

ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY REPORT

Year 2007
School Name JOHN PAUL II SCHOOL
School Type K-6
Suburb CLARENDON VALE

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Principal: BR GEOFF WHITEFIELD

School Profile

Part of our Vision & Mission Statement reminds us that we are on about preparing our students to be ethical and active members of our society. Our school aims to be a place of promise and hope. All aspects of life at John Paul II School are underpinned by our community's commitment to live out the Gospel values of Jesus Christ.

We are proud to have been named after our recent pope, John Paul II, a man who courageously pushed out into unfamiliar territories, was not afraid to challenge convention but was at the same time a valiant defender of Gospel values, and held a special place in his heart for the fragile, the dispossessed and the orphaned. Inspired by John Paul II, we endeavour to live out our motto "To love and serve the Lord in peace". As a Catholic School, while being open to the whole community we hopefully extend the hand of welcome particularly to those who struggle.

Our school is situated between Clarendon Vale and Rokeby and backs on to a farm property. While most of our students are

drawn from those immediate two suburbs a good number come to us from further afield including Acton Park, Bellerive, Clifton Beach, Cremorne, Dodges Ferry, Howrah, Lauderdale, Mornington, Oakdowns, Sandford, Seven Mile Beach and South Arm. While Clarendon Vale and parts of Rokeby are heavily populated with Government housing, other areas, such as Oakdale, are "developing" suburbs and further areas, such as Acton and Seven Mile Beach, could be described as semi-rural.

Our school is relatively young, ranging from the original buildings being opened in 1983 to the most recent being opened in 2001. Our school facilities include seven classrooms, a spacious multi-purpose hall, a library, wide corridors, two smaller focused learning areas, a board room, various offices, a staffroom that includes a resource area, a canteen, a clothes store, a set of three games courts, a large playing field surrounded with shade-providing trees, adventure playground equipment, a large utilities shed and well kept gardens.

Adjoining the school is John Paul II Church, which is part of the Bellerive Lindisfarne Catholic Parish. Our school is an integral part of this parish.

Catholic Life and Mission

John Paul II School promotes and fosters the values and experiences that define us as a Catholic school.

Part of the school's mission is to provide opportunities for Catholic students to learn about and to be involved in aspects of their Faith. As an inclusive school, all non-Catholic students are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the Catholic life of the school.

Such participation for students in 2007 included

- regular attendance at parish and school masses
- daily classroom prayer
- weekly whole school prayer and reflection at Friday assemblies
- classroom studies based on the Good News for Living curriculum.
- The Making Jesus Real program for Grade 4-6 students

Our school enjoys a great rapport with our Parish Priest, Fr Peter O'Loughlin, and the community of regular parishioners who attend the weekly Thursday mass. The school happily makes its resources available to support parish life. Through the parish some of the students prepared for their initiation into various sacraments. The school supported these students in a number of ways. Classes studied the same sacraments that these students were preparing for. We also raised the awareness of the school community via our assemblies and newsletters.

Students also participated in wider community gatherings. One such gathering was the annual Archbishop's Mass for Grade 6 Leavers. Another was the Edmund Rice Mass that is held at the Derwent Entertainment Centre each year

and involves close to a thousand students as well as a good number of other people involved in Edmund Rice ministries (which are chiefly concerned with outreach to the disadvantaged).

John Paul II Students supported community initiatives, including

- The Ecumenical World Day of Prayer
- The Anzac Day service (at South Arm)
- Project Compassion (Students and their teachers arranged an array of activities to help support this Catholic charity that runs each year before Easter.)
- St. Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal

2007 saw a strong sense of pastoral care continue within the school. Senior students were involved in a Leadership programme (sourced by the Catholic Education Office, Hobart, and facilitated by Mr Peter Mitchell) which, when combined with our 'buddy' programme, allowed for older students to provide care, direction and modelling for younger students.

Pastoral care also extends to the staff, parent body and the local community. The staff prays together on a weekly basis. All staff aim to be welcoming and pastoral and available to the parents of our students. As well as formal parent-teacher interviews, parents are encouraged to be in touch with staff as much as they deem necessary.

