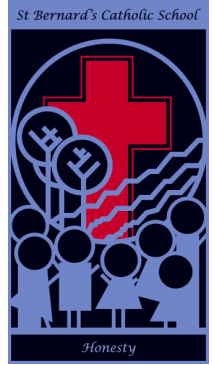


ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Monday 15th August

Dear Parents and Carers

I write to update you on the progress of the St Bernard's Catholic School Improvement Plan. As you are aware from newsletters and the many posters across the school there are three goals for 2011. As the half way point in the school year has recently passed, it is timely to check in on our progress. This check in will assist staff members to deeply reflect on the progress and the parent community can provide insights into how well our daily practices are aligned to the goals. The Parent Education Team has already met on several occasions and discussed this progress.

Goal 1: Building the capacity of all teachers to engage all students more fully in Religious Education lessons whilst nurturing a discipleship response.

Major indicators of progress and /or achievement include:

- Six staff members studying towards a Masters Degree in Religious Education or Theology (2 already hold)
- Facilitation of the four Roman Missal workshops; an invitation was extended to parents and parishioners
- CSO Education Officer , Mr Bernard Cumming, has mentored all teachers in programme development
- Programming for Religious Education deemed commendable in the Tier 1 process
- Outstanding results in the Year 6 Religious Education Test; well above Diocesan average with 2 High Distinctions, 13 Distinctions and 12 Credits awarded
- Successful integration of RE and ICLT with all students Years 3-6 competent users of new technologies (e.g. Voki, Filp cameras, Ipads)
- Andrew Chinn engaged to facilitate examples of how religious music can be used to educate
- Vibrancy of liturgies – fuller participation of students (e.g. weekend Class Masses, liturgical movements)
- Parents model discipleship response through their interactions and willingness to support school initiatives (e.g. volunteering, participation in Masses and attendance at weekly assemblies, completing surveys etc)
- Staff unpacking the Mercy charism to deepen their understanding of the foundations of St Bernard's

Future Direction: A **staff Spirituality Day will be held on the 23rd September** (originally planned for October but amended due to a change on the Catholic Schools Office calendar). The focus of the day will be the history and tradition of the Mercy Sisters who founded St Bernard's Catholic School. This day is a designated pupil free day. Mrs Richards (REC) is also working with CSO representatives to design a **parent prayer program**.

Goal 2: To continue the successful implementation of the Positive Behaviours for Learning framework.

Major indicators of progress and /or achievement include:

- PBL posters displayed across the school
- An active PBL Team; membership includes parent representation
- All staff members practising framework in class and playground
- Award system aligned to the framework, including the use of common language
- Data gathering and analysis used to promote informed discussion at PBL meetings and staff meetings
- Satisfaction Survey indicated that 100% of students know and understand the rules
- Class surveys around bullying and conflict strongly indicate that students at St Bernard's feel safe
- Meditation initiative involving two parent facilitators and designed for children, parents and staff
- Disseminating information regularly about the importance of reclaiming 'stillness' as a factor in building resilience; this initiative encouraged by Leadership Team and supported by staff in classrooms.

Future Direction: Involvement in and strong commitment to embedding the KidsMatter framework across the school to ensure proactively addressing the mental health of all community members.

Goal 3: Displaying significant learning gains for all students in Literacy and Numeracy:

Some of the indicators of progress and /or achievement include:

- Professional Learning program for Years K-2, drawing on the expertise of CSO Education Officers Sue Low and Jane Denny, across the latter half of 2010 -2011
- Outstanding results in the UNSW Tests for Spelling and Writing (2 High Distinctions)
- Running Records meetings twice per term to discuss and analyse reading progress of students K-2
- Individual learning styles supported through the use of IT within classrooms/ Library (e.g. Voki's, e-see)
- Examples of student's work published in the weekly newsletter and/ or showcased during assembly
- Professional Learning programme for K-6, drawing on the expertise of CSO Education Officer Bianca Whitney to lead learning in Mathematics
- All staff members supported to participate in external professional learning with a view to facilitating staff sessions (e.g. Miss Pascoe and Mrs Tod leading 'Writing Criteria'; Mr McNee leading Spelling; Mrs Neems, Mrs Tomsett and Mrs Fenning leading discussion around catering to the gifted and talented etc)
- 'Seeking Excellence' , Thinking Thursday and Think Tank initiatives designed to lift the profile of Mathematics and enable all students to experience success
- All stage groups meeting regularly (during Release from Face to Face, lunchtimes and staff meetings) using a carefully constructed agenda focused on lifting Numeracy gains for all students
- Planned activities for National Literacy and Numeracy Week with a focus on playing games with an educational focus while encouraging children to learn and spend time as a family unit
- Staff working towards greater competency in administering the Clinical Interview and a deepened understanding of Growth Points (as explained in the Parent Education Team meeting in Term 1)
- Staff setting targets and milestones around formal assessments in English and Mathematics (e.g. PATMaths, PATSPG, South Australia Spelling test etc). Staff becoming more competent in analysing student's data and pin-pointing need and designing explicit teaching to assist student's growth

Future Direction: A **Staff Development Day will be held on Friday 14th October** (first Friday of Term 4) which is part of the Diocesan initiative to enable and empower teachers to become even more competent in leading learning in classrooms. **Next week's Book Week Parade** involves dressing as a Book Character from a book set in another country. This event will involve students resourcing books from other countries and sharing their knowledge with their peers. The **activities planned for National Literacy and Numeracy Week** aim to draw parents into classrooms to explore in a structured and non threatening way how to use fun games to promote learning at home.

Of course, none of the above happens without close collaboration between school and the home so I sincerely urge you to support your child's learning through your communication with his/ her teacher. You are encouraged to be your child's advocate, assisting their growth as independent, resilient and resourceful learners who reach their individual potential.

In closing, I appreciate that there can be difficulty in finding care for your child/ren on Pupil Free Days (23rd September and 14th October). If you anticipate that you will experience undue angst on either of the above stated staff development days, please email the Office at sbb@dbb.catholic.edu.au or phone me on 9456 2104.

Yours sincerely

Luanna Fletcher

Principal