

St Brigid's Principal Report 2018 School Year Annual Community Meeting

Firstly, I wish to thank all of our parents, staff and community who are gathered here this evening, who have taken time from your busy lives in support of our school. This evening, I particularly wish to acknowledge; Mrs Fiona Shephard who continues to support our school, many years after her children have departed, to Chair our Annual Community Meeting, Mrs Kerry Higgins who volunteered to cater this evening's event and our Assistant Teachers; Mrs Bertolini, Mrs Harker, Mrs Vlasich and Mrs Valessi who are supervising students outside, to enable parents to attend our meeting tonight.

2018 was a year of trust, transition and success. During 2017, after detailed financial analysis by school leadership and our Board, through a series of meetings, highlighted to our community, our current financial challenges and the implications these challenges, may have on our school. These challenges were predominately brought about through declining enrolments across our school. After extensive consultation with staff and parents, we implemented a composite class structure for our school in 2018 to enable us to operate in a financially viable manner, allowing much needed investment in our resources and facilities. We thank our parents and community for listening to us, being part of the journey and trusting our leadership, staff and Board with these important and necessary adjustments that were required for the future and prosperity of our school. Fortunately, since the start of 2017, we have increased enrolments across our school by more than 13%, up from 147 students to 169 students (not including Kindy), a great result in a town with a declining population. This enrolment growth across our school enabled us to return to single stream classes again in 2019. To provide the best for our students, families and school we must continue proactive and responsive to changing conditions that we are faced with. We thank our students and parents, who remain our greatest advertisement and advocates for the quality of care and education that we offer at St Brigid's. The positive words you speak about our school with your friends, family and community have an enormous impact on the prosperity of our school. I therefore continue to encourage our parents and families to trust our school staff with your feedback so we can continue to improve and get better as a school.

In 2018 we welcomed our new parish priest Fr Nic Lim who replaced the long-serving and much-loved Fr Jaybee. Fr Nic made an immediate and positive impact at our school and parish faith community, with his strong faith, connection to people, love for life and of course his jokes! Fr Nic was transitioned to Leschenault Parish at the end of 2018 and we welcome Fr Robert Romano as our Parish Priest from 2019. We also welcomed to our staff Miss Emily Grieves, now Mrs Mason, and Mrs Linda Lyons to our staff.

This year we welcome new teachers; Miss Keira Piavanini who completed her final teaching practicum here last year and is assigned to Year Two and Miss Chandler Sanford, who recently returned from teaching in the UK and is now our PE Teacher and working alongside Mrs Prince in Year 3. We were also delighted by the arrival of baby Hudson, first born child of long serving staff member Renae Shea and her husband Chris.

We started 2018 with an amazing new Early Years Playground and outdoor learning space, funded through the P&F, Board and many generous organisations and companies in Collie and further afield. Much appreciation to our early years staff and especially Mrs Dee and Ms Howard for all their planning and organisation- it is a space to be celebrated. The K/PP classrooms were both refurbished and have been complemented by the semi-enclosed undercover area, complete with storage and glass sliding door access. The bike track area has also been developed with a new hut and vegetable gardens thanks to the generosity and contributions of our parents. Our early years learning environment both inside and outside is outstanding!

We were superbly led all year by our Year 6 leaders, those in elected positions and those contributing to each Council. They guided our work in social justice throughout the year, raising much needed funds and foods for the local and broader community, during Purple Day, a family fun day (raising over \$720 for Project Compassion) and the Christmas Appeal in which our school donated more than 550 items to those in need within Collie. They also led our work caring for the environment and leading our Waste Wise practices within the school, showcasing our waste management system to the Premier, Mr Mark McGowan.

Our Board, staff and Leadership Team have continued to work together in 2018, towards our set Strategic Plan Goals for 2018-2020. We have allocated budgets to support the ongoing training and development of our staff so we can maximise our impact on our students. In 2018, our school paid off our fifteen year loan that financed our relocation from the old primary school site next to the church to our current location on the old St Edmunds site. We have investigated in our facilities and resources; including a full school repaint, enhanced learning areas and the provision of 1-2 iPads in lower grades and the commencement of 1-1 Laptop program for our Yr 5 and Yr 6 classes commencing in 2019.

I wish to thank the many groups who give so much of themselves for the benefit of others and our school; The P&F for your service and ongoing efforts in providing for our students and building connections, friendships and real community within our school, our Board for your vision and dedication to managing and improving our school, our volunteers for the many hours of service you provide right across the school. As principal, I feel very privileged to work alongside such committed and dedicated staff who give so much of themselves to ensure that every student who walks through our gates each day is welcomed and is cared for spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful staff here at St Brigid's.

We look towards 2019 with excitement and anticipation and remain a committed team, working in partnership with our parents, to provide the best possible care and education that we can for each and every one of our students.