



**OUR LADY'S ASSUMPTION**  
SCHOOL



Strategic Plan 2019 - 2021



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## Message from the Principal



It is my pleasure to present to you our new Strategic Plan 2019-2021 particularly as we approach the end of my first year as Principal of the school. Building upon the strong foundations established by the Dominican Order, an unerring commitment to truth still guides us today. As such, the school's leadership team, staff and Board have reflected on the true situation at Our Lady's Assumption (OLA) School in developing this Strategic Plan. We have reviewed feedback from parents on how well we are travelling as a school, as well as the emerging challenges and trends likely to be faced in the future. This reflection suggests there is much to celebrate but also things we can still improve.

The Dominican Sisters prized the development of intellectual virtues in their schools. They strived to ensure that "their schools were academically superior; the instructors skilled in teaching; the students led to love knowledge and to excel; and that planting the seeds of faith has ramifications far beyond the years during which they attend our school" (Constitutions of the Congregation). These virtues are no less important in a school today and resonate with our own core values of striving for personal excellence and integrity in our learning. A renewed focus on personal excellence and integrity in our learning is relevant to all members of a school community – students, staff and parents. This is our aspiration for the next 3 years as we take steps to recapture our mantle as the premier school in the area.

OLA is well regarded as a place where every student is known by name and need and is able to experience a sense of belonging. Strong pastoral care reinforces this element of our reputation. This comes from a strong Catholic belief that all humans are created in the image of God and therefore the potential and dignity of each individual should be respected and nurtured. The Bishops of Western Australia have charged the Catholic Education Commission of WA (CECWA) with ensuring all schools are good schools in the secular sense and are authentically Catholic in the way that they go about their business. The requirement is reflected in this Strategic Plan.

Recapturing our excellence in teaching and learning through truthful reflection and continuing to be authentically Catholic in the way that we relate, is our plan. We are under no illusion that this will take hard work. We are confident however, that by remembering our heritage and working with parents as the first educators of their children, if we *Imagine* then *Believe*, we will *Succeed*.

I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with parents as we progress this new Strategic Plan and ultimately to providing an outstanding Catholic education.

**Mr Greg Martin**  
Principal







## Our vision

Our Lady's Assumption School seeks to be a place that fosters a living faith, based on truth, where the potential and dignity of the individual is respected and nurtured in an environment of trust.

We do this by:

- Fostering faith formation through word and example;
- Providing an atmosphere which promotes dignity and respect for all;
- Providing a supportive environment which encourages each child to develop as a confident, independent learner;
- Nurturing the spiritual, social, physical, intellectual and emotional needs of each child;
- Promoting an appreciation of, and respect for, all creation; and
- Encouraging each member of the school community to approach life with confidence and optimism.

# Our approach and vision of success

## **UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES and VALUES**

Christ-centred | Student-focussed | Evidence-based  
Respect | Integrity | Compassion | Excellence



### **DRIVER OF CHANGE**

#### **STRONG ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE**

Consistent team approach across streams  
Excellent communication  
Regular feedback on performance and recognition  
Financial sustainability  
Resources and facilities support the strategy

### **DRIVER OF CHANGE**

#### **A CONNECTED COMMUNITY**

Culture of welcome  
Community is open and inclusive  
Shared responsibility for student learning  
Regular feedback on student performance  
External relationships enhance learning program

### **DRIVER OF CHANGE**

#### **AN ENGAGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Staff care about student well-being and the well-being of their colleagues  
Analysis and discussion of data is common  
Specialist support and extension programs are in place to respond to student need  
An expert teaching team is retained and developed



### **OUTCOMES WE SEEK**

Strong academic performance and service of others  
A community that is faith-filled, diverse, engaged and healthy  
A place that is contemporary, inviting and sustainable

## Our context – evidence base

Society has changed since our last Strategic Plan was prepared. These changes are the context in which the school operates and provide an indication of the challenges to be faced. Emerging trends in education and the WA community have been considered. Consultation through face to face workshops and surveys was undertaken within our community at the end of 2017 and in 2018. Student performance data for the past 3 years has also been reviewed. Some of the challenges that are likely to be faced over the next 3 years, are outlined below.

