



# Our Lady of Lourdes School

Dardanup

dardanup.admin@cewa.edu.au  
www.ololdard.wa.edu.au  
PO Box 67  
2-8 Ferguson Road  
Dardanup WA 6236  
08 9728 2200

## *Annual School Community Meeting Principal's Report Tuesday 23 November 2021*

Good evening and thank you for your attendance this evening. How can it be that it is two and a half weeks until the end of another school year? We have been fortunate to have a year virtually uninterrupted by COVID, except for the very first week of the year, and we have been lucky to be able to have face-to-face teaching and learning and all our events and activities with parents and grandparents attending. It is this involvement with our families that is such an important part of our community here at OLOL, and what we missed so much last year.

Once again, I have the privilege of reporting on school activities for the year, and the opportunity to thank the many people who contribute their time and talents.

Firstly, our staff, who always go above and beyond to support student engagement and learning. Our teaching staff who plan and assess and are always learning, meeting each week after school to discuss students and investigating ways to further support student learning and our wonderful Education Assistant team, who are right there behind the scenes a lot of the time, always willing to do whatever is asked, and whatever is needed. Our social committee and others are always organising ways to celebrate special events and occasions. Our soup Tuesdays, Foodie Fridays, Melbourne Cup lunch, celebrations for birthdays, or just when we all pull together to set up for something like Father's Day or Mother's Day breakfasts, Sacraments or end of year activities. People are always offering to help each other and for this I am so grateful.

We have some staff movement this year. Jenny Maslin stepped down from her AP role after many years of service, returning to the classroom in Year 5. I would like to thank Jenny for her contribution in her Leadership Role across all aspects of school life, and particularly during the planning for our Centenary celebrations last year. As a past student, the daughter of a past student, and whose own children attended here, Jenny's family has generational links to the school, and she has invested her heart in the daily operations of the school over time, continuing next year as a classroom teacher. Chelsea Burton will be leaving us at the end of the year. Chelsea has been with us for this semester in Year 4 while Cheryl Scott has been on long service leave. Thank you Chelsea, we hope you have enjoyed being with us for a little while. Ben Priest was here for two months in Term 3 while I was on long service leave and we sincerely thank Ben for stepping in with ease and getting to know our community in a short space of time. Luke Vine is leaving us after being Assistant Principal for 4 years to take up an AP role at St Helena's in Ellenbrook. We wish him well as he continues his leadership journey at a double stream school. Thanks for the memories! Camp will never be the same again, nor will our Quiz Nights or staff room banter. Luke, you brought your unique personality and style to your role, and you will be missed here at OLOL. We welcome some new faces to our staff team in 2022. Clare Crapella will be teaching alongside Hayley Thompson in Year 6 and Billy Boucher will be working as an Education Assistant in Pre-primary. I would also like to congratulate Paula Houston and Hayley Thompson who have been appointed as Assistant Principals.

As we are wrapping up 2021, looking back, we had many achievements and much growth and learning for all our students. A lightning strike early in the year caused damage to our irrigation system, some of our computing equipment and our phone lines. Thanks to our insurance, we were able to upgrade and re-do our irrigation and update our phones to Teams Calling for Schools. You might see our office staff walking around with headsets, answering calls while they multi-task. Another big change in the office this year was the migration to AoS, Administration of Schools, data and financial management system. I thank our office staff for working through these changes to adopt this new system. Lots of 'behind the scenes' work goes on to make for a smooth school environment for all. Sometimes these changes take people out of their comfort zones, but their willingness to move with these changes is appreciated. Schools these days are very busy places and the office at times is crazy. Special thanks to Leanne, Clair and Mel for all their work in the smooth running of our school.

At beginning of the year, we started a 'Playgroup' on Monday mornings, to welcome parents, babies and toddlers to come and begin their OLOL journey at a very young age. This provided parents with the chance to gather and chat and to begin the familiarisation process with our school environment. Thank you to Clare Clarke for facilitating our Mums (mostly) and Bubs group.

Mother's Day changed this year with a breakfast for Mums and Nannas, not wanting the Dads to have all the fun. We also had another extremely well-attended Father's Day breakfast. We changed the format of our Grandparents afternoon to include afternoon tea, classroom visits and an Assembly with our Choir singing a special song about Grandparents and viewing a video made by our students. I am told that they spent-up big at the book Fair, treating their grandchildren with new books. We'll make sure we align these events again next year.

You may have noticed the beautiful Mercy Cross on the wall in our Centenary Garden. Thank you to Gill Brady for her artistic skill in creating this.

Speaking of artistic skill, our Year 6 Artwork project is now in its 6<sup>th</sup> year, bringing colour and life to our school. From the mural representing our school values in the undercover area, our mosaic with our school motto, multiple pieces in the school hall representing memorable elements of primary school education, areas where our students travel from to attend at OLOL and representation of our historic faction names, this year we are 'hanging 10' as a tribute to our Surf Camp and MJR experience. It is wonderful for our Year 6 students to participate in something that they can leave behind, essentially 'leaving their mark' at the end of their years with us. Thank you to Hayley Thompson and Gill Brady for coordinating this project.