As the resources and units for our new Religious Education Curriculum, Good News for Living, continue to build up, our staff has had further training in the use of this curriculum. Sr Margaret Henderson (Catholic Education Office, Hobart) facilitated this Professional Learning. Our Religious Education Co-ordinator (R.E.C.) and the Assistant R.E.C. attended a three-day conference as part of their Professional Learning for the year.

All staff participated in a Spirituality day facilitated by Dr Tony Lennard, Catholic Education Office, Hobart. We focused on the theology of story, making parallels with story and literature throughout the ages including modern children's stories.

Elements of Catholic Life & Mission overlap into many other areas of the life of this school and therefore also into other areas of this report, especially in the Pastoral Care and Community Involvement sections.

Our Learning Community

Learning and Teaching

As with all registered Primary Schools in Australia our curriculum features eight Key Learning Areas: Mathematics, English, Studies of Society & Environment, Science, The Arts, Health & Physical Education, Technology, and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) -Italian. Additionally, as a Catholic School we also teach the subject, Religious Education.

As part of this learning community, the John Paul II Staff is continually improving its teaching skills and pedagogical (ie. the art of teaching) understandings and reinforcing its commitment to spirituality and faith development. The staff's professional development closely aligns to the needs of the students. The staff endeavours to teach in a range of styles to cater for the different learning styles encountered across the student population.

Through feedback from the national benchmark testing and in-school assessing it was decided the major focus for 2007 was to continue to improve various Numeracy and Literacy outcomes. Therefore the staff's professional development was tailored to suit these needs.

Members of the school's leadership team trained in the newly introduced School Improvement Process "Learn, Live, Grow"

and duly introduced this into the school. It involves the school reflecting on the five domains of Catholic Culture & Ethos, Student Learning and Achievement, Learning Environment, Curriculum and Pedagogy and, finally, Leadership. It involves collection of data and feedback from all the stakeholders of the school community.

Members of the John Paul II School Staff participated in a number of professional development courses, many organised through the Catholic Education Office. These included:-

- Working Mathematically (Brian Tickle)
- First Steps -Mathematics
- Whole School Planning with to the NSW Mathematics Syllabus
- Mathematics- Whole Number
- Emergent Leadership Program
- Covey: 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
- Family Violence: Early Intervention Workshops
- Diabetes and Asthma Education
- Boys' Education Issues
- R.E.D.I. (Resilience Education)
- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- Reading Links
- Behaviour Management Strategies
- Workplace First Aid
- Theology of Story: The Hero Journey

In 2007 various staff were also involved with the following networks:

- Special Education
- Kindergarten
- Aboriginal Education & Perspectives
- Local community issues forum: FUTIPOP

Finally, in 2007 one teacher has completed her degree in Special Education at university while one teacher assistant continues studying for her teaching degree. Two other staff continued their studies for their Grad. Cert. R.E.

Aboriginal perspectives

A combination of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students worked with a local elder to give an insight into Aboriginal culture and spirituality. The group produced a beautifully decorated mat and prayer box.

Some special funding was available to support our Aboriginal students. Depending on the particular students our specific aims were to enhance numeracy and literacy and encourage school retention.

Special Needs programs

Around twelve students attracted special funding for a variety of reasons. Specific programs were tailored to meet their needs. A further forty or so non-funded students were given extra tuition, involved in literacy and numeracy catch-up or reinforcement programs, or worked in small groups with the teacher assistants or volunteer parents. Two newly arrived students were funded as "English as Another Language" students.