### Trends in education

- In the Australian context, funding of non-government schools is likely to have an increasing profile in the lead up to the 2019 Federal election.
- There is much research on the positive long-term effect of quality early learning on educational, social and health outcomes. A focus on Kindergarten to Year 1 and early intervention, is considered essential.
- Performance of Australian students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) against international benchmarks has stalled. A *National STEM School Education Strategy: 2016 - 2026* is available to sharpen the focus of schools.<sup>1</sup>
- The integration of learning Apps, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality are becoming increasingly accessible. According to Graeme Lawrie, Director of Innovation and Outreach at Sevenoaks School in Kent (UK), “schools should watch its evolution and plan effectively for incorporation in the curriculum – it is not far off.”<sup>2</sup>
- School design and facilities are changing to meet changes in delivery – focus is on flexibility, technology rich environments, spaces for collaboration and furniture that is more like a home environment.
- The 2017 NAPLAN Annual Report (December 2017) led to extensive media attention on the under-performance of boys in writing.<sup>3</sup>

### Trends in Western Australia

- Even conservative projections by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) show high levels of growth in primary school aged children in WA each year over the next 10 years.<sup>4</sup> In the suburbs surrounding the school, it is expected to increase but at a decreasing rate.
- Results of the most recent community survey of over 2000 Western Australian residents conducted by the Committee of Perth (2017) and again in 2018<sup>5</sup> indicate:
  - 72% of respondents have no expectation that their wages will increase.
  - 40% of households reported being financially worse off than they were five years ago.
  - 59% of all households would struggle financially if costs increased by 5%.

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Ensuring school fees do not present a barrier for the community, is critical.



- There is increasing demand for places in State Government Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) programs. The number of students applying for places in secondary school GATE programs has increased 30 per cent in four years, 3631 to 4756 in 2018. There is an opportunity for increased focus on GATE, particularly if seen as an academic pathway to Mt Lawley SHS or Chisholm Catholic College.

## School trends

The school's own research and data from 2017 and 2018 suggests a number of identifiable strengths as well as some challenges<sup>6</sup>:

- **Excellent pastoral care:** 87% of students have a positive sense of belonging to the school; 94% of students feel they have positive relationships; 78% of parents believe their child feels safe at school.
- **Faith development opportunities are good:** 83% of parents believe the school provides appropriate opportunities for students to develop and reflect on their faith.
- **Good communication:** 80% of parents believe there are sufficient ways to communicate with the school.
- **Disparity in parent and student perceptions on student academic engagement:** 78% of students are interested and motivated; 95% are giving their best effort; 94% believe they receive quality instruction; however, 32% of parents feel the academic programs may not provide sufficient challenge; 30% believe the academic needs of their child could receive greater attention.
- **Greatest need for support and focus is in Kindergarten to Year 1:** reflected in our early years testing.
- **Enrolments:** have declined over the past 3 years; filling vacancies left by student moves to other single gender K-12 private schools at Year 4, is an ongoing challenge.

## Catholic system strategic directions

This plan, has been informed by the 2008 *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* which calls all schools to promote equity and excellence and strive for all young Australians to become successful learners; confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens. Likewise, the Bishops' *Mandate Letter* calls us to form young Christian men and women who will ultimately contribute to improving their community. The focus areas of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) tie the two documents together. The CECWA calls on schools to develop a strategy that is *Christ-centred, Student-focussed and Evidence-based*.

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1 Education Council (2015), *A National STEM School Education Strategy: A comprehensive plan for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education in Australia 2016–2026*;  
 2 Lawrie (2017) accessible from <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/01/23/school-using-virtual-reality-prepare-pupils-future>  
 3 *The Conversation* (28 January 2018), *What's ahead for education policy in 2018*;  
 4 Australian Council for Education Research (2015), *The Teacher Workforce in Australia: Supply, Demand and Data Issues*, Canberra.  
 5 Committee for Perth (2017), *Bigger and Better Beyond the Boom – Perth's Economic Future as a Region of 3.5 Million People*, Perth; Committee for Perth (2018), *Bigger and Better Beyond the Boom – 2018 Perth Perception Survey*  
 6 *Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey, conducted in 2018; School Board survey, conducted at the end of 2017*

# The CECWA priorities and our goals

**AUTHENTIC CATHOLICITY**  
To live the Gospel values and give witness to the Catholic faith in all that we do



## 1. Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable Schools

Ensuring access for children whose parents seek a Catholic education, especially the poor and marginalised and making decisions responsibly for the long-term benefit of Catholic education.

