

## **Principal's Message 2020**

*As part of our required reporting procedures for Catholic Education WA I will use the four headings of Catholic Identity, Education, Community and Stewardship to present our achievements for this year 2020.*

### **Education**

As the year started all the staff worked as a team to develop and write a Vision for Learning. This gave us all a plan and a road map for the journey ahead. We now match all of what we teach to the vision to ensure it is aligned and fits with our beliefs and ethos. This year our major curriculum focus has been in the English learning area with a specific focus on writing. All teaches have been in-serviced in the 'Talk for Writing' process. This has seen a big improvement in the level and quantity of the students writing in all year levels. In many classes this year you will have seen and heard about 'Hooks' that have got the children engaged in the writing topic. They have then used the very popular story telling using movement and hand signs as they learnt the story structure and genre of writing being explored. This has then led to some very imaginative and excellent stories being written across the school. It has also facilitated cohort planning with the year group teachers working together to co-plan the program to cover. We have implemented data walls that track reading and writing across the whole school. In Years 3 to 6 we have implemented the use of an online tracking program for the children's reading progress. This has allowed us to monitor the amount and level of all reading the children have done in the program. The ongoing Mini Lit and Math's Lit has continued to consolidate children's knowledge in small groups and the progress of the children in the lessons has been excellent. One cohort has trialed iMaths and this was successful and will be implemented across the whole school next year. The integration of technology using the iPad in Years 1 to 4 has also enhances the engagement of our children as well as allowed them to think differently and produce learning in different ways. This will continue next year as the iPad move up the school into Year 5.

### **Community**

COVID 19 hit us early in the year and it was with sadness that we had to send a lot of our students to work at home over the lock down period in term one and two. This meant that our connection with the parent community was stopped overnight and we had no parents on campus for a long period. During this time, the staff took to the different world we moved into with enthusiasm with home contact with each child made into a priority. The use of home schooling with organized work packs for the junior school and online learning for the seniors was a new world. I think that over this period the parent perception of the job of teachers changed forever. Our Easter drive by was a highlight, we only expected a few cars but instead the line went around the block in both directions and went on for over a half hour. The support we got from all families during that time was amazing.

Once the COVID period of lock down was finished we moved into the next stage of having the children back but no parents, and the staff once again stepped up and organized pick up

and drop off procedures to comply with the protocols given to us. Thankfully for the moment we are nearly back to normal if there ever is going to be a normal into the future. Thank you everyone once again for the support and trust you gave to the school during this time.

The P&F have bounced back with Father's Day stall, disco and colour run to finish off the year with a bang. Thank you to the outgoing executive for all of your hard work and energy in a very difficult year.

The use of 'Teams' by all staff has come about due to the home schooling as well as it being used in the senior years by all students.

## **Stewardship**

With many schools in WA finding it hard to balance their budgets, we have been fortunate this year to have been able to work with a balanced budget and complete some major works needed around the school. We have also been working closely with Catholic Education to transition our bookkeeping from a cash based to accrual model to align with all catholic schools in WA and the hard-working admin team have transitioned into using the new software AOS for all the information keeping in the office. This was a huge task over many weeks, and they are now well on the way to being AOS experts.

Our hard-working school board made some major changes with our uniform this year after consultation and a lot of discussion. These changes will phase in over the next two years.

The board has also set up two school bursaries to be offered to two new students with music ability to start at the school next year. They also set up two bursaries for current music students for next year. We are about to have a new sign installed on Marion St to advertise the school and a letter drop is to be completed in the next few weeks in Tapping to promote the school for future enrollments.

We have also overhauled all our stationary to improve our image and make it more contemporary. Our online presents on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have been a big focus this year and has really put our information out in the community in a very positive way. Special thanks to Mrs. Ward who has implemented all these improvements.

A huge thank you to Mr. Tim Tolley our outgoing Board Chairperson. Tim has been a driving force behind the board with ideas and support in many quarters. His commitment has been over and above what is expected, and he even found time to stay on for most P&F meetings this year as well, all when he did not even have a student at the school with his girls now in high school.

## **Catholic Identity**

Once again, this year the sacramental process has aligned itself with that of the Perth Diocese Guidelines by being, Parish based, school supported, and family focused. Due to COVID the

sacramental timelines changed, however with the support of Fr Francis and the parish we were able to complete all of the sacraments by the end of November. We have been very blessed in having Fr Francis as our school priest. Father has been a regular participation in all activities at the school. His presence has helped us by giving spiritual and moral guidance as well as support. Father is an active member of the School Board and he has really made us feel part of a parish that is not close in distance. A thank you to Fr Ziggy also who has been kind enough to preside in our class masses in the Salvatorians Chapel.

I sincerely thank all of our **staff**. I acknowledge both the collective and individual contributions that you each bring to our school as you work alongside our students. Each day you touch the lives of our students in so many ways. Building on the foundations from family, your kindness, patience, dedication, and genuine care for our students, contributes significantly to our students 'blossoming' as they grow into polite, considerate, and hardworking young individuals, who represent the spirit of Francis Jordan Catholic School so well. Thank you for the time you give to provide this valuable support to our students.

Teaching is one of the most rewarding professions in that it gives teachers an opportunity to make an impact on a future generation, however it is also extremely challenging and never easy. No one with actual teaching experience would tell you otherwise. Being a teacher takes patience, dedication, passion, and the ability to do more with less. It is a journey often filled with just as many valleys as mountains. There is the perception that teachers only work from 8-3 each day and have way too many holidays! Our teachers at Francis Jordan arrive early and stay late and regularly continue to work on things even after they go home, I know that for most, finding a balance between personal life and professional life is tricky.

Finally, our students, no two students are alike, and it is an ever-present and time-consuming task for our teachers to utilise data and observations in order to find the appropriate resources and approach to meet every student where they are at. Despite all this, you constantly impress me with your professionalism, and the commitment and honesty you bring to conversations and these challenges as we work towards our priorities.

To the teachers leaving us at the end of the year Mrs. Rosina Rennie and Mr. Wayne Horrocks we wish you well in retirement. To Mrs. Jo Collins who is taking a year's leave, enjoy the break. I would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication and wish them well into the future.

We also say **farewell** to those families who are leaving or relocating away from our school, we wish you well as you embark on your journey to new places and new communities. I pray that the Holy Spirit will guide your onward journey.

I wish everyone a Christ filled Christmas and safe journeys over the break and look forward to seeing everyone back safe and refreshed for 2021.

Thank you.

Chris Dunning

Principal