



PRINCIPAL REPORT TO
St THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
COMMUNITY MEETING
NOVEMBER 2016



St Thomas More
Catholic Primary
School
Vision Statement

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a community growing together in faith where children are offered opportunities to know and to love Jesus, to seek wisdom and to develop respect for the rights and dignity of all.

It is with pleasure that I present my Principals Report for 2016. And yes, once again, this year has passed very quickly. There have been many achievements this year at St Thomas More and these accomplishments have only been made possible by having outstanding staff, assisted by a supportive parent body and excellent students.

As a school we are committed to providing excellence in learning through the provision of best practice in curriculum, differentiated and data informed and influenced learning programmes and a continued commitment to school improvement. Our Annual School Improvement Plan targets the areas of LEARNING, ENGAGEMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY and DISCIPLINESHIP. We have made improvements in these areas and can be well pleased with the improvement gained through this strategic plan.

Our Learning Goal this year focussed upon the Future Direction of IT within the school and deciding upon a platform for the future of IT within the school. We have made this decision, which will be the Mac platform for the students. Based on information from the recent IT survey, we will be working with parents in year 5 and 6 next year to provide the best solution to the Technology Education at the school, and also with the year 3 and 4 parents to drive the implementation of a 1:1 laptop program in 2018 for students in year 4 and 5.

The Engagement focus has been on improving open communication and transparent decision making processes. The school has continued to work on these on many levels, staff, student, parent, School Board, P&F. The belief of the school board and the staff is that we have made many improvements across all of these areas this year.

A Consistent Approach to testing has been the focus in the area of Stewardship. The school has worked this year with regard to the testing and assessments that take place, where the data/results are stored, and what and how the data will be used to drive the curriculum direction of the school. We have just completed the Online Progressive Achievement Tests, which are standardised tests, and the school has achieved excellent results in comparison with other students who have completed these reliable standardised tests. We will use this information to determine the future direction of the school teaching and learning program.

Our goal with regard to discipleship has been to continue to develop the positive relationship between the school and our parish. The School has been working on ways that we can try to have more of our families engage with the parish. A lot harder and more complex than it sounds. Some things we are doing include;

- Fr Mars joins the staff for morning tea on Wednesdays, then will stay and speak to a different class each week.
- In 2017, we will be changing our Assembly day to allow Fr Mars the opportunity to join us as a whole school once a week.
- Last Sunday we had a family mass. Using school based Hymns, Staff presented the mass, and we used the child's Eucharistic prayer. I had positive comments about the mass, even though there weren't too many school families in attendance. It is a busy time, and people are happy to pretty much do anything but come to mass. We will continue with these masses next year.

I am happy to work with the parish on practical ways that we can engage more of our families in the parish, and/or parishioners in our school in whatever capacity to see our relationship continue to develop with our parish.

Our school NAPLAN results this year were most pleasing, with improved results being shown by our year 3 class and the year 5's. We have very few students who are at or below the minimum standard and are well above and/or at the National Mean as cohorts in the areas of Numeracy, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation, Reading and Writing. Our whole school curriculum focus on writing in 2017 should see us continue to improve in the National Assessment Program.

Students Learning will be maximised when they learn in an environment where high standards are expected and accepted. Over the period of the last few years, as a school, we have lifted what we expect from the kids, and also what we will accept from them. We do have high standards of behaviour, manners and respect here at St Thomas More. It was great to have the input of all key stakeholders, staff, parents and students in the update and review of the St Thomas More Behaviour Management Policy, which, through this process became, the STM CPS Positive Behaviour Policy. The BUZ Program, facilitated by Nurtureworks Busselton has also been a positive in our school with regard to the Social and Emotional growth of our school community.

According to the School Climate Survey that we completed earlier in the year, parents, students and staff all noticed an improvement in the behaviour, safety and general wellbeing of our students.

We are most fortunate to have such a supportive parent body, in particular our two parent organisations in our Parents and Friends Association and our School Board.

Our School Board continues to provide outstanding leadership and development for the school. I believe our school demonstrates best practice in the synergy that is promoted between our School Board under the Chairmanship of Pat Moran, along with Sharyn Bucat, Kirstie Kitis, Liam Smith, Beth Kiernan, Joel Lawrance and Amber Fairbrass. Fr Mars, Karien, Mike O are the School based members of the School Board, with whom the school could not do without. 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. Thank you all.

Our P&F Association under the Leadership of Sonia Kenyon and Jen Murphy have been a wonderful support to our school community. Along with Nat Bell and Aoife Cosby, the P&F executive have raised huge amounts of money again this year to help our students and teachers with resources both inside and outside the classroom, that are over and above what the school budget will allow.

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.

Please continue to support our P&F and School Board in the many tasks they undertake to maximise the facilities and learning potential of each child, and I thank you all on behalf of the staff.

My sincerest Thanks and Appreciation goes out to the whole STM CPS staff. Every role fulfilled here at the school is essential to our school's success and I feel honoured to be a part of this dedicated group, no matter what role they perform at St Thomas More. We are fortunate to have such professional office