

**PRINCIPAL REPORT TO STMCPS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.**

**NOVEMBER 23 2015**

Saint Thomas More Catholic Primary School has completed another most constructive and successful year. With full support and involvement of all staff, parents, students and community, we have worked collaboratively to continue to offer many wonderful and meaningful learning experiences to the students of our school. A feature of our school is the support we receive from our parish, with our goal to see the Parish and the school part of the one community. People who visit our school express amazement at the facilities, environment and resources we have. If they had time to meet our students, I am sure that they would be even more impressed.

I would also like to acknowledge the wonderful support offered to the school by our Parents and Friends Association. We have a dedicated and committed group of parents who have the best interest of the school, and the education of their children at heart. We are afforded many extras through the work of the P&F. We are extremely well resourced as a school, with teachers and students never having to go without. Many of the little extras that the P&F provide add value to the educational experience provided by the school. The staff, students and I are well aware of the work done by the Parents and Friends. I Thank you all for your support and would like to especially thank Beth Kiernan, Jude Lentjes, Aoife Cosby, Lucy Scott and all classroom representatives on the P & F, all members of the various committees on the P&F for their support. We look forward to continuing to work together with our parent body in 2016. Thank you to Sandra Newland Gleeson for taking on the role of Fair Coordinator for 2016.

The School has continued to work through the Catholic Education Office's Quality Catholic Schooling Process whereby staff determine ratings for certain areas and come up with a plan to improve in these areas as a school. The component areas that we focused on this year were; Pastoral Care of Students, Effective Pedagogical Practices and Integrating Catholic Life and Faith. All of these received a positive rating and several recommendations made as to how we can improve these areas have been made. As part of our end of year whole school planning, the staff will work on determining the QCS areas to work on in 2016, that align with our annual improvement plan and strategic plan. The 2016 Annual Improvement plan will be discussed at the Parent Information Sessions to be held in early 2016.

The school, as a whole, achieved excellent results in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy this year. Across year 3 and year 5, we had very close to 100% of children above the National Minimum Standards in all areas. We were very close in all areas to the National Mean, slightly above in some areas, slightly below in others. We are exploring this data as a staff to look for areas we can continue to improve upon, not to get better NAPLAN results, but to better the education of the students. We continue to strive for a culture of continual improvement. Part of our school focus for next year will be for all staff to continue to lift their expectations as to what all children can achieve. We will also be continuing our focus on consistent approaches to teaching and learning across the school and looking at lifting our achievement across all levels, but especially in the K – 2 years. We will again be looking to focus more as a whole staff on the K-2 area and the 3-6 area. We have begun this year with the writing of the School Quality Improvement Plan and Early Childhood Philosophy, in line with the National Quality Standards. Key members of staff have also worked across the last 6 months on developing, writing and preparing for the implementation in 2016 of a whole school consistent approach to the teaching of literacy. The K -2 areas have been completed and are ready for whole staff input and the 3 -6 year levels will be worked on between now and the end of the year and early in 2016. We will also be looking in 2016 to explore ways of staff being more collaborative in our key teaching subject areas such as Maths and English, and then as whole school teaching group, where we use the most up to date student data to drive our teaching and learning program.

***NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY.***  
**2015 NAPLAN DATA (myschool website)**

**YEAR 3 201**

<b>NAPLAN TEST AREA</b>	<b>STMCPs MEAN</b>	<b>NATIONAL MEAN</b>
READING	419.6	425.8
WRITING	406.4	416.3
SPELLING	394.8	409.2
PUNCTUATION & GRAMMAR	435	432.7
NUMERACY	391.6	432.7

## YEAR 5 2015

NAPLAN TEST AREA	STM CPS MEAN	NATIONAL MEAN
READING	479.9	498.2
WRITING	493.2	478.1
SPELLING	521.6	498.1
PUNCTUATION & GRAMMAR	485.1	503.8
NUMERACY	477	492.3

### Year 3

97 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Reading

97 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Writing

100 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Spelling

100 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Grammar and Punctuation

97 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Numeracy

### Year 5

94 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Reading

100 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Writing

100 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Spelling

100 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Grammar and Punctuation

94 % of students were at or above the minimum standard in Numeracy

The Kids Matter program was introduced this year and has seen some interesting developments over the year. The surveys completed earlier in the year by the staff, parents and students gave us some very good information as to where we should be looking to focus our energies as far as the Mental Health of our community is concerned. Out of this, the BUZ Program eventuated, with all classes from year 1 – 6 participating in programs delivered by NurtureWorks aimed at developing our children's social and emotional skills. The school board were paramount in allowing this to happen through releasing funds to pay for the programs. These have been included in the 2016 budget, and will continue, adding to the skills tool belt the children started with this year. Some other highlights of the year were the Performing Arts Evening, the Athletics and Swimming Carnivals, incursions, the recent school camp to Rottnest for year 6 and year 5's to Fremantle, and of course, our Sacramental program, which has already been mentioned.

The School Leadership Group, including the School Board are continuing to explore ways in which we can continue to offer effective, enjoyable and relevant learning programs into the school, into the future. We are confident that we will be able to maintain the current specialist programs, Music, Art, IT, Phys Ed, Dance and Drama and LOTE, that many single stream schools simply do not have operating with specialist staff.

We are also about to include in the school annual improvement plan for 2016 priorities of; improving the way we engage with our school community, completion of the school core values, updates in our Behaviour Management and school bullying policies and generally getting our message of all the good things going on here at STMCPs to not only our school community, but to the wider community as well.

