



2023 ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETING

7th February 2024

Principal's Report

Dear Staff, Parents, Carers and Community Members,

It is with pleasure that I present my annual report for the 2023 school year at St Bernard's Catholic Primary School. This report highlights the structures that were in place in 2023 as well as some of the more significant events, activities and outcomes of the year. It does so by addressing each of the four domains of Catholic Education WA: Stewardship, Education, Community and Catholic Identity.

STEWARDSHIP

Staff at St Bernard's play a critical role in ensuring students receive the best possible standard of care and education while they are at our school and this involves commitment from all our staff members including cleaning and grounds staff, administration staff, teaching staff (teachers and education assistants) and leadership. We are blessed to have such a committed staff working each day to ensure the best outcomes for all students.

At the end of 2023 we farewelled Miss Casey Hewitt, who is moving to Perth and has a teaching position at St Bernadette's Primary School in Port Kennedy; Mr Ben Myers, who has decided to take a break from teaching after 12 years; Mrs Kath Wharton and Mrs Di Gardner who are both retiring; Mrs Lisa Cavanagh who is leaving to focus on other commitments and next week we will farewell our groundsperson, Miss Karin Praetz, who is leaving due to health reasons.

Staffing arrangements for 2024 see new staff members Mrs Nicole Jones join us as K/PP teacher; Mrs Kirsten Kondonis and Mrs Liz Worthington join the Year 5/6 classroom; and Mrs Aleigha Dixon-Barclay will continue in Administration after starting in Term 4.

School grounds and buildings continued to be maintained throughout the year by our team of Mrs Annette Sawyer (cleaning) and Ms Karin Praetz (grounds and maintenance). I would like to make special mention of Karin who began work as our groundsperson with no previous experience and has done an amazing job, with our gardens and grounds receiving many comments from visitors. Unfortunately, Karin has had to resign due to health issues and we hope to be able to announce her replacement shortly.

Catholic School Advisory Council members for 2023 were Mr Joel Treeby (chairperson), Mrs Kate Clayton (secretary), Mrs Shannon Waldock (Treasurer-elect), Mr Michael Rose (P&F representative) and Mr Raymond Noonan. I would like to extend my thanks to all members of the CSAC, and congratulate Joel on his first year in the chair position.

Our school P&F was active once again in supporting our school, and the wider community. The P&F was led by Mrs Libby Rose as chairperson, Mrs Marju Rutherford as vice-chairperson, Mrs Sophie Macri as secretary and Mrs Chloe Noonan as Treasurer, along with a consistent contingent of supportive parents. A major event for the P&F was the biennial Goods and Services auction fundraiser, which was held on March 17th at the Memorial Hall. Again, I would like to extend my thanks to all members of the P&F for their wonderful support of our school throughout the 2023 school year.

Major projects completed in 2023 included the completion of the chess pad shed; the replacement of retaining walls around the garden beds in front of the Admin office, flagpole lawn and alongside the Learning Support rooms; and replacement of the western oval playground shade sails and poles. St

Bernard's Capital Development Program (CDP) application was approved in December 2023, in full for \$5 million to complete a new Multi-Purpose Room and upgrades to the Year 1/2 classroom. By January 2024 this had been revised to only the Multi-Purpose Room at a total cost of \$1.2 million. The moral of the story is not to count your chickens before they are hatched! We remain committed to the Year 1/2 classroom upgrades but will need to plan how that will now take place.

EDUCATION

In 2023 a major event was the whole school play, Cinderella, which was performed early in Term 4. This was a great showcase of our students' talents and, in particular, highlighted our Year 5/6 class who committed to weekly rehearsals throughout most of the school year. Students' creative talents were also showcased at the Goods and Services Auction with a whole array of amazing artwork offered for auction.

Staff continued to engage with school improvement through the tools of Quality Catholic Schooling and the National Quality Standards (NQS), as well as the School Improvement Plan (SIP), incorporating the Early Years Learning Plan, Evangelisation Plan and Aboriginal Education Plan.

In line with our SIP, staff focus on establishing a process around moderation of student work and standards across all learning areas; extending our Bush School and STEM pedagogy to all classes; and trialling the URStrong friendship program in all classes.

Extending our practice in indoor-outdoor learning opportunities in the Early Years continued to be the focus identified in our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) as part of our commitment to implementing the NQS in Kindy-Year 2. Although this was an Early Years focus, indoor-outdoor learning is an important focus across all years at St Bernard's, as evidenced by our commitment to two Outdoor Classroom days – one in winter and one in summer. We took part in a whole school Loose Parts Play incursion, designed to enrich students' play opportunities at St Bernard's, and an identified Bush School focus in each classroom.

