



# Our Lady of Lourdes School

## Dardanup

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### End of Year Awards Night and Year 6 Graduation 30 November 2017

Good evening everyone and thank you for your attendance at our End of Year Awards Night and Year 6 Graduation. Thank you, Fr Wayne, for our Liturgy.

Special thanks to our newly formed 'Choir' for their beautiful singing. This is something we hope to continue and expand on next year, to provide for students to be involved in a variety of performance opportunities as they arise. Students from Years 3-6 were invited to participate in our group for tonight. Thanks, Ms Barbera for your expert guidance! They sounded fantastic!

Thank you for entrusting your children to our school for their education. It is a privilege lead such a vibrant, supportive community. I thank God every day for the opportunity to work and grow with our staff, students and families.

2017 has been a very positive year at OLOL.

Our school goals are based around the Catholic Education Strategic Direction of LEAD, which represents the areas of LEARNING, ENGAGEMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY and DISCIPLESHIP.

In our **Learning**, we have had a focus on Literacy Dedicated Time, and making Learning Intentions explicit. We continued to explore ways to engage students in Mathematics learning. The teachers have been networking with teachers at St Mary's in Bunbury to share and extend our learning and we had many professional development days throughout the year to support our learning, including parent and teacher workshops to educate our parents and staff about ways to support students with learning difficulties, specifically Dyslexia.

Our **Engagement** focus was to continue to deliver Keeping Safe – Child Protection Curriculum in combination with Aussie Optimism and Health and Religious Education programs. Also, part of our Engagement focus was to continue to provide opportunities for families to engage with school activities. Our major 'engagement' goal this year was the commencement of our Nature Play Project. This has engaged many volunteers and we sincerely thank all who have contributed. A focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) through the introduction of a dedicated Science specialist this year has been a wonderful way to excite our students about their investigative learning. I love it when I hear students say 'Yes, it's Science today!'

Our **Accountability** focus has been to implement our Information Technology plan. To meet the needs of our school we purchased equipment including two interactive projection systems for classrooms and one for the the hall, 15 new Chrome books, 20 new ipads, for classrooms and to support students with special learning needs, and new laptops for the classroom teachers. These have added to our existing facilities, and are providing flexibility for our students. This is helping to broaden our students' skills and prepare them for the world in which they will be living as they move through school and beyond. Teachers have been working towards full implementation of the Digital Technologies Curriculum, which will be reported on for the first time in 2018.

In the **Discipleship** area, we continued with the Making Jesus Real program, where we support students to strive to make Jesus real to all they meet in the ways they act towards others. We try to focus on positive actions, celebrating MJR stars once a term at an assembly. This links to our school values. We also continued to work with the Parish for Sacramental programs and started 'Family Masses' hosted by year levels once each term. This is one way for school and Parish to work together, as we are all part of the Parish community.

Sacramental programs were highlights during the year, with 25 students receiving Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time, 23 students being confirmed in their faith, and 14 students having their first Reconciliation. Parents committed to working with the school and Parish as part of the preparation, with an enrolment Mass, home program, parent meetings and a parent/child workshop leading up to the celebration of each Sacrament.

We are very lucky to have Fr Wayne as our Parish Priest. His presence in our community is a blessing.

Camps were also highlights for our students this year, with Year 6 students at Ern Halliday recreation camp at Hillarys, and Year 5 students staying at the Catholic Youth Camp in Busselton and travelling to Margaret River for their surfing lessons. The Year 6 camp featured on-site based activities including abseiling, caving, archery, orienteering and other challenging activities. The Year 5 surfing camp, with close links to our MJR program successfully achieved its aims of providing students with an opportunity to be challenged out of their comfort zone, achieve success at a new skill, and celebrate their own success and the success of others. It was heaps of fun, with perfect weather as well! It was tough at the 'office' for those two days, but we managed! At these camps, staff went out of their comfort zones, me included, encouraged by our students, and we also enjoyed the feeling of achievement in doing something that is not within our usual scope!

We had a major change to the way we hold our Sports Carnivals this year, starting with the renaming of our Factions in honour of significant people in the history of our school and church. We held our own school based carnival at the beginning of Term 4, kitted out with new faction shirts and faction banners (thanks to the support of the P&F) which help build team spirit. A change in the schedule of events meant that every child was busy for a lot of the day, and all of our students participated and competed with great sportsmanship.

We celebrated Harmony Day and NAIDOC week together with our friends at Dardanup Primary School. We also celebrated Science Day, Book Week and had a Virtual Reality incursion teaching mutual respect and team building. We had a fantastic Astronomy night, and an author and illustrator visit and enjoyed a performance by the Silver threads band. For the first time this year we entered two teams in the Optiminds challenge. Our students did us proud taking out the Spirit of Optiminds Award. We were fortunate to be successful in receiving sporting grants for clinics and resources in Soccer, Cricket, Aussie rules football and basketball. These activities, together with excursions to various places, enhanced learning for all our students. And they have certainly kept us very busy and made life interesting!

