

## Mary MacKillop CCPS ACM Principal's Report 2021

It is with a great sense of pride that I present the 2021 Principal's report to the Mary MacKillop CCPS community. It has been another challenging year with the prospect of COVID-19 likely to cause issues for us as it has around the world. However, I'm relieved to say that Western Australia has been very fortunate with the way our government has handled the situation, and we have been lucky to have minimal disruption. I'm not so sure that 2022 will be as straightforward though!

I have been very appreciative of the high level of support the staff, P&F and School Advisory Council members have shown towards one another. There is a very genuine desire amongst our community members to work collaboratively in a supportive manner to help make this a better school for everyone here.

Parish relations have continued to be very positive during the past 12 months and Fr John and Fr Mark have done a wonderful job of working with us in partnership to make our community a better place to be. Once again, I ask you to continue to support Fr John and Fr Mark as they work to make our parish community a welcoming and inclusive place of worship.

In line with our school improvement plan, this year we continued our exciting student leadership programme, which we run in conjunction with Servite College. The programme known as 24:7 Youth Ministry, involves the Year 10 students at Servite supporting our students in Years 3, 4 and 6 as they prepare to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. The Servite students organise and run the retreat days for our students. The Year 5 students had two days of leadership training as well as their sleepover in the hall. This programme then continues into three leadership days in Year 6, which are linked to the social justice teachings and organisations of the Church such as Caritas, Life Link and St Vincent de Paul. This year, this programme finally found its way into the parish, and they have established a youth group which has been a dream of Fr John's for some time. From what I have heard, it has made a positive start and good numbers are turning out.

There have been a number of significant achievements this year in terms of improving the facilities at Mary MacKillop. In line with our School Improvement Plan, the remainder of the administration block finally received the facelift it has badly needed for many years. The staffroom and all internal offices received new carpets, paint, furniture, and a new roof. This has made it a much more welcoming and engaging space to work in and has improved the practicality and quality of our resources. The Pre Primary and Science block also had a colobond roof replace the old tiles which often leaked on rainy days.

Courtesy of a \$30 000 grant from our local member of parliament, Rita Saffioti, we were able to replace the fence at the front of the school with a lovely new garrison style security fence. This was later extended along the driveway we share with the parish. We even got them to fix

the golden gates at the front of the Church. We also replaced the fencing along our driveway in the main car park along with new poles for the banners.

The basketball courts were resurfaced and they also received a new chain wire fence as the old one was rusting and falling apart.

The senior toilet block was refurbished and the students were extremely grateful that their toilets are now a whole lot nicer to use.

For next year, we are once again in a solid financial position where we can continue to upgrade our facilities around the school. 2021 saw the introduction of a new Art programme which was offered to all students from Pre Primary to Year 6. This happened in the old Year 5 Orange room. Over the coming summer holidays, the newly vacated 6 Orange will be transformed into the newly relocated Science room. It will get new vinyl flooring plus a coat of paint. Everything in the current Science room will be transferred to this new location which will free up space in the Pre Primary. By moving the Science room, we can now turn the Pre Primary classes into an architecturally designed early learning space where the two classes get to share three rooms, a bit like the Kindergarten currently does. The middle Pre Primary room will have a brand new kitchen installed as well as new doors and extra toilets which are now compliant with the new guidelines. The rooms will also get new flooring and a coat of paint along with walls being removed to open the space right up. Not only will this be an amazing learning space, but hopefully it will attract more families into our school.

During 2021, the school underwent a cyclic review and I participated in a principal review. Both were conducted by CEWA and I am very happy to say that the outcome from both reviews was very positive. In May 2022, the school will participate in an audit for registration. These occur every 5 years.

On this year's improvement plan, was the goal of engaging students with their learning with contemporary evidence based pedagogies. As such, our Cooperative Learning journey was continued with a coaching programme and SAM Club meetings (Structure a Month). It also sets us up perfectly for the future as we explore aspects of inquiry based learning. Both Kindergarten and Pre Primary classes have started using investigations from the Kathy Walker Early Years programme which has changed the way the classrooms look. The Kindergarten and Pre Primary staff will participate in extra professional development next year so they can bring more to this exciting journey. We are looking at teaming up with other schools who are already successfully implementing elements of this programme. In time, this will be extended into the other classes. This approach to teaching and learning at Mary Mac will help with the capacity building of all teachers in a very positive way. It is also our point of difference which gives parents in the area a choice of teaching styles when choosing schools. Our enrolments have continued to be strong with the majority of year levels being full in 2022.