Teachers with Special Expertise

All students Kindergarten-Grade 6 had the opportunity to benefit from classes featuring specialist teachers: singing with Mr Ian Williams and Physical Education with Mr Michael Edwards. Preps –Grade 6 also learn about the Italian language and culture with Mrs Maria di Tommaso

Civics and Citizenship

John Paul II students from Grades 4-6 are involved in the school parliament, which is modelled on Australia's own government. While learning about our parliament, the roles within it and how it operates, the students are also having an experience of real student leadership. All students are involved in at least one portfolio (eg. Community, Culture, Sport & Recreation, Publicity) and have constituents to care for. All students are required to make at least two speeches throughout the life of the Parliament and have challenges to meet. Challenges include bringing in guest speakers or artists to work with our school

community and to organize relevant and inclusive activities to involve the students in. The Parliament is encouraged to be outward looking- to explore ways that benefit not just our own community but those beyond our immediate community.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

With computers in all classrooms and two further areas set up with multiple computers, the students have healthy access to ICT. The staff has been ably supported by Catholic Education Office Consultant, Mrs Glynis Tully, who has in-serviced the staff in applying ICT to the various learning areas and has worked with classes.

Health & Wellbeing

In 2007 the school gained its accreditation as a Sun Smart school. The Parents & Friends Association (P&F) supplied classes with sunscreen to support this accreditation.

With a student being diagnosed as epileptic the staff was educated in how to deal with this condition.

Special focuses were held on these topics: Road Safety, Healthy Bones, Solutions to Bullying, Bus Safety, Water Safety and Asthma Awareness.

Student Performance

Each year our Grade 3 and 5 students participate in the LANNA testing. LANNA stands for Literacy and Numeracy National Assessment. The four areas tested since 2003 are Numeracy (Maths), Writing, Reading and Spelling. The feedback tells us a number of things. Two important pieces of data tell us:

1. whether the students have reached the "benchmark" (the minimum "pass" for that particular area).
2. whether they sit below, within or above the middle 60% of students at the same year level who took part in the LANNA testing nationally.

Grade 5 Numeracy

Maximum score 42.

All Schools average: 20.8, JPPII 14.5.

Comment:

Students generally found Number and Space most challenging. Four out of fifteen students scored at or above the All Schools average.

Grade 5 Reading

Maximum score 36.

All Schools average 20.1, JPPII 18.2

Comment:

Students performed reasonable well in many areas

Students had difficulty with interpretation, making inferences and generalising in Narrative and Exposition and with identifying key information in Descriptive recount.

Five out of fifteen students performed at or above the All Schools average.

Grade 3 Numeracy

Maximum score 34.

All Schools Average 17.3, JPPII 14.0.

Comment:

Ten out of Twenty-two students scored at or above the All Schools average.

Grade 3 Reading

Maximum score 27.

All Schools average 15.2, JPPII 10.6

Comment:

Students found Exposition and Description particularly challenging. Three out of twenty students scored at or above the All Schools average.

Pastoral Care

"All that we do at John Paul II School has its foundation in our belief in Jesus Christ and lived commitment to Christian values."

John Paul II Mission Statement

The John Paul II School prides itself in being a caring and pastoral community, living out the excerpt from the Mission statement above.

The staff makes a point of knowing all students at the school by name.

A number of staff has been trained in Rainbows, a program for helping children grieve if they have suffered a loss or a dramatic change due to a death, divorce or other family separation. This program was offered to the students.

Our behaviour management policies reflect a pastoral approach. From the letter of appointment issued to staff members at John Paul II School: "The pastoral care of our students is a core value within this school and behaviour management should be exercised in such a way that maintains the dignity of our students."

In terms of bullying, John Paul II School believes that it is essential to create a positive environment in which students can work and learn happily and confidently. Therefore bullying is not tolerated in any form, whether it is verbal, physical or visual. Students are educated by their teachers about the options they have if they consider they are being bullied. When at play, students who don't respect the rights of other students are removed from the playground. Students are encouraged to speak with a trusted adult about any form of bullying, which is subsequently followed up. There is a whole school approach to dealing with bullying issues.

Staff members incorporate resilience skill building and social skill development activities into the students' programs as required.

Breakfast and lunch have been discretely supplied as needed, likewise have items of school uniform.

All staff members are willing to make time to talk with parent over their concerns.

Strategic Planning

2007 saw a focus on continuing to work towards stronger outcomes in both Literacy and Numeracy. Professional Development to support this focus was

planned. A particular target for our school in 2007 was to develop stronger Comprehension and Inference skills across the school. Resources were bought to support this. Our strategy to bring this about includes reviewing and renewing our resources in this area in conjunction with further expert advice being made available to the teaching staff to assist in their planning, teaching and evaluating of these to skills.

