



Many Minds

One Heart

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End of Year Awards Night/Graduation Wednesday 11 December 2019 Principal's Report

Good evening everyone and thank you for your attendance at our End of Year Awards Night and Graduation for our Year 6 students.

It has been an extremely busy school year, and I am very happy to be able to report on school events and activities for the year once again. We have had a wonderful last week or so at school. I am sure you will agree, our Community Carols night last Friday was a highlight event for the year, our students were fantastic. Special thanks to Miss Danni Barbera for all her work to make it happen. I know the teachers would have loved to do an encore performance tonight, but unfortunately that would be difficult because we are all wearing heels (except Mr Vine, I hope! I don't think he is!) Our End of Year Fun Day was another highlight yesterday. It was so much fun with the bouncy castle, giant slides, water tag, face painting, train rides, pony rides, dunk tank and other giant games. It was a fantastic way to round off a busy year, all being together and celebrating with each other. Our P&F came to the party again, and fed the whole school sausages and ice-creams for lunch. Thanks very much Miss Hayley Thompson for coordinating the entire day with your usual poise, attention to detail and calm demeanour.

Tonight is an opportunity to say thank you to lots of people who have supported our school this year. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge and thank our School Board for their dedication to their roles and the time they so freely give to Board matters. Special thanks to Anthony Harris, who is finishing up tonight after 4 years, three of those chairing the Board. He has always been available on the end of the phone and has supported me professionally and personally. His guidance throughout my one and only building project (toilets!) helped get me through the architects, shire, planning, building and contractors, all way out of my comfort zone, to provide better facilities for our students. Thanks to Chris Mangano, who completed a four year term, took a two year break and returned for another two year term. We appreciate his long-term knowledge and willingness to get involved in school and Parish events. Thank you to Angela Brett for several years of service to the school community, and to Emma Tyrrell who for the last two years has been in the role of Board/P&F representative, liaising between both groups, reporting back each time. This is a demanding role, and Emma has done a great job.

Our P&F Executive were all new this year and they certainly took on their roles with dedication and lots of energy. Thank you to Ali, Fi, Laura, Elise and Emma for all their work throughout the year. Without the support of the P&F, our school would not be where we are today, or would not enjoy the facilities and activities that enhance school life. Special mention should be made of the contribution of the P&F towards the purchase of two interactive projection systems for classrooms this year. They also supported camps, purchased 2 new gazebos for outdoor events, purchased a lectern and supported anything we ever asked them to do, both in funds and organisation. We

added Grandparents day to our schedule this year and continued with some favourites, like the Disco, Book Fair and sports carnival lunches and morning teas. The best attended event for the year was the Father's Day Breakfast. I am extremely happy that our Executive group have re-nominated to go around again next year, building on their successes and experience from this year. I would also like to express my thanks to Candice Humble and Josie Higham for all their work in the uniform shop, supporting our students to have uniforms that look so smart.

One of the highlights of this year was starting a three year old Kindergarten program. I love seeing the enjoyment and wonder on the faces of our littlest students. They are so comfortable in their class environment and really seem to feel at home. They 'owned' Kindy Café this year and are counting the days until they get to be here three days per week next year. Thanks to Abbey Thompson for building the foundations for this program and providing such a nurturing start for the students and families. They look so cute in their bright Pre-Kindy t-shirts, and it is a great 'leveller' and stress-reliever to spend time with them on Wednesdays.

This year, as part of our professional learning and school goals, teachers participated in 'The Literacy Collective', presented by world renowned educator, Dr Lyn Sharratt. We discussed our shared beliefs and values about learning, explored Case Management meetings and the creation of a Data Wall and looked at ways to track and record student data as part of our shared responsibility for all student learning. We are exploring the use of Learning Intentions and co-constructed Success Criteria, and beginning 'Learning Walks and Talks'. We meet as a professional group twice a week before school, and are really focussed on our shared learning. This year has seen the introduction of a Whole School Spelling Program, which individualises spelling for students and allows for checkpoints along the way. All of this work will continue next year.

Once again, the year has raced by in a blur of events and learning activities. We celebrated Sacraments, Masses, Prayer Services, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparents Day. We held Assemblies, Sports Carnivals, and camps, participated in Choir performances, Optiminds challenges and community events such as ANZAC services and the Bull & Barrel festival. We had some incursions, some excursions, Disco, a Quiz Night and lots of learning along the way. All of these activities are due to the dedication of our staff and community members, and we greatly appreciate the efforts of all involved to bring life to our school.

Sadly, we are saying goodbye to some of our staff at the end of the school year. After more than 20 years, Jo Leach is continuing her teaching at another school, where she will no doubt share her love of all things 'Maths' with another group of students. Kylie Madaffari, after 17 years at OLOL is moving to another centre to continue educating the youngest ones. Kirsty Dusci has been a constant in our library on Thursdays for the last 7 years. I know the students will miss her as much as she will miss them. Brooke Chatfield has been with us for almost 4 years and has worked in a variety of roles across the school. She moves to full time work, and her adaptability and willingness to go wherever needed will be missed. Kate Western has been with us in Year 4 two days a week this year, and as a relief teacher in nearly every class at some stage. Jo, Kylie, Kirsty, Brooke and Kate have brought their own unique styles to their work with students and staff and we thank them all for their contribution to our school life and wish them well for the future.

Special thanks to my dedicated office team, Leanne Depiazzi, Mel Sarre and Clair Panetta, my Assistant Principals, Jenny Maslin and Luke Vine, and all of our staff who are always willing to go the extra mile for our school and students.

Tonight is a special night for our Year 6 students. Tinged with sadness, but with the excitement of anticipation for what is to come as they move to the next part of their educational journey. I arrived at OLOL when they were little Year 3 students and I have seen them grow and change over the last four years. From when they presented 'The Enormous Crocodile' for their assembly in Year 3 (with the crocodile magically being hoisted up to the light fitting) to 'The Lorax' in Year 4, and Music through the decades this year, I have been with them on camps and watched them develop as school leaders. Most of all, I have watched the way they look out for each other. I know they are ready to move to high school, and I know they have the qualities to branch out and make more friends, but we will miss them, their personalities, their quirks and all the fun and laughs they have brought to our school over the last 8 years. They presented a fantastic final assembly on Friday and we got to see a slide show of photos highlighting how they have grown and changed. Thank you, Year 6 students, for being role models for our younger students. Always remember your primary school days, and we wish you every success for your future. Tonight is your night. Together with your families, you can remember and celebrate all that has happened to bring you to the end of your primary school journey. As Dr Seuss said: 'You're off to great places, today is your day. Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way.'

To the rest of our students, thank you for all your work this year, as well. You are ready to move up to a new year level, with a new teacher, (most of you, one class will have the same teacher). We look forward to another good year together next year. We've booked that Fun Day again for the last week!

Looking to the future, 2020 is our centenary year. Much celebration will occur in February when past students and families gather to reminisce about their own school days, and look with interest at what the school looks like today. Over the last 100 years there have been so many changes in education and in the physical spaces at our school. We will always be grateful for the vision, insight and determination of all who went before us to ensure that we have the facilities we enjoy today. From the Mercy traditions of the Sisters who played such an important role in the history of our school, we maintain the ethos they started with a focus on our school values of Respect, Justice, Integrity, Courage and Compassion. The Mercy tradition has always recognised the importance of education as a crucial way for children to reach their potential. At Our Lady of Lourdes, our motto 'Many Minds, One Heart' encompasses this tradition.

Next year, in our 100th year, we will be able to thank all who have contributed towards making OLOL the wonderful school environment where we learn and grow together.

Thank you all for your ongoing support of our school and students.