This year sees the final part of an eight year journey of transitioning from a triple stream school to a double stream. It has been a challenging journey from many points of view, including navigating our finances through uncertain times and the impact this had on staffing

and resourcing. I am pleased to announce that we have managed to come through this challenging time in good shape. Most of these issues have now been resolved and from next year onwards, we will operate as a double stream school. One of the major benefits of this downsizing, is we now have eight extra classrooms to use as we want. This is something most schools could only dream about. We are an extremely well resourced school which offers our students first classes resources and facilities. Our grounds are well maintained and are very attractive.

Another goal from our School Improvement Plan was to collect some data around the concept of student wellness. Last year, we created a wellness centre, which was run by our social worker, Lisa Mueller. It has become a space where Lisa can run workshops on friendship issues and mental health programmes as well as a place for meditation and mindfulness activities. It has been very rewarding to see the excellent programmes that Lisa has organised this year. One of these was a very positive drumming workshop for a number of our students who enjoyed it immensely. It is very rewarding to know that many of our students now actively seek out Lisa's assistance when they are feeling anxious or stressed. Lisa has a wonderful way of working with our students and this program has been an excellent addition to our community. This resource has been so well utilised that we will need to expand it in the future. Three days a week is not enough as the demand for support, especially with the counselling part of the service, is growing all the time. I believe that mental health is one of the most urgent issues we face in schools today.

The educational focus for next year will continue to be the Australian Curriculum, early intervention strategies, extension/enrichment strategies, Co-operative Learning, inquiry based learning and the integration of technology into the classroom. We will also continue supplementing our Religious Education programme by bringing in the Making Jesus Real programme at a more significant level.

The P&F and the school went into a partnership of upgrading the playgrounds around the school which will take around two more years to complete. This year we went halves in a new flying fox and rock bed water play area at the front of the school. A small limestone wall was installed to separate the oval from the nature play areas and mulch was placed in the newly developed play areas, including a new rock pool for the Year 1 and 2 students to access. Over the next couple of years, all fundraising from the P&F will go towards this upgrade which will be very exciting for our students. The next stage of this project will see a shipwreck being built in the Kindergarten and Pre Primary playground. I am hoping this will be completed for the start of next year. Work is due to start as soon as the students leave at the end of this term. The project will cost around \$50 000 which will be evenly shared by the P&F and the school.

I would like to thank the School Advisory Council members for their support this year. We have made some big decisions and I appreciate the way in which everyone comes together in the best interests of our community. In particular, I would like to make special mention of Albert Ferraloro who has served as Board/SAC Chair for the past 5 years and has served for eight years in total. Albert has been with us all the way through the transition and can recall

some scary moments when we thought we were in dire financial trouble. He has been a voice of reason and has helped us make informed decisions which have set us up to be in the space we now enjoy. Albert's youngest child, Marco, completes Year 6 this year and the Ferraloro family leave our community. On behalf of everyone here, I would like to sincerely thank Albert for his support and commitment to our school. Colin Schotte also completes his time here as a parent. However, he has kindly offered to stay on the SAC for another year. Colin's financial guidance has been critical throughout the past nine years he has served on the Board/SAC. I am thrilled that we get to have Colin's wisdom for another year. I also extend my gratitude to any SAC and P&F members who are finishing their terms as well as those who have elected to stay on for next year.

The P&F have again provided valuable resources into all classrooms this year. The P&F have done a great job of helping to build strong and positive relationships in our community as well as providing resources which are always greatly appreciated. The P&F have organised a range of fabulous activities once again this year, including an excellent Read- a -Thon and a Book Fair which combined raised over \$12 000 which went towards books for the Library. I would like to thank our team of Dee Wright, Candice Ladd, Raelene Kerin, Angela Cotellessa and Anita Andrews who did a great job of running a small but successful committee. They managed to help build our community spirit by organising a range of great activities throughout the year. Angela will be stepping down from her role as Secretary and on behalf of everyone, I would like to thank her for her contributions.

I would now like to acknowledge the fantastic staff members at Mary MacKillop. They are a joy to work with and I have certainly appreciated their support this year. To all of you, I say thank you for all of your hard work and dedication.

This year, we say farewell to Vanessa Cooper as she will be taking 12 months leave to focus on other things. She will be greatly missed and I would like to thank her very sincerely for their contributions here at Mary Mac.

Paul Cranley and Jane Landells have both resigned from their positions here to pursue new adventures. I also wish them all the very best for their future endeavours.

Whilst the whole staff has been outstanding this year, I would like to make special mention of Lisa Liebrechts, Jacki Tucker, Sue Haynes, Barb Burton and Jane Coniglio. They have done a huge amount of work behind the scenes to make sure this school runs as well as it does. I thank them also for their counsel and openness to implementing strategies to make Mary MacKillop the best place it possibly can be.

Laurie Bechelli