



ST JOHNS SCHOOL—PRINCIPAL’S SUMMARY 2015

Another wonderful year draws to a close and again the contributions by everyone involved with the school certainly make me proud being a part of our community.

Our Year 6 children are now ready to move onto secondary school and well prepared to face exciting new and challenging experiences. I wish them every success. I also extend my thanks to our 2015 School Captains for their impressive leadership over the year. My thanks to Olivia Nguyen, Lucy Bult, Julian Malavisi and Max Gigliotti.

An important decision this year was to have our children receiving their First Communion at the OLMC Gymnasium. This proved to be a very successful and reverent celebration with the gymnasium space presented beautifully, and clearly reflected the importance of the space as a sacred and special one for our community. There is no doubt that one could clearly feel the love and presence of our Lord.

We congratulate all the First Communicates, the children who received their First Reconciliation, and of course the Year 6 children who received their Confirmation at St Patrick’s Cathedral.

We are mindful of our responsibilities to Social Justice issues. Over the year we have supported the St Vincent’s Winter and Toy Appeals, the Fight Cancer Foundation, National Heart Foundation, Exodus Community and the Good Samaritan Inn.

After several year hiatus, the P.I.C (Partners In Community) re-established itself and certainly has done marvellous work this year in both fund-raising and ‘friend-raising’. The usual events were coordinated, such as, Pancake Tuesday, Grandparent’s Day, Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls, Footy Colours Day amongst others, but the major fund-raising event during the year was the *Winter Glam Cocktail Night* which proved to be a very enjoyable and successful evening.

Much of the work of the PIC this year has been the focused and incredible and sustained work in preparation for the 2016 School Fete to be held on the 5th March. The response from the community has been outstanding and we all look forward to what we hope will be a memorable day for us all next year.

Together with the great assistance from Fundraising Funds we were able to install five quality air-conditioning units. Every classroom is now heated and air-conditioned.

In the academic sphere the school continues to maintain excellent results in both Literacy and Numeracy, with a focus this year on improving our writing. NAPLAN results continue to indicate that we are operating effectively with results in the Year 3 area particularly strong this year. Our Showcase event this year, *“Four Seasons in One Day”* was held at the OLMC Performing Arts Theatre again with wonderful feedback. There are three major performances over two days with every single child having at least one line in the Production.

We are committed to the Australian Primary Schools Mental health Initiative - *Kids Matter* which focuses the wellbeing of our children and have done a great deal of work in this area this year. 2016 will see us implementing Kids Matter fully.

This year proved to be our most successful in Sport. Winning premierships in Football, (for the first time since 2003), Netball B, Basketball but also being grand finalists in Volleyball, Tee-Ball and Netball A.

For the first time ever, we had a boy’s relay team that reached the State Final in Athletics. A fantastic effort by Anthony Caminiti, Patrick Csar, Frankie Paonesa and Josh Hazelton. Anthony also finished third in the Championships in the discus event. I would also like to commend Lucy Bult, a member of the Victorian Team that won the National Netball championships in Perth, Anthony Caminiti, a member of the Victorian Football team which won the National Championships, as well as Olivia Nguyen who competes at the elite level in swimming who specialises in the backstroke and has won numerous medals in the past 12 months and recently breaking the 100m backstroke record by more than half second. Olivia also won the St John’s Sports Person of the year.

Also competing at the highest level were children competing in golf, gymnastics, surf-life saving and Cross Country with Lucy Bult and Rachel attaining outstanding results in this event.

Our School Sports Carnival this year was won by the McCubbin House (Red).

We are committed to developing Sustainability practices in the school which include minimising wastage, encourage walking and riding to school, growing herbs, developing worm farms, having egg-laying hens and after a successful grant of \$10 000, which recognised our commitment to Sustainability, we replaced all our conventional fluorescent tubes with LED tubes which can potentially improve this energy use by up to 68%. We are currently working our way to becoming a Sustainability Certified school.

Linked to our Sustainability objectives, we were delighted to have an International guest speaker, Fernando Spigarelli from the Canadian Climate Reality Project who spoke so eloquently about climate change to our senior children.

A highlight of the year was St John's being selected as one of only 300 schools from across Australia that was allocated a *Gallipoli Oak Seedling*. This seedling was used at our ANZAC Day commemoration this year and has pride of place on the top yard near the flag poles. As a community, we also had a wonderful response by our families attending the Dawn Service, a significant one this year as we commemorated the 100 year Anniversary of the Gallipoli landing.

Closely linked to this, was our participation in the Pozieres French-Australian School Project, where we were able to donate generously to this Project.

Our strong links to OLMC is manifested in many ways but this year we developed a partnership to enhance our music programs with many of our children being taught by instrumental teachers from OLMC. Four of our children are part of the OLMC Training Band and performed at the Melbourne Recital Centre as part of the OLMC Celebration Concert.

Being a part of the school staff, I have the opportunity to celebrate with them on significant moments in their lives. Babies were born to three of our teachers (Clare Jenkinson, Nesrine Kettle, James Egan), Connie Costa became engaged and Stephanie Doure was married recently.

The links with the Parish continue to grow with the school working very closely with the parish this year to promote and support the Parish Stewardship Programme. The links were also supported with the Parish Picnic and Carols Night, and significantly assisted with refreshments following the Anointing of the Sick masses during the year.

The recipient of the annual John Hickey Award, an award that's presented to a student for general excellence across a broad range of criteria was awarded to two students for only the second time since its inception. We congratulate Mairead Csar and Eliza Bannan on their achievement.

My sincere thanks to Fr Mario for his help, wonderful support and leadership.

May Christmas be a joyful and faith-filled day for you all.

I wish you Christmas Peace and a New Year full of great experiences.

Nick Marinelli (Principal)