**GOAL 1:** Full enrolment that reflects the surrounding community demographic.

**GOAL 2:** Facilities that are contemporary, attractive, flexible and support the learning program.



## 2. Catholic Schools of Excellence

To ensure Catholic education is committed to excellence, continual transformation and meeting all external requirements.

**GOAL 3:** Diversity of learning opportunities continue to meet the needs of students.

**GOAL 4:** High levels of student academic achievement.



## 3. Pastoral Catholic Communities

To respect the dignity and support the well-being of every member of the school community.

**GOAL 5:** High levels of respect for others and for all creation.



## 4. Christ-Centred Leadership

To ensure all give witness to the Gospel through their faith, actions, relationships and professional excellence in education.

**GOAL 6:** An expert teaching team that drives students to excel.

**GOAL 7:** Increased opportunities for students, staff and parents to give witness to their faith through the service of those in need.

### *CECWA Vision:*

*Catholic education in Western Australia is a Christ-centred community of engaging learning environments, inspiring all to actively live the Gospel.*



## Actions we will take to achieve our goals

Some goals provide the pre-condition for success and as such are drivers of our student-focussed goals. These include:

- **GOAL 2: Facilities that are contemporary, attractive and flexible continue to support the learning program.**
- **GOAL 3: Diversity of learning opportunities continue to meet the needs of students.**
- **GOAL 6: An expert teaching team that drives students to excel.**
- **GOAL 7: Increased opportunity for students, staff and parents to give witness to their faith through the service of those in need.**

Other goals emphasise renewed high expectations for learning, personal achievement and living out Gospel values.

- **GOAL 1: Full enrolment that reflects the surrounding community demographic.**
- **GOAL 4: High levels of student academic achievement.**
- **GOAL 5: High levels of respect for others and for all creation.**

STRATEGIES	DETAIL - MILESTONES and GUIDE
1. Support for the full range of students to access appropriate learning support and challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining intervention programs – MiniLit, MacqLit, Reading Recovery, Stretch, Reach, Sensory program and Learning sprints.</li> <li>• Review existing opportunities and performance data of participants to inform areas for development.</li> <li>• Identify underrepresented groups or opportunities for external involvement from within the community.</li> <li>• Targeted promotion of and recruitment for new opportunities.</li> </ul>
2. Establish partnerships to increase opportunities for Gifted and Talented students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a review of existing opportunities.</li> <li>• Identify participants and the areas of focus.</li> <li>• Establish partnerships and structures within the school to facilitate STEM and GATE.</li> <li>• Targeted promotion of new opportunities.</li> </ul>
3. Develop a consistent school wide approach to the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school Literacy and Numeracy plans are developed.</li> <li>• Establish Scope and Sequence - Literacy and Numeracy strategies explicitly mapped across the years.</li> <li>• Develop Middle/Cluster leaders – how to lead in a collaborative environment – knowledge, facilitation skills, focus, etc.</li> <li>• Clusters audit their curriculum for a whole school approach.</li> </ul>
4. Establish and implement a Digital Technology Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current technology provisions to identify strengths and improvements.</li> <li>• Incorporate a plan to upgrade equipment including a sustainable funding approach.</li> <li>• Incorporate elements of Catholic Education’s Leading Lights where it enhances the teaching program.</li> <li>• Incorporate staff professional learning as a pre-cursor to implementation of any digital transformation program.</li> </ul>