Our active P&F had another very successful year. They continue to engage in fundraising and community building activities. They supported our camps, provided funds for teacher and classroom resources and had a special project this year to purchase our new room dividers that enhance our assembly performances and other activities in our school hall. They also purchased OSMO coding kits and committed funds towards the nature play project. I know our staff

appreciated being treated to a celebratory morning tea prepared by our lovely P&F to celebrate World Teachers Day.

We thank our executive: Yvette Duane, Tania Barnes, Kirsty Frontino, and Jenelle Commisso, all who renominated at our recent AGM to do it all again next year. Special thanks to Ebony Harris for taking on the role of P&F Representative on the school Board. This demanding role requires attendance at both the P&F and Board meetings, reporting between the two groups.

We have had many community building events this year that were very well attended. Examples include our Welcome Sundowner, Mother's Day Mass, class Masses and Liturgies, Fun Run, disco, Open Morning, two excellent sports carnivals, movie night and (dare I say it!) four sausage sizzles four weeks in a row! Community involvement in the Bull and Barrel festival and the Art Spectacular were also features of the P&F work. The students appreciate parents and grandparents attending our activities to show their interest, and as a bonus we can build up our supportive community.

The Catholic Education WA School Cyclic Review process focuses on the effectiveness of a school's engagement with self-review, the impact of self-review on school improvement and the future directions for the improvement of student outcomes that the school has identified. Our school was involved in the Review Process this year, which involved a two day visit by a panel, who met with Leadership team, staff, parents, Board, P&F and students. Overwhelmingly, they noted that our school was a very welcoming community. They also said there was a high level of trust and collegiality among staff and a focus on student wellbeing and academic achievement. They commented on parent response to improved communication and said that there was 'personality' in the school physical environment, with artwork and the nature play area, which they felt had energised the community and brought parents together who are focused and passionate about improving the environment and opportunities for students. The strong relationship with our Parish Priest, Fr Wayne, was also evident to the review panel. Along with the celebrations, they also gave us some recommendations for further growth and improvement, and we are including those suggestions in our Annual School Improvement Plan as we look towards setting goals for next year. The panel said the highlight of their visit was meeting with a group of students, who rated our school with a scores of 9.5 or 9.6 out of 10. Obvious pride in their school!

Our school board continued to oversee the financial management of our school and worked on several projects over the course of the year. One project, started last year, was our new school entry statement sign, which was completed in April. Another project was to continue to have artwork to brighten our school, with Year 6 students contributing to the creation of an artwork as part of their legacy to leave with the school. Last year was a mural in our undercover area celebrating our school values. This year is a stunning mosaic design celebrating our school motto 'Many Minds, One Heart'. The black Perspex silhouettes that overlay the mosaics were created from a photo taken by our senior students of other senior students. Have a look in the courtyard area when you are next in the school.

The Board recommended an upgrade to the projection system in the Hall. This will enhance our assemblies and will have many other uses throughout the school year. Upgrades to or replacement of our existing sound system is being considered as the need for greater sound outside the hall during large gatherings is becoming an issue.

A major project for this year was the investigation of new toilet facilities for our students in both the junior and senior areas of the school. We have written a proposal which is being presented to the School Resources Committee and we will know in April if this project can proceed.

Our current School Strategic Plan was planned to go from 2014 to 2018, so next year we will undergo a process to write a new plan, which will involve consultation with the community. Stay tuned if you would like to be involved. We would value your input.

Together with our Board Chairman, Anthony Harris, I would like to extend grateful thanks to our retiring Board members, Victor Rodwell, Vicki Dewar and Linda Davern whose youngest children are finishing Primary School, Monika Strutka, who has come to the end of her term and Kirsten Italiano and Kate Bovell who left us during the year. Also thanks to Ebony Harris for her role as P&F Representative on the Board, as already mentioned. We thank them for their time and dedication to the Board over many years, and extend a warm welcome to our new members.

Our school website continues to be an up-to-date method of communication and promotion of our school. This, together with our fortnightly newsletter, notes and text messages continue to keep people in the loop and our school managed Facebook continues with its purpose to 'Communicate, Remind, Inform and Celebrate'. This is a popular way to share what is happening at school. Regular contributions to the Dardy Times is another way we keep people informed about our school priorities, successes and events.