The Great Southern Network for Years 3 and 4 continued to focus on STEM, with meetings each term and culminating in a STEM Challenge Showcase in Term 3. Once again, St Bernard's Year 3/4 students enjoyed the STEM focus and we had groups represented in both the highly commended and overall winner award categories.

Literacy development for students at St Bernard's continued to be supported by our commitment to the Literacy Dedicated Time block; the PLD spelling program; Accelerated Reader and STAR reading programs; and data collected via Running Records and Informal Prose Inventories. Students' writing continued to be supported by the use of Brightpath to moderate and support students' individual development in the different writing genres. Kindy students took part in the Kindergarten Oral Language Program (KOLP) offered through the Great Southern Health system. The On-Entry program and Observation Survey provided valuable start of year data about student's literacy abilities to help plan for classroom learning programs. We continued to offer the MultiLit suite of support programs in Literacy, with the MiniLit program for Years 1-3 and the MaqLit program for Years 3-6, taught by Mrs Kaylene Smart.

Numeracy support continued with the use of Maths Assessment Interview (MAI) and Brightpath for data collection, and investigation of inquiry-based Maths approaches in the Early Years, via the Great Southern Early Years Network.

Our 2023 Enrichment class was led by Mrs Denise Bowen, who worked with a team of eight competitively selected students from Years 4-6. The team took part in the Optiminds program throughout the year, culminating in the Optiminds Challenge day at Curtin University in Perth in August, competing well and gaining much from their experience. Congratulations to our Enrichment team, and Mrs Bowen, for representing our school so well and with such pride.

Specialist teachers continued to provide St Bernard's students with a well-rounded primary school education in the areas of Art (Mrs Sophie Atkinson), Drama (Mrs Jayne Thorn), Science (Mrs Atkinson/Mrs Thorn), Auslan and Physical Education (Mrs Peta Marinoni). The Little Stars playgroup for children aged 0-5 years old, and their parents, continued on Monday mornings with numbers of children attending consistently sitting between 12 and 20. Little Stars teacher, Mrs Melissa Matthews, continued as our Jnr. Stars 3 year old Pre-Kindy class teacher on Tuesdays, finishing with 26 enrolments at the end of the year. Mrs Matthews and Mrs Sue Sumner also ran Bush Kindy on Friday mornings for 3-year-olds and Kindy students enrolled in our Kindy class. The Pre-Primary class spent the day in Bush School on Tuesdays with Mrs Sue Sumner and the Year 1/2 class also spent Thursday afternoons in Bush School.

Professional learning for staff included a whole staff First Aid course at the start of the year; the Early Years and Year 3/4 STEM Great Southern Network meetings; regular Professional Learning Community meetings and moderating sessions; professional learning sessions with School Support Consultant, Mrs Jan Flemming, and various other CEWA consultants.

On the ground support was provided throughout the year by CEWA consultants and learning area experts, as well as school support personnel including our School Improvement Advisor, School Support Consultant, Students with Disabilities consultant, and visiting school psychologist.

Assessment

A range of assessments continued to be taken at the start, and throughout the school year, to inform teaching and track student progress. Diagnostic assessments at the start and/or end of the year included the On Entry assessment for PP students, the Observation Survey suite of testing in Literacy, the Mathematics Assessment Interview, the Ballard Westwood mental maths assessment, Brightpath writing, PLD spelling and the Informal Prose Inventory and STAR assessments for reading. System-level assessments included NAPLAN and the Bishops' Religious Literacy Assessment, both for students in Years 3 and 5, and Progressive Achievement Testing (PAT) was completed in Mathematics and Reading at the end of the year.

Reporting to parents included formal reports each semester, learning portfolios, parent-teacher interviews, Individual Education Plans, EAL/D learning plans and informal meetings.

In 2023 a number of PLC meetings were dedicated to the analysis of student data in Literacy and Numeracy, enabling teaching staff to observe trends and patterns, inform planning and to develop and explore questions in relation to student progress. In our commitment to exploring student data and focusing on our teaching and its impact on student learning we reinforce our commitment to helping each student to achieve to their highest potential.

COMMUNITY

St Bernard's is blessed to have an active body of parent, grandparent and community members who help our school in many ways. The Parents and Friends Association is a major supporter of all students and staff at our school and is always active within our school and the wider community. In 2023 P&F executive members were: Libby Rose (chairperson), Marju Rutherford (vice-chairperson), Sophie Macri (secretary), Chloe Noonan (treasurer), all supported by a consistent cohort of willing helpers at meetings and events. The P&F supported our whole school pancake day on Shrove Tuesday at the start of the year, followed by an Easter egg hunt at the end of the Term One. Throughout the year the P&F also supported sporting carnivals, classroom 'wishlist' purchases, the Year 5/6 and 3/4 camps, Year 6 leavers' shirts, Athletics subscriptions, the Dancesport week in Term 2, and the purchase of Literacy and Numeracy resources. Special thanks to our Uniform Shop co-ordinator, Aleigha Dixon-Barclay, who co-ordinated

the uniform shop from her home with great efficiency, but also care and concern. Thank you to the Renew op-shop, which provided the option of second hand uniforms for our families.

