

Our Lady Help of Christians  
Catholic Primary School  
Epping

16th November 2009

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2009</b> <b>PARENTS AND FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b></p>
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As Principal of Our Lady Help of Christians I present this report to the Parents and Friends (P&F) of the School.

2009 has been a rewarding year as the school community has been challenged to move forward in many areas. Contract renewal for the Principal and Assistant Principal was undertaken and this consultative process resulted in Louise and I being offered new four year contracts. This has provided an opportunity for the leadership team, with the inclusion of Tracey Dawson Religious Education Coordinator, to complete the final year of the Strategic Management Plan and to begin planning for the future strategic direction beyond 2010.

I would firstly like to acknowledge the important role that the staff at OLHC have in the formation of each and every child at this Catholic school. The dedicated and professional teachers have worked tirelessly through the year to contribute to the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of the students in their care. I am a privileged Principal to work with such a committed and dedicated group of teachers who have the needs of the children as the most important task that they undertake here at OLHC.

To the Parents and Friends Executive under the leadership of Robert Manning (President) and Richard Zalm (Vice President) I thank you for your continued support and commitment to the school.

I would like to make special mention of Robert Manning who will be stepping down as Parents and Friends President having completed his three year term. Robert has been instrumental in moving the school forward and provided strong leadership as P&F President. I have very much enjoyed working with Robert and on behalf of the school community I congratulate and thank him for all that he has done for the school.

Also, to Angela Doherty, who will be moving overseas and so vacating the position of P&F Secretary. Angela brings much enthusiasm and determination to the role and the school thanks her for all that she has done in her time at OLHC.

The school could not function without the generous support of the parent community. The class parents; canteen coordinators and helpers; uniform shop coordinators; sacramental program team leaders; family mass assistants; parent helpers in the classrooms; Book Club coordinator; Library helpers; Epping Twilight Markets committee and all parents who have contributed in any way to building a strong positive community at OLHC deserve our gratitude for all that they have done.

In my role as Principal I have been strongly supported by the leadership team of Louise McDonald and Tracey Dawson. Louise and Tracey are committed and professional leaders who each and every day work for the good of the school community. Their important role in the school is greatly appreciated and I know that I could not carry out my vocation without their support.

The important role of the support staff needs to be recognised also. Leanne Speechley and Leigh Turner are the two people who I rely heavily on and work closely with on a daily basis in the Office. As a school community we thank both Leanne and Leigh for their daily contribution in many ways to OLHC.

The following is a report on the key achievements of the school as we have worked together as a school community to implement the annual goals for 2009.

### **CATHOLIC LIFE AND MISSION**

**Our Mission is known, celebrated and informs all that we do.**

- Student learning in Religious Education has been enhanced by the continued development of teaching strategies and the purchase of resources to support the religious education units.
- Building a unified “Epping Carlingford” Catholic parish through combined school events with St. Gerard’s Carlingford. This included the annual combined school Mass.
- In the final week of this term staff will be participating in a spirituality and faith development day focusing on the Mercy heritage and their role in the school’s history and the values that are still promoted today.

- Students and Parents continued to celebrate in the liturgical life of the school and Parish by participating in class masses, whole school masses, Parish family masses, sacramental programs and liturgies.
- Opportunities were provided for the students to develop a shared understanding of Catholic Discipleship through a social justice focus:
  - Whole school events –
    - Fund raising for Catholic Missions
    - St Vincent De Paul hampers

### **CURRICULUM TEACHING AND LEARNING**

#### **A dynamic, stimulating curriculum meets students' learning needs.**

- Teachers were given the opportunity for professional development in the use of interactive whiteboard technology. Teachers facilitated workshops on the use of this technology to support teaching and learning.
- Literacy continued to be a focus across Kindergarten to Year 6.
- Literacy support was provided for all classes, with a focus on Kindergarten, Years 1 and 2. The Literacy Support Teacher, Learning Support Teacher and Learning Support Assistant worked in classes to meet the needs of the students.
- Professional learning in the area of numeracy was a focus. There was a staff development day on teaching mathematics K-6. Funds have been spent to purchase more mathematics resources. The focus on numeracy will continue next year in 2010.
- The implementation of the Quality Teaching Framework (QTF) continued in the Key Learning Area of HSIE. This provided an opportunity for teachers to base their teaching on the QTF to improve student outcomes.
- All students participated in the swimming skills program at Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre.
- Students were once again involved in the Maths Olympiad and Australasian Schools competitions.

#### **National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)**

OLHC performed exceptionally well in all areas and it was pleasing to note that OLHC had the highest growth rate from Year 3 to Year 5 for Numeracy and the seventh highest for Literacy across the 47 primary schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay.