Under the leadership of the very talented and hard-working Vicki Noonan, our Nature Play project has become the envy of many other schools as our amazing play space evolved over several stages through the hard work of dedicated volunteers. The result has been an inviting area for students to learn through engaging in creative play. I love watching the interaction and play between and within year levels. It is wonderful to be able to offer an alternate play space for students. I would like to invite Vicki to come forward to accept a token of our appreciation for her vision, design, organisation, and sheer hard work this year. Anthony and Yvette, please can you come forward to present to Vicki on behalf of our Board and P&F. Vicki, you are amazing! This is for you and your family, we sincerely thank you for everything!

We will start 2018 with 217 students. We plan to have a focus next year on Literacy Dedicated Time, Mathematics, Science and Design Technology, continuing with the MJR program, working with the Parish and Integrating Digital Technologies curriculum into all learning areas. Research is showing that some of the careers our students will have don't exist yet. With information being so readily available, the focus is less on learning content, but more on developing skills, collaboration and innovation to prepare students for the world in which they live.

We thank all our volunteers who have supported our school this year in many ways whether it be by classroom help, excursions, sporting events, Book club, Uniform shop, Canteen, P&F, School Board, Nature play Busy Bees to name a few. We sincerely thank all our volunteers because it is their contribution to the life at OLOL that makes our school the wonderful place that it is.

I thank all our hardworking and dedicated staff who have had a steep learning curve this year with the implementation of the new CEWA initiative 'Leading Lights'. They go 'above and beyond' in the care and education of our students. Your work is greatly appreciated. John Dewey said that 'If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow'. Thank you to our teachers for always looking for new ways to engage students and support their growth for the best possible 'tomorrow'.

I would like to extend my thanks to Leanne Depiazzi for her dedicated hard work in the office. Thanks, also to Clair Panetta for her creativity, ideas and action in promoting our school. I would also like to thank my Assistant Principals, Natalie Dillon and Jenny Maslin for their attention to detail, hard work and support this year. Thank you to Natalie for acting as Assistant Principal for the last three years. I thank her for her efficiency as she moves back to her area of passion in Junior Primary, teaching Year 2.

I would like to welcome Mr Luke Vine to our staff as Assistant Principal next year. Luke is currently at St Augustine's in Rivervale and is really looking forward to joining our community. Luke Skehan is leaving us at the end of the year to teach Year 3 at St Mary's, Donnybrook. He will be missed in our OLOL community, and we thank him for his contribution to our school over the last 9 years, especially in the areas of IT, MJR and Sports organisation. We wish him well in this new chapter of his teaching career. One 'Luke' leaves us and we welcome another! Thank you, also to Michelle Holzknacht, or Miss Michelle as the students refer to her, for her contribution to supporting students, Jo Buemi (Miss B) for supporting a student with learning needs among other roles and Nita Scassera, our Italian teacher who is retiring at the end of this year.

To our graduating students.

For some of you, tonight is the end of an eight-year journey through Primary School. There has been lots of learning along the way; through experiences both in and out of the classroom. You have learned how to read and count, add, subtract, multiply, and divide and probably lots more Maths particularly this year; you have learned how to observe and record your observations; you have learned how to create, how to get along with each other and you have come to understand the importance of taking care of our world. Over the years, you have worked and played, and experienced joy and disappointment. Through all these experiences you have come to be the people you are today. All that you have learned will assist you in your future years. Here in primary school, you have developed the foundations upon which your future learning will be built. So, this is an important day and you have much to celebrate, but you are really just getting started.

It is my sincere hope that you feel ready to cope with the transition from the familiar faces of OLOL and surrounds of our primary school, to the new routines, teachers and classmates of your high schools.

I feel very confident you are ready because I know the good work that all your teachers over the years have done to support you. I have seen the great leadership you have shown throughout the year and I got to see you first hand managing yourselves relatively independently when we were at two camps, last year's Surfing camp and this year's adventure camp. These are very good signs that you are ready for the new challenges of high school.

This is also a night for parents to ask themselves questions about whether they are ready to cope with the big transition ahead. As a parent myself, I am very aware that stages in the life of your child come and go so quickly (our last child left home this year!) and that teenagers need active and courageous parenting more than any previous stage. I encourage you to remain interested in your child's friends, engage actively with their learning and remain firm in your modelling of values to your children.

I thank each of our Year 6 students for being good role models for the younger students. You are a vibrant and compassionate group of young people. Although you have grown a lot since you were in kindy and you are no longer quite as adorable, you are still just as unique and precious. Saying

goodbye to such a great bunch of students is hard, but we know you are ready, and we wish you every success for high school and beyond.

In conclusion, I would like to thank **all** of our students. Our students are the reason we are all here. It is through them that life and joy are present in our school. I thank each student for making our school such a welcoming happy place of learning. I thank the school community for entrusting me with leading such a dynamic community.

I wish you all a festive season filled with wonder and family and friends, happy holidays, safe travel, time to recharge and refresh and I look forward to seeing you back at OLOL in 2018. Thank you.

Angela Hegney  
Principal