The St Bernard's Choir was again made possible with the support of Mrs Kate Clayton and Drama teacher, Mrs Jayne Thorn, and wowed us with their performance at the Graduation and Awards night. The choir also performed for Springhaven residents. The whole school also performed the 'Busking for Change' song to raise money for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation at the end of year Christmas Concert, with parents generously donating more than \$170.

A number of celebrations were held with our community throughout the year, including St Bernard's Feast Day, Grandparents' Day, and the Dancesport Concert. As always, it is wonderful to come together as a school community.

We continued to build links with the local Kojonup community through events and activities such as providing regular articles in the Kojonup News, participation in the Kojonup Show, community and school-based ANZAC Day services, sporting events and carnivals.

Kindy and Pre-Kindy orientation sessions were held in Term 4 and our Little Stars playgroup and Jnr. Stars 3 year old Pre-Kindy finished the year with excellent numbers attending.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Fr Marlon Rey continued as St Bernard's Parish priest in 2023. Religious Education continued to be first and foremost learning area with instruction in the Religious Education units of work, and catechesis, being a priority throughout the year. Two students undertook the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion and one student undertook the Sacrament of Confirmation. These sacramental events included Parent/Student workshops and a retreat for students in the sacramental classes.

Our school community once again participated in the Rosary Rally in October which was led by the St. Bernard's Parish. It was once again a lovely, multi-cultural celebration.

We marked major events in the Church Liturgical calendar with whole school masses and liturgies and we also supported the Catholic Missions and Project Compassion with our fundraising efforts.

The promotion of Make Jesus Real (MJR) behaviours and understandings continued to be a focus in 2023.

SCHOOL GOALS & PRIORITIES 2023

Education

- Establish a process around moderation of student work and standards across all learning areas.
- Extend our Bush School and STEM pedagogy to all classes.

Catholic Identity

- Re-implementation of service ministry across all classrooms and areas of the school.
- Updating FSW program.
- Completing updated St Bernard's prayer book.

Community

- Improve our processes and practices around supporting our growing community of CALD families.
- Trial URStrong program in all classrooms

Stewardship

- Review school climate survey and use the data to celebrate our successes as well as identify areas for improvement.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

School began for our students on Wednesday 31st January 2024 and we welcomed 14 initial enrolments in Jnr. Stars, 12 new Kindy students, and new students in Years 1 and 5, bringing our start of year numbers to 76- (64 if you take out the Kindy students). We welcome 8 new families to the St Bernard's community and hope that they enjoy their time at our beautiful school.

Class and Learning Area teachers and EAs for 2024 are as follows:

Little Stars Playgroup	Mrs Melissa Matthews, Mrs Kaylene Smart (EA)
Jnr. Stars	Mrs Melissa Matthews, Miss Lara Norrish (EA)
K/PP	Mrs Nicole Jones, Mrs Sue Sumner (Bush School Tuesdays) Mrs Nikki Reinke and Miss Lara Norrish (EAs)
Y1/2	Mrs Sharon Venables, Mrs Denise Bowen, Miss Jenna Taplin (EA)
Y3/4	Mrs Teresa Donaldson, Mrs Margie Davies (EA)
Y5/6	Mrs Kirsten Kondonis, Mrs Liz Worthington (EA)
Learning Support EA	Mrs Kaylene Smart (Mondays-Thursdays),
Library	Mrs Sue Sumner (Mondays)
Physical Education	Mrs Peta Marinoni (Fridays)
Auslan	Mrs Peta Marinoni (Wednesdays)
Literacy Co-ordinator	Mrs Sharon Venables
Numeracy Co-ordinator	Mrs Denise Bowen
Visual Arts (S1) & Science (S2)	Mrs Sophie Atkinson (Wednesdays)
Science (S1) & Drama (S2)	Mrs Jayne Thorn (Thursdays)
Enrichment Co-ordinator	Mrs Denise Bowen
EAL/D Co-ordinator	Mrs Bowen

We welcome new staff members Mrs Nicole Jones, Mrs Kirsten Kondonis and Mrs Liz Worthington and wish them well in their time at St Bernard's.

I look forward to working with all members of our school community as we work together to achieve the best outcomes for all our students. My best wishes to the St. Bernard's School and Parish communities for a successful, rewarding and peace-filled year in 2024.

God Bless,

Mrs Sharon Marino
Principal