Students in Year 3 and Year 5 completed the **NAPLAN** Tests and achieved the following results:

In Year 5 **Literacy 100%** of the children were placed in the **top three bands** compared to 64% of the state.

In Year 5 **Numeracy 84%** of the children were placed in the **top three bands** compared to 59% of the state.

In Year 3 **Literacy 92%** of the children were placed in the **top three bands** compared to 77% of the state.

In Year 3 **Numeracy 96%** of the children were placed in the **top three bands** compared to 65% of the state.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

**Students are valued and difference is respected and celebrated  
Parents are integral to the life of the school community**

- Students have continued to be recognised at assemblies with merit certificates, Principal awards and class awards.
- The 'Mentoring Project' was continued in Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2). Students from Marist College Eastwood and Arden Anglican School acted as mentors assisting with literacy activities.
- Support for families with specific needs within our community continued.

The "Dads in the Classroom" project has continued throughout the year.

- A review of the project was undertaken with the dads and the teaching staff. A decision was made to link the program more closely with literacy activities but still provide a 'Fitness Day' activity which is planned where the dads are involved in outdoor activities. Of course dads continue to work in the classrooms at other times as well as supporting the school in a number of practical ways.
- Other opportunities for involvement by parents have included; the welcome BBQ at the beginning of the year, Stage Two excursion to the Rocks, Stage One visit to the Ryde School House, Kindergartens visit to the city and the Athletics and Swimming Carnivals.
- Parent education nights were held on 'Literacy in K-2 and the role of fathers in their child's education.'

## **STEWARDSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- The school leadership team in consultation with the Parents and Friends continue to strive to implement the agreed priority areas for resource acquisition.
- Through the generous support of the P&F six laptops and a new computer trolley were purchased; the computers in Year 3 and 4 were replaced; two interactive whiteboards were installed into Kindergarten and the Library, a trophy cabinet for the front foyer was purchased, funds for school promotion and further teaching resources and library books were purchased. There is an ongoing need to ensure that our children have the best possible resources to assist their learning.
- The school received a huge funding boost with the 'Building the Education Revolution' money from the Federal Government. This money was received in two parts:

### **Part 1 – PRIDE Refurbishment Funds**

The \$75,000.00 received was used to complete the following:

- Painting of the school both interior and exterior
- Installation of a new PA system
- Installation of a new sound system in the Hall
- Installation of new double doors in Kindergarten, Year 1, Year 2 and the multi purpose room.
- Upgrade part of the wireless access points
- Relocation of a data projector and screen in the Hall

### **Part 2 – Primary Schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (P21) Funds**

The \$850,000.00 has been allocated for the following projects:

- Refurbishment of the Hall
- Installation of a new outdoor covered area (COLA)
- Development of an outdoor learning area garden
- Installation of shelving in the storage area
- Levelling playground areas and the basketball court
- Upgrading of gates on the exterior of the school property

All the proposed works should be completed by the middle of next year.

## **OTHER EVENTS**

There were other significant events that occurred during 2009:

### **Open Day**

This event was held during Catholic Schools Week in March this year. Many families visited the school as open day provided an opportunity for people in the wider community to gain an insight to this wonderful Catholic school.

### **Grandparents Day**

This event was introduced to the school year and we had over 100 grandparents / honourable substitutes as guests of our school for the morning. The visitors were entertained by the children and they also had an opportunity to visit the classrooms and observe the wonderful work of the children at OLHC.

### **Walkathon**

This event saw over \$8,000.00 raised by the children for new technology and mathematics resources. The children really got behind the event and through the generosity of their sponsors the school was able to reach this amazing total.

## **GOALS FOR 2010**

### **Enrolments**

The whole school community needs to work hard to increase enrolments. Support needs to be given to the open day and promotion of the school within the wider community.

### **Numeracy Development**

The current Strategic Management Plan has identified Numeracy development K-6. In 2009 a Numeracy Policy and a Numeracy Plan was developed; a staff development day was held identifying teaching techniques in numeracy and money was spent on purchasing mathematical resources. This focus on numeracy will continue in 2010.

### **Gifted and Talented Education**

The current Strategic Management Plan has also identified the need for a focus on Gifted and Talented Education. A plan of direction has been discussed with the Catholic Schools Office Education Officer for Gifted and Talented and staff have begun working on meeting the needs of the gifted and talented children in our school.

## **2011 Strategic Plan**

Work will begin on the next Strategic Management Plan as the current plan is due to finish at the end of next year. Staff, parents, children, clergy and parish will be consulted as the development of the 2011 Strategic Management Plan is undertaken.

Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Primary School is such a unique place of learning where difference is accepted and a sense of welcome and belonging is promoted. The positive culture that exists here is because home and school work so closely together and it is through this partnership that each and every child at the school feels valued and a part of the school community.