One of our major goals for 2008-2009 is a sustained lift in student outcomes as indicated in LANNA / NAPLAN Reading score (3% Over 2 Years ?)

Supporting this is:

- the introduction, implementation and review of using the Rigby Literacy Collections in conjunction with the NSW English Syllabus
- the measurement of improvement / otherwise evident in tracked Guided Reading records.
- the measurement of an increase / otherwise using the TORCH TEST for grade 3-6

As mentioned earlier in this report the school entered a new phase of Strategic Planning, adopting the Catholic Education Office's newly released School Improvement Framework entitled: "Live Learn Grow". Data was gathered including a survey of staff, Parents & Friends and Board members. The data were processed by the school leadership team (Principal, Assistant Principal, RE Co-ordinator and Curriculum Officer). A plan of deeper research into all areas of school life was drawn up. This process of deeper investigation began mid 2007 and will continue into 2008. The findings of this research will inform our strategic planning.

The Parents and Friends achieved their 2007 goal of financing a new adventure playground that would be suitably challenging for the Grade 3-6 students.

Their efforts are gratefully acknowledged by the many students who thoroughly enjoy using this new equipment.

The maintenance plan was followed while changes in compliance rules led to further minor works being carried out around the school. By the end of 2007 all classrooms had been re-painted over the last 4 years, and all classrooms had been recarpeted over the last two years. Further glass that was not compliant with more recent changes in safety standards was replaced, the plan for updating desks and chairs in all classrooms was, further security measures at the school were upgraded, additional computers and associated software were purchased and installed.

Car park: The car park was identified as a safety risk. With the possibility of attracting an Federal Government IOSP grant plans for a safer flow-through drop-off type car park were drawn up. Unfortunately the quotes for the project far exceeded the maximum grant. Nevertheless the school's Board continued to explore possibilities to bring about the needed car park improvements. This remains a goal for 2008 and beyond.

Enrolment and Staffing

In 2007 the school consisted of 6 classes ranging from Kindergarten to Grade 6. The configuration of classes was: Kindergarten Saplings, Grade Prep Bluegum, Grade 1/2 Wattle, Grade 3 Blackwood, Grade 4/5 Huon and Grade 5/6 Sassafras. During the year there was approximately 150 students. The average class size was 25. 8 students identified as Aboriginal. As of November 2007 the gender percentage was 47.3% girls and therefore 52.7% boys. 8.1% of students were funded for various special needs.

The staff consisted of 11 teachers (6 full-time and 5 part-time, 8 female and 3 male), 3 teacher assistants (all female and part-time), 2 office staff (both female and

part-time), a utilities officer (male and part-time) and a cleaner (female and part-time). All staff were appropriately qualified for the positions they held.

Community Involvement

The John Paul II School endeavoured to build its links with the community in a number of ways.

Members of the school community were actively involved in the Ecumenical World Day of Prayer, the local community Funday focusing on the work of FUTIPOP (anti family violence) and the South Arm ANZAC Day ceremonies. Students who lived locally were involved in a community art project sponsored by the local council. Guest speakers and experts were invited into the school from the wider community. They included people from parliament (Lin Thorp), the fire department (Fire Fighter Barry), Road Safety (Maree Pinnell), UTAS Tassie Tiger researchers and guests from AFL Tasmania.

The school has been represented in the local community forum "FUTI-POP: Facing Up To It- Playing Our Part" which aims to

educate about and confront domestic violence in our community. Local principals, health workers, youth workers, housing workers and other interested parties are involved.

About this Report

In preparing this report, information has been gathered from evaluations conducted during the year. Information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes have also been analysed and from this analysis goals for the school's future development have been determined.

This report was prepared by the Principal, Br Geoff Whitefield, with the assistance of the staff of John Paul II School.

Signed:

Bro. Geoff Whitefield

Principal

Thursday 29 May 2008

Summary Financial Information

This systemic financial summary has been prepared by the Finance and Administrative Services CEO.