One of our big School Improvement Goals for this year was a focus on staff and student well-being. We aimed to embed staff wellbeing practices, with the view to having a focus on the 'big people' with a flow-on effect to the 'little people'. This is being achieved through staff involvement in strength identification, buddy activities, gratitude journals, a review of all Health programs across the school, and alignment through Scope and Sequence documents. Engagement with 'Be You', with staff completing training modules. During the month of October, Mental Health Month, staff tried out a range of activities to support their own wellbeing and that of their fellow staff members. We continue to 'check-in' on each other. This is a work in progress and will continue next year with a move towards our focus being on student wellbeing.

A focus for our Curriculum Plan this year was to compile a 'Teaching and Learning Handbook' that brings together all our beliefs/programs/non-negotiables/resources in a central space that is easily accessible for all staff. We began by ensuring that we have a common philosophy/vision about teaching and learning, under which all other aspects must sit. This is our vision: **At OLOL we strive to develop Christ-centred confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners who are active and informed members of the community.** Next year, we will continue working on this document with all learning areas to be covered.

As part of our Aboriginal Education Plan, we always have Acknowledgement of Country at gatherings and the text is on display in all classrooms. NAIDOC activities were held with DPS, and staff use and share resources that embed Aboriginal Perspectives across learning areas. We have continued to explore professional learning opportunities to improve staff cultural competence.

Our Digital Learning focus this year was on the introduction of 1:1 devices (I-pads) in Years 4-6 as part of the digital learning program. This has been very successful with teachers reporting that they are noticing how well students manage their devices and the quality of the work that is being produced. We have also worked to upskill teachers in pedagogy to support digital learning pedagogy. Teachers are working hard to integrate the use of devices, rather than replace what they can do in other ways, with a focus on creativity. Paula Houston, our Digital Learning Coach has been working alongside teachers for demonstration purposes and support.

One of our Education goals is about investigating a whole school approach to writing. Teachers have researched a few programs and we will look at implementing 'Talk 4 Writing' at the beginning of next year. We already have a consistent spelling program and would like to extend this approach to incorporate the way we teach writing.

As part of our focus on school values, there was a focus on demonstrating respect to self, others and the environment at school. We introduced the 'Golden Broom' which is awarded weekly at assembly to a class who shows care for their learning space and classroom.

One of the highlights this year was Science Day and Family STEM Rocket Challenge. We also enjoyed the bi-annual Astronomy Night. Our school is instrumental in the organisation of Leonardo Day, bringing many schools together with a focus on Science and STEM learning, and I thank Kath Heelan for her leadership in this area.

We were lucky to be able to rekindle our partnership with Dardanup Primary School again this year with our combined NAIDOC and Harmony Days.

On the sporting front, the Winter Carnival was a great day. For the first time, we took a team to participate in the Interschool Cross Country, after holding our own school event. We hosted the Interschool Athletics Carnival at our school this year. Our P&F and a Lions grant assisted with the purchase of new sporting equipment.

A large group of students and staff attended the community ANZAC commemorations this year. We continue to give service and look beyond ourselves with our Social Justice initiatives, including 'Jeans for Genes' day, 'Socktober' and Vinnies Christmas Hamper appeal. We thank our generous community for supporting these outreach initiatives.

Other things happened this year to enhance our experience together. With the help of our P&F, we started a lunchtime LEGO club, and it is always fascinating to see what our students create. We 'flipped' our lunch time around, to allow students to run and play first when they go out of their classroom at lunch time, and then return to eat their lunch after playing. Lapping Legends continues to be a part of our Friday morning routine. Special thanks to the P&F and Elle Barbetti for her work towards the organisation that happens behind the scenes to ensure that this is an option for our students and families each Friday. The introduction of Accelerated Reader (AR) with P&F support, has enhanced the reading comprehension program for students in Years 3-6.

Our School Advisory Council Chair, Kairon, has reported on Council activities and Gemma will report on the finances. I would like to add my sincere thanks to all Council members for their dedication to their roles and contribution and advice throughout the year. I am very happy that all members are continuing next year, further building on the momentum gained as a group this year.

Our P&F Executive have done an outstanding job this year in their first year, with many extremely successful events and activities aimed at building community and raising funds to support school initiatives. Monique and Celeste will report shortly on their successes. I am grateful for their willingness to continue next year to build on their initial success. Their model of shared leadership within the group has seen individuals taking responsibility for certain events. This shared the load and gave clear direction for all. Congratulations and thank you to our P&F Executive group.

This year Australia is celebrating 200 years of Catholic Education, and in WA, Catholic Education WA is celebrating 50 years. We had our School Climate survey, which is an interesting way to gather feedback data about how we are going as a school. Our student numbers are up by about 16 next year. Word-of-mouth is a wonderful thing.

Many new family enrolment interviews tell me that they know someone who attends who talks really positively about our school. It is the strength of all involved that builds our good reputation in the wider community.

We still have many activities to look forward to as we conclude the school year. Our Community Carols and End of Year Awards nights are two opportunities to celebrate the skills and talents and successes of our students.

Thank you to each and every one of you who are part of the OLOL family. The students are at the centre of all that we do, and it is a great privilege to be part of this community as we strive to be 'Many Minds – One Heart' in Christ.

Thank you.

Angela Hegney  
Principal