

2024 End of Year Address [Principal]

Afternoon children, parents, carers, family members, staff, parishioners and clergy,

St Mel's is a proud Catholic Education Community striving, learning and achieving together, through Christ our light.

Across the year I have often reflected on our school Identity Statement, in particular the phrases and ideals captured within this succinct statement...

- Proud Catholic Education Community – families, school, kinder, parish & broader community focussed on Education – the education of our young children.
- Striving, learning and achieving together – a focus on continued improvement, learning (the education of our children & life long learning for all) and achieving (of growth, setting and attaining goals, continued development of the individual).
- Christ our light – inspired, challenged, shaped by our encounter with Christ, in Scripture, through prayer and reflection, at celebration, within a broader multi-faith community and self-less actions of positive role models in our lives.

As a Catholic Education – multi faith / multi culture - Community, we are enriched by the rich diversity of the members of our St Mel's Education Community.

Our children, parents, carers and family members, our Staff Team, our parishioners, our parish team, our clergy (Fr Rene and Fr Ruel) and the broader Shepparton and diocesan community. What daily opportunities we all have to learn from and achieve together as we build on the foundations laid by families as first educators, as we strive to provide our kinder and primary aged children with learning opportunities and experiences to continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understandings, whilst continuing to strengthen a love of learning through life. Our school has a focus on developing Learner Assets across the years of primary schooling. Learner Assets that apply to adults, young people and children alike.

We are...

- Researchers – Curious, courageous and resourceful
- Thinkers – Open-minded, flexible and persistent
- Collaborators – Empathetic, compassionate and reliable
- Self Managers – Resilient, responsible and reflective
- Communicators – Confident, responsive and respectful

What a fine list of attributes to aspire to fully develop across a learning journey.

Here we see the practical application of all our knowledge, skills and understandings.

Gathered here this afternoon we celebrate our year of learning and growth as a school community. We congratulate all of the children in our school on their respective learning journey across the 2024 school year and celebrate their achievements.

Thank you to our parents, carers and family members who have continued to provide support to their young learners across this year and to our school community as a whole. We are conscious of the busyness of life and the opportunities and challenges facing families in today's society. We are grateful for any effort you have made, any contribution you have offered in support of your children and the children of other families in our school.

I commend the hard work and dedication of the members of our St Mel's Staff Team for their many and varied contributions across this year. Particularly within the context of an evolving diocesan education reform 'Magnify', an ongoing teacher shortage and welcoming a

recycled principal (and former student) to the team. I wish all staff colleagues a restful and re-energising break and look forward to continuing to support our learners in the next year.

Thank you to the members of our parish team, parishioners and Fathers Rene and Ruel for their presence, involvement in, and support of, our school community, of our children, families and staff in relation to the spiritual, Sacramental and religious life of our Catholic Education Community. Our parish relationship also provides opportunity for our school community to engage with students staff and families of our sister school, St Anne's College. Whether it be through our parish Sacramental Program, sharing of facilities and resources, Parish Pastoral Council, professional learning activities or on the soccer field or netball court. We are a vital part of the broader rich faith community of St Mel's Parish.

So now to our Graduates, our Year 6 Leaders.

Can you all please stand.

This year a cumulation of seven years primary school education at our school (or less – depending on when you joined the community).

Your primary school years may seem to be a life time to you at this moment.

As graduates, our school community has had great plans for you, your continuing education, growth and development as young people within our community.

From our Graduate Outcomes, we inspire you to be young people who...

- Demonstrate openness to faith and willingness to act justly.
- Are open to nurturing their personal spirituality.
- Are curious, engaged learners, risk takers in their learning and life long learners.
- Are literate and numerate.
- Have good self awareness and confidence to explore possibilities.
- Understand their responsibility in caring for all God's creation.
- Show understanding and appreciation of the diversity of society.
- Are respectful, cooperative, and can communicate and work with others harmoniously.

At the end of this year, you leave us for the next chapter in your educational story.

We congratulate you on your years of learning and growth as members of the St Mel's Primary School and Parish Community. Thank you for your many contributions to our school community, especially in this your year in Leadership of our school.

We wish you ongoing success, happiness and continued growth as you move onto Secondary school and continue to strive, learn and achieve through Christ our Light.

Finally, best wishes to all for the approaching school holiday break, a joy-filled Christmas and Happy New Year.

Thank you.