As I reflect on the past twelve months I realise that despite our best intentions, life is growing busier and schools have to work very hard to ensure that the focus of our work remains on education. We are inundated with programmes, incursions and excursions, workshops, health and safety initiatives and promotions, many of which have great merit, but are not necessarily the core business of a school. This year, your children have enjoyed a selection of these activities, those that we believe support our educational programme and provide maximum opportunities for the development of children. They include participation in a variety of sporting events, arts incursions and the Performing Arts Festival, Edgym, Asthma Awareness and Waterwise activities, Australia’s Biggest Morning Tea and school development projects such as the Vege garden and our treed area.

Several events from the school calendar for 2011 need to be highlighted. Our Community Hall Opening was a wonderful event, and we are delighted to have the use of this facility funded by the Australian Government under the Building Education Revolution programme. We celebrated NAIDOC week in style with every child being involved in activities and presentations to advance their understanding of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Fathers’ Day breakfast continues to be extremely well supported as Dads and Grandads join with their children and grandchildren in a hearty breakfast. For many Dads, this is one of the few opportunities they have to visit the school and it is much appreciated by their children and our staff, who organise and prepare this breakfast. The Book Week assembly was an exciting event – highlighted by Mrs Graffin jumping out of a box and dancing around the Hall and Mr Smith bravely allowing his class to dress him in a toga. We celebrate St Andrew’s Day each year, and tomorrow will be no different with Mass, buddy activities and kite flying being on the programme.

We thank our parents for their involvement in the school at a Morning Tea following the St Andrew’s Day Mass – parents who have attended camp, gone on excursions, helped in the canteen and on class rosters to name but a few. Many families have also supported the school through P & F activities this year, and have received credits towards the P & F levy for doing so. This programme will be expanded in 2012 with more activities meeting the criteria for credits. I would like to thank the active members of the P & F for their work this year in providing community events including the Welcome to St Andrew’s night, the school disco and the Easter raffle. Our community continues to support of our chosen charities – St Vinnies, Lifelink, Mission Australia and Project Compassion. I continue to be amazed at the generosity of our school community and thank you for this.
Literacy and numeracy have been, and remain, our key focus areas. We review the assessment data that we have from PIPS, NAPLAN, PAT tests and the Observation Survey to make sure that identified areas of need are being addressed. With the implementation of the Australian Curriculum well under way in English and Mathematics, and new standards of reporting on an A to E scale, teachers have spent much time this year familiarising themselves with the changes from an outcomes based curriculum to a more syllabus based, prescriptive curriculum. In 2012, we are returning to the use of a text book for spelling and mathematics, both of which support the Australian Curriculum requirements. Student learning continues to be supported by programmes such as Reading Recovery, EMU, JETS and CHEKS which assist the development of both students at education risk and those in need of extension. The scarecrow created by the Yr 2 CHEKS children was great hit this year and our TOM team performed creditably at the State competition. Our instrumental programme continues to grow and I thank all our tutors for their enthusiasm and encouragement of our students.

National Standards in Early Childhood need to be fully implemented from January 2012 as does the Early Years Learning Framework - *Belonging, Being, Becoming*. This has meant changes to the current Kindergarten programme in particular and has resulted in the Board deciding to have three Kindy groups of 20 in 2012, rather than two groups of 30. Staff and parents are very happy with this arrangement and a second classroom is being set up to support this change. From 2013, Kindy will be funded for 15 hours a week by the Australian Government, instead of the current 11 hours a week.

We have had several changes of staff during the year, as staff members take parental leave for the births of their babies. When changes of staff members occur, we work hard to ensure that we maintain high quality staff members and that the impact of the change is minimised for children. Given the ages and gender of our staff, families can expect staff changes during a school year for some time to come. Our Seasons for Growth programme run by Sister Wendy, our dedicated and much needed pastoral care worker, was accessed by many families this year, and a social skills programme implemented by Mrs Sullivan has provided further assistance to children who struggle in social settings or making friends. These complement the Making Jesus Real programme, which is the basis of our behaviour management and anti bullying programme.

We continue to develop our links with the parish and Father Andrew and this year welcomed Father Tom to our community. He is assisting Father Andrew in our very extensive parish. Our sacramental programme which is parish based
includes St Andrew's, Irene Mac, Brighton Catholic PS and the Afterschool Programme and is a major focus in our Religious Education programme.

The five year review cycle of our school continues through the Quality Catholic Schools Review and Improvement Framework with the areas for review in 2011 being: Vision and Mission, Learning Environments, Engagement with Families and Students with Special Needs. There are 24 components for review with 4 or 5 being covered each year under five guiding principles:

- The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and staff
- The quality of and organisation is determined by its willingness and capacity to learn
- An organisation is made up of conversations and its quality can be gauged by the strength of those conversations
- The map is not the territory (school improvement needs to be sensitive to the initial conditions of the school itself - not mandated externally)
- Trust and enlightenment are the key nutrients (honest reflection / broad leadership)

I thank all parents and staff who have been, and continue to be involved in this review process which will only improve the educational outcomes for children of St Andrew's.

In conclusion I would like to thank the Board members for their commitment to St Andrew's and for their support of me in my role as Principal of this vibrant community.

Eileen Climo
Principal
November 2011