking of student growth. This to include reading data tracking.
- Develop whole school approach to the explicit teaching of concepts in Mathematics and dedicated numeracy time.
- Embed practice in use of scope and sequence documents for planning.

- Learning Intentions and Success Criteria embedded in all classroom teaching practice.
- Regularly using and analysing data, to differentiate the curriculum, to cater for the needs of the children.
- Early Childhood philosophy reviewed and developed for 2022 and beyond. National Quality Standards Audit in 2023.

Catholic Pastoral Communities

St Columba's School is built on community. It always has been and always will be, it is what St Columba people are about. The heart of the community is in the way people care for each other and see every member as a part of them. It is what we are called to do. It is about serving others where we find our greatest joy and greatest peace. Just need to think of our motto and what we stand for, 'Growing in Faith, Seeking Wisdom and Living in Peace'.



'Never see a need without doing something about it.'
Mary MacKillop

This quote by Mary MacKillop, our first Australian saint, encompasses all of this. Our pastoral care is about being there when we are needed by others. This is where our Pastoral Care Committee lead our school community. Their commitment to others, in seeing the need and doing something about it, is central to the spirit of Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy.

Nicole Leach, our school counsellor, continues to offer a supportive and encouraging environment in which our children feel safe to be who they are as young people. All staff and families work together with Nicole in ensuring the wellness of our children is a priority.

We continue to be centred on what is in the best interests of our children. I know all our community members understand this commitment, and as such we continue to see our children grow into resilient young people. Our OSHC is a place where staff and children, along with their parents create a sense of home and belonging. Under the leadership of Jess Scott and Karen McGlue, our staff and children flourish in making all feel welcome.

As part of our Transforming Lives Strategy for 2021, we continue to liaise with Candy McKay and the broader community. Candy has brought to life our experiences through a connection to community. I wish to acknowledge her work, along with Matthew Hubbard and Caroline Brewer, as part of this opportunity to connect with our land and community here in Bayswater. The connection and development of a community-based team continues to be in development. We look forward to where this will lead in 2022.

Review of Priorities 2021

- Continue to support the endeavours of our Pastoral Care Committee and CSPWA in their work in caring for our school community members. [achieved, but can be focused on more throughout the year to acknowledge their contribution to our school community]

- Continued commitment to the Transforming Lives Strategy 2025 collaboration with CEWA. [partially achieved, ongoing development]
- School counsellor role continues to be focused on the students and their needs. [achieved]
- The school's bursary continues to support students within the school, while establishing connections with Chisholm Catholic College, Bedford. [achieved]

Priorities 2022

- Development and embedding of the Code of Conduct across the school community, including staff, students and parents.
- A review of the Seesaw App and how this is utilised as a form of communication across the school between teachers and parents. Development of clear protocols.
- Regular meetings scheduled for the Community Engagement Team as part of the Transforming Lives Strategy.

Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable System of Schools

There are many elements within a Catholic school and administration processes that are undertaken to ensure the school runs effectively. At St Columba's School, we have a very dedicated team that work together in the administration. I would like to thank Peta Santella, Lisa Slocum and Janine Witherow for their continued support and willingness to put in the extra hours for the school and community. During 2021, they have worked tirelessly to continue the implementation of the new administration system, AoS (Administration of Schools).

Again, I wish to acknowledge the professionalism of all staff at St Columba's School. We are very fortunate to have such committed staff, that enjoys working together, and ensure student educational needs are met. I especially would like to thank my Leadership Team, Deb Klatt and Niall Kehoe, for their support and leadership within our community. Both leaders have undertaken many responsibilities and duties, during this ever changing year.

Enrolment applications have continued to increase through the year. Strong enrolment trends are associated with the reputation that St Columba's School has held for many decades in Bayswater. This connection to community is ever present and is a result of the work of our staff and our families. This positive feel in the community is driven by the stories from our families and the quality of learning that has been embedded in our school. To ensure these trends of enrolment growth continue, we must ensure we provide the very best for our students and remain open to opportunities for growth. As the Bishops' Mandate articulates, 'A Catholic school is a good school'.

Review of Priorities 2021

- Maintain high levels of enrolment for students entering the school at Kindergarten [achieved with waitlists]
- Continue to implement and master the Administration of Schools [AoS] [achieved]
- Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2021-2023 including planning for the Capital Development Plan [achieved]

Priorities 2022

- Maintain high levels of enrolment for students entering the school at Kindergarten. Promote year levels that have vacancies in 2022.
- Develop strategies and systems for learning walks and peer observations for staff across the school.
- Continue to support the work of the Millennium Kids project commenced in the second half of the 2021 school year.

- Develop a three-year, responsible and sustainable plan, including maintenance with IT Dynamics, our 2022 partner and CEWA consultants.

Conclusion

As with every year, we will have families and staff leave our school. I take this opportunity to wish all our staff members and St Columba families all the very best into the future. You will always be St Columba's people and are welcome back for a visit whenever you are in the area. The Mercy Sisters have a tradition, the kettle will be on and a cup of tea at the ready. Maybe even Tim Tams.



This is why we are so blessed. We get to look at so many aspects of our school, and why we exist, our charm, our soul, and here we find it. We just need to take a moment to ask ourselves, what is it we can do over the next few weeks in the lead up to the end of the year, to bring goodness to the forefront of our thinking. Bring it alive in those moments where we are called to be St Col's people. We allow ourselves to bring the humanness with its imperfections, but all of its spirit. Let's take one day at a time to resolve to be good today, then better tomorrow in what we give out to the world.

As I look forward to enjoying Semester 1 on long service leave, it brings me a great amount of joy to know I leave you in the capable hands of Sandro Coniglio. Sandro comes with a wealth of experience. He is a quality person who will lead with heart and understanding for all. It is how the universe works that Sandro is available to lead our school for the first half of 2022, before heading out to establish a new Catholic school in 2023.

It is with gratitude, I thank everyone for your part in creating what we have at St Columba's, knowing that we embrace imperfection, and we bring gentleness and kindness to every situation. It is a time to celebrate our children's gifts and talents as we end the 2021 school year.

On behalf of all in our community, I wish you an abundance of joy this Christmas and the year ahead be filled with goodness and hope. May you and your families be blessed.

In appreciation for what you all bring to our community

Art Lombardi
Principal
24 November 2021