## Actions we will take to achieve our goals (continued)

STRATEGIES	DETAIL - MILESTONES and GUIDE
5. Establish a Capital Development Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Early childhood facilities to ensure National Quality Standards (NQS) compliance.</li> <li>• Review internal spaces and equipment to identify development opportunities.</li> </ul>
6. Continuity of focus on core instruction and prioritising the learning program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review timetabling structures and calendar to minimise 'non-core' activities and to facilitate team work across staff.</li> <li>• Invest in targeted professional learning for staff focussed on strong classroom instruction.</li> <li>• Establish explicit expectations and accountability for the quality of practice and the level of student performance.</li> <li>• Implement co-planning, data review, external feedback and reviews to enable reflection on teaching practice.</li> <li>• Classroom observation and feedback occurs.</li> </ul>
7. Provide a professional learning program that supports the development needs and aspirations of all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake staff appraisals to inform development needs and establish professional growth plans.</li> <li>• Link to Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards.</li> <li>• Identify targeted professional learning for each staff member.</li> <li>• Annual discussions with Principal to support feedback, recognition, identifying progress and annual learning focus.</li> <li>• Staff to share their professional learning and hold concurrent sessions at Staff Development days.</li> <li>• Recognise outstanding achievement.</li> </ul>
8. Expansion of the school's service learning focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to use Faith, Story and Witness.</li> <li>• Age appropriate opportunities identified for service (Scope and Sequence).</li> <li>• Link to Pastoral Care policy and Core Values.</li> <li>• Incorporate Year 6 Leadership Ministries.</li> <li>• P&amp;F to lead opportunities for parents.</li> </ul>
9. Continue to review and optimise internal processes and external marketing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review administrative processes to ensure they are efficient, enable a focus on teaching and learning and support a strong sense of welcome and belonging.</li> <li>• Continue Marketing sub-committee to raise brand awareness.</li> </ul>
10. Resources are managed and allocated sustainably to fund the priorities identified in this Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plan are reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Priorities for each year are identified along with the resourcing requirements.</li> <li>• School Board monitors success measures and budgets to ensure sustainability and allocate appropriate resourcing.</li> </ul>



# Our targets and measures of success

The measures of achievement for our strategic goals and their targets are summarised below. As we implement our plan in a constantly changing world, the targets indicate our aspirations but are by no means certain. Progress will be reviewed annually.

HIGH ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE OF OTHERS	2021 TARGET
Parent/staff/student survey (% whom agree or higher) indicates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong and authentic Catholic culture is evident.</li> <li>• Opportunities to understand the Catholic faith, for prayer and liturgy are appropriate.</li> <li>• Opportunities to serve others have increased.</li> <li>• Staff provide safe and supportive learning environments.</li> <li>• School leadership communicate well with the community.</li> <li>• Students demonstrate respect - for staff, each other and creation.</li> <li>• % who believe students are giving their best effort.</li> <li>• % who believe they receive quality instruction.</li> <li>• % of parents who believe the academic programs provide challenge.</li> <li>• % of parents who believe the academic needs of their child are met.</li> <li>• The school has established appropriate community relationships to enhance the learning opportunities of students.</li> <li>• That facilities at the school are attractive contemporary and support learning.</li> </ul>	Greater than 80% for all
NAPLAN – Year 3 performance in all (5) measures is above the national average.	YES
NAPLAN – Year 5 performance in all (5) measures is above that in 'like' schools.	YES
NAPLAN - student gains from Year 3-5 in all (5) measures exceed those in 'like' schools.	YES
OPERATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND DIVERSITY	2021 TARGET
Enrolment sustainability and diversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolments – number of year groups with greater than 50 students.</li> <li>• Kindergarten enrolments exceed the target benchmark each year.</li> <li>• Demographic mix of student cohort – Upper quartile to Lower quartile.</li> <li>• School demographic mix matches the community demographic.</li> </ul>	ALL 26 60%:40% YES
Operating benchmarks for financial sustainability are achieved and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operating surplus as a % of Total Income.</li> <li>• Staffing expenditure (ALL staff) as a % of Total Income.</li> <li>• Professional Learning budget as % of Staff salaries.</li> <li>• Budgets prioritise the activities identified in the Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>	5% < 70% 1% YES



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Plan prepared with the assistance of



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