Father Mars, our Parish Priest, has continued his role as a very visible reminder of the person of Jesus to all our students. He is very much a part of our staff, and his genuine love of the children adds to the respect, and the value that children place on him, and also the church itself. His support, guidance and ministry to the staff and students is very much appreciated. Thank you Fr for your wonderful support of our school and what we are trying to achieve in being a truly authentic Catholic School.

Our Sacramental Program was once again a big success with 18 children making their first Reconciliation, and 11 children receiving the Sacrament of Eucharist this year. Our Confirmation Mass, where 21 students were welcomed into the church as adults was another of the highlights of the Year for the school, along with the Reconciliation and First Holy Communion Celebrations.

A big Thank you to Michael O'Brien the Assistant Principal. Michael continues to develop as a leader and his wisdom, encouragement and support have added immensely to the leadership of the school. Michael coordinates the excellent Religious Education Program within the school, and has represented our school on the Parish council as well. As part of his role Michael also is in charge of many of the administration duties within the school. As you would all be aware, Mike has a teaching load of 2 days per week, in which he teaches and coordinates the Physical Education Program. We have had very successful carnivals this year, both swimming and athletics, and many other events that Mike has coordinated. Mike has done a great job in his leadership role, and in the role of the teacher. Thanks Mike.

We all know that the children are the most important people in a Catholic School. However it is clear that committed, enthusiastic and professional staff are required to develop the gifts of the students, and the school community as a whole.

This year we farewell three of our members of staff.

Mrs Meyer farewells us after being on board here at STM CPS for the year as our Library Teacher. Amie has combined the role of being here for one day per week, 2 days per week at OLC Dunsborough and 2 days per week as the Education Consultant for Computer West in Busselton. Amie has provided a fantastic library program, and some IT support across the school this year. One of the highlights of the school year, and for her was the recent Bookfair in which the school sold in excess of \$2000 worth of books, allowing us a commission of over \$600 to go towards new books for our library. Thank you Amie, and we look forward to seeing you again in your role with Computer West with some IT Professional Learning.

Mrs Gravett leaves us after 7 years of outstanding service and contributions to our school, in several different and varied roles. Beck has shared many of her gifts with us at Saint Thomas More. The staff, parents and especially the students will all be sad to see you go Beck, especially those who have been looking forward to you teaching them next year. You have brought a tremendous deal of professionalism, commitment to our school, and your genuine love of the children is something that can be contagious. We all wish you all the best as you leave us and in your new role at St Peters School in Bedford. We will all be keen to keep in contact with you and to perhaps work in conjunction with you and your new class in some way into the future.

Mrs Gail Warren has decided that after over 40 years working in education across Australia, that she would like to retire. I do not have the words to express what Gail has done for so many over so long. Gail has worked at St Thomas More for 23 years in the junior primary area. Gail has provided a wonderful learning program over many years here at St Thomas More and the legacy of her work will continue for many years to come. Her inspiring program and the mark she has left on so many children due to this is immeasurable. Gail, we Thank you for all you have brought to our school community over many years, you will be greatly missed, however, you will certainly be highly sought after for relief work as this becomes available. We will formally recognise, celebrate and farewell Mrs Warren, and Mrs Gravett and Mrs Meyer as part of our end of year formalities.

Thank you on behalf of our school community Gail, Beck and Amie and we all wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

We have appointed one new staff member for next year and finalizing one more. As soon as this process is complete, I will announce the 2016 staffing to the school community.

I would also like to Thank and acknowledge the staff that are staying with us for their efforts this year. I have been extremely fortunate as Principal to have such talented, passionate and devoted people surrounding me. I am appreciative of the all of the work that our staff contribute to our school, and our community, both inside and outside the classroom. The School Spirit that we have at Saint Thomas More is a reward in itself, and would be nothing without the whole staff approach that we take to the education of the whole child. I thank you all for your support and the wonderful work you all do with the children always being our first and most important priority.

Our School Board continues to provide outstanding leadership and development for the school. I would personally like to thank the school board of Liam Smith, Carolyn Homes, Sharyn Bucat, Kirstie Kitis, Beth Kiernan, Carla Gillmore, Mike O'Brien, Karien Rollinger and Father Mars for their efforts this year, and their support and guidance offered to me in my Principalship. Without people like this our school simply would not function, let alone be the great place that it is today. The unique learning and teaching environment that is present in our school doesn't just happen. It is due to the commitment, support and outstanding work provided by the school board.

A special Thank you to Carolyn Homes who has been a school board member for the past **5 years**. Carolyn has decided that this will be her last as a member of our school board. She has brought great knowledge, a sense of calm, an experienced parent voice and has been a great presence on our school board. She can be very proud of the time she has spent on the school board and all that the school has achieved during this time.

As we complete the year we are moving another wonderful group of students to MacKillop Catholic College, Margaret River Senior High and other schools confident that the good name of St Thomas More will continue to be realised in these graduating students. The feedback from both main feeder high-schools has been extremely positive over the years. This gives us the confidence here at St Thomas More to keep delivering the quality programs we do.

Finally, to all parents, for their support and involvement in the school, thank you very much. As I have previously mentioned we are very fortunate at Saint Thomas More to have such dedicated and positive support from our parent body. I would also like to especially thank your children, for their many unique and special gifts they bring and share in our school.

Thank you.