Companions on the Journey

Annual General Meeting of St Andrew’s School Board

2009 Principal’s Report to the School Community

St Andrew’s is a school community with supportive parents appreciative of the talented staff who provide your children with rich and varied educational opportunities.

‘The Year in Review’ document attached, provides the school community with a snapshot of the wide variety of activities that took place at St Andrew’s in 2009. These range from our sacramental and ‘Making Jesus Real’ programmes, to the Lenten Rainbow Line, Walk to School Safety Day, Chess Club and instrumental programme, sporting events, Musica Viva and various appeals. I suggest you read ‘The Year in Review’ to discover the depth of opportunity that the children experienced.

Literacy continues to be a focus area, with the Reading Recovery Programme being extended in 2009 and support staff being increased in Junior Primary with the goal that all children at risk receive the support needed so that ‘catch up’ by the end of Year 2 and require little support in middle and upper primary. Our literacy results in the 2009 NAPLAN would indicate that this goal is being achieved.

Our focus on Mathematics is based on our results on the WALNA and NAPLAN assessments that the children sit in Years 3, 5 & 7. While these assessments are ‘on-off’ events they do support what was an identified weakness in maths across the school. Many children had a poor attitude towards maths and this was reflected in their class assessments. With the input of additional staff into middle and upper primary in 2009 and beyond and the increase in resources in this area, we are already seeing an upward trend in our maths results associated with the more positive attitudes that children are displaying and the improved skills they are developing.

Our sporting achievements have been many this year and we continue to experience joy through our arts programmes. Science will become a focus this year as we move towards a National Curriculum in English, Maths, Science and History. JETS and CHEKS provide opportunities for extension for high achieving children from Preprimary to Year 6. The extension programme includes ICAS competitions and TOM.

2009 proved to be a year of surprises with considerable unexpected funding being made available to schools by the Australian Government for resourcing and building. We received $192,000 for upgrading and maintaining our school and $3,000,000 to build a community hall. This consumed much of the School Board’s time during the year and we look forward to a completed building on site towards the end of 2010. The hall will be used by the school and community alike and will provide us with additional space to expand existing school programmes plus a venue for assemblies and concerts.
We sadly farewelled Father Phillip Perreau from our school community and parish, recognising his role in the development of our school and in particular the sacramental programme in its present form, parish based, school supported and family focussed. We welcome Father Andrew Albis to our community and know we will build a relationship with him that will be a positive experience for us all.

Our Environmental, Pastoral Care and Curriculum committees supported a number of programmes during the year, the most obvious of which was the tree planting beyond the courts. We faced some challenges as the water reticulation was not adequate for the needs of the seedlings but in 2010, this area will be made more sustainable and seating and shade structures are planned for the area to make it more attractive for children to spend time in. Our garden of reflection will also be constructed in 2010.

And so to 2010.

- We will continue our educational focus on literacy and numeracy and develop your children’s ‘thinking skills’ through explicit teaching of a variety of strategies that develop their innate abilities.
- We will develop children’s resiliency and personal safety through the ‘Protective Behaviours’ and ‘Friendly Schools and Families’ programmes.
- We will provide a variety of educational experiences that support our educational goals, but not at the expense of our core foci of literacy and numeracy.
- We will continue to develop caring and concerned citizens through our Religious Education units of work and the ‘Making Jesus Real’ programme.

I wish to thank the School Board members for their contribution to the school through their membership on the Board and in particular, Mr Sean Higgins who resigns his position as Treasurer on the Board after four years service to the school. I also wish to thank the parent body for their support of school and the P & F for their on going work to provide social activities for the community and fundraising for additional resources for your children. I would finally like to thank the staff for their dedicated and enthusiastic approach to the education of your children.

God bless you.
Eileen Climo
Principal

December 2009