



# SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Annual Review Meeting

### PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

## 2024

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2024 Principal's Report to the St Joseph's School Advisory Council and wider community. It is a report built from a deep sense of pride and gratitude for all that has been accomplished in 2024. It continues to be a great privilege to serve as Principal of St Joseph's Primary School and lead this wonderful community.

### QUALITY TEACHING – 2024 Priorities and New Initiatives

Our 2024 priorities were:

- **Building Staff Capacity**

**GOAL - To establish a culture of feedback to improve professional growth at St Joseph's Primary School.**

- o **Key Improvement Strategies**

- Engage in professional learning to build a shared understanding of feedback.
- Develop and implement a shared and documented feedback model.
- Support both collective and individual staff needs

- o **Achievements**

- Continue to implement a Position of Leadership focussed on Coaching and Mentoring.
- Begin using 'Steplab' with graduate teacher and 1 other nominated early years teacher.
- Establish processes and procedures for observation & feedback through StepLab - share this with staff
- Begin teaching sprints focused on the HIT (High Impact Teaching) strategy - feedback.

- o **Considerations**

2025 staffing schedule to provide allocated time for teachers to be released for peer observation and feedback.

- **Pedagogical Framework**

**GOAL - To establish a pedagogical framework that focuses on shared beliefs and understandings about Evidence-Based Learning**

- o **Key Improvement Strategies**

- Develop, implement and refine a co-constructed pedagogical framework.
    - Build knowledge and understanding of evidence-based teaching and learning practices.
    - Implement dialogue and questioning techniques that lead to deeper thinking and reflection on Catholic identity, faith and tradition

- o **Achievements**

- Leadership Team (*Principal, Deputy Principal/Learning and Teaching Leader & English Leader*) to develop a shared understanding of the SJN approach to learning and teaching in Writing.
    - Staff meeting focus on HIT strategies in writing.
    - Teaching Sprints focused on implementing HIT strategy - feedback.
    - Staff worked on creating 'I can' statements for writing aligned with the new English Curriculum.
    - Language consultant, Deb Sukarna, was engaged to work with the staff on the implementation of the 'I Can' statements and to lead the staff in the teaching of Writing.
    - Teachers in grades 3-6 implemented the new OCHRE resources to support the new English curriculum

- o **Considerations**

- Deb Sukarna will continue to work with the staff throughout 2025.
    - Position of Leadership - Mathematics - to be implemented in 2025 to begin the process of streamlining our teaching and learning practices in Mathematics and explore the new OCHRE Mathematics resources to support the new curriculum.

- **Student Engagement**

**GOAL - To strengthen staff and student capacity while enhancing student engagement and empowerment**

- o **Key Improvement Strategies**

- Engage in professional learning opportunities
    - Identify and create opportunities to co-construct and design learning experiences with students
    - Build student capacity to become self-directed learners

- o **Achievements**

- Implement the 'Student Voice Audit Tool' to provide feedback from a student's perspective

- o **Considerations**

- In 2025 we will use the data gathered and link this priority with the HITS strategies and focus on student voice in our classroom practise and whole school planning.

## **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

### **Enrolment Data**

- December 2023 - 143 enrolments
- January 2024 - 174 enrolments
  - 21 students exiting (2023)
  - 18 enrolments due to the closure of St John's
  - 34 Prep intake
- Currently - 179 enrolments
  - 93 boys / 86 girls
- 125 Families

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Roof Rectification Project**

This year, the school undertook a significant roof rectification project, with an allocated budget of \$1.1 million. This project aimed to address critical structural issues and enhance the long-term sustainability and safety of the facility.

Outcomes:

- The project was successfully completed ahead of the scheduled timeline, minimizing disruption to school operations.
- Final costs came in under budget, reflecting efficient project management and cost control.

The successful execution of this project ensures the school buildings are well-prepared for future use, with improved resilience to environmental factors and reduced maintenance needs moving forward.

### **Learning and Teaching**

- SCHOOL CONCERT- such a grand success.
- Established regular Professional Learning Team meetings with a focus on High Impact Teaching Strategies
- Embedding of facilitated planning with Learning and Teaching leader.
- Staff participation in professional learning focussed on:
  - Little Learners Love Literacy
  - SMART spelling
  - Writing Moderation
  - Feedback and Coaching - trialed StepLab (online coaching platform)
  - Refresher course on Evidence Based Learning (E.B.L.) strategies
    - What does E.B.L. look like for students
    - What does E.B.L. look like for teachers
    - What doe E.B.L. look like for learning environments
  - Unpacking and implementation of High Impact Teaching Strategies via Teaching Sprints
  - Development of Curriculum 'I Can' statements in Writing
  - Working with external consultants to establish a quality Writing programme from grades prep - 6.
  - First Aid and OH&S

## **School Community**

- School Concert
- Friday Markets – and SRC initiative that not only strengthened school community
- Kindergarten Visits
- Social Club events/fundraising
- Police visits
- Fire Brigade visits
- Participation in the Darebin Council Education Council
- SVDP Blanket Drive
- Christmas Giving Tree

## **Education in Faith**

- Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation
- Class Masses continued each Tuesday morning
- Celebration of special events – Mother’s, Father’s and Grandparent’s days/Masses
- Social Justice Initiatives
  - \* Food Drive - Sacred Heart Mass
  - \* Socktober - supporting children through Catholic Children’s Missions
  - \* St Vincent Blanket Appeal
  - \* Project Compassion

## **Wellbeing**

- Continuation of partnership with Catholic Care to provide a school counsellor on a weekly basis  
External clinicians and allied health care providers working onsite
- Social Emotional Learning units
- Buddy programme
- Awards presented at Assembly
- House Points System - recognition of general achievements

## **FINAL THANKS...**

I would like to acknowledge and thank the core Leadership Team:

- Kate Lynn’s ongoing support and camaraderie are truly invaluable. As Deputy Principal this year, Kate has been nothing short of exceptional. Her organizational skills are unparalleled, and her remarkable ability to always stay one step ahead continues to amaze me. Additionally, she is an outstanding leader in learning and teaching, consistently driving excellence and inspiring those around her.
- Ashlyn Keane began the year leading our Learning Diversity and Wellbeing, and when commencing parental leave was replaced by Bella Zacharioudakis. Ashlyn and Bella worked closely with our staff and parents in supporting our SWANS (Students with Additional Needs) and the general wellbeing of all our community. They have demonstrated outstanding commitment to fostering inclusive and supportive learning environments, and have worked collaboratively with staff, families, and external specialists to implement tailored support programs, ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive.

- This year, our English leader, Brittany Symons, has demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication in advancing Literacy across our school community. Brittany's commitment to professional development has enabled her to foster a culture of continuous improvement.

I thank them all for the enthusiasm and energy they bring to their roles and the strong positive impression they leave on me as a leader

I thank Myanna Goetze for her leadership in the area of mentoring and coaching. I wish her all the best as she commences her parental leave at the end of this year. It goes without saying that St Joseph's is very fortunate to have such a wonderful team of teachers whose dedication to the craft of teaching is unsurpassed. I feel privileged to work alongside each and every one of them.

I thank the School Advisory Council who has yet again provided advice and direction that is highly valued by myself and the community as a whole. It has been a privilege to work with such a committed group of people. I would like to particularly like to thank Raffaella Arico for taking on the role of Chairperson. I thank you for the support you have given me and I look forward to continuing to work with you into 2025.

Thank you to Fr Shabin for his spiritual and pastoral support and guidance for our school and parish community. I look forward to continuing to work with him to further develop the bonds of the joint parish communities of St Joseph's Northcote and St Mary's Thornbury, St Anthony's Alphington and Holy Spirit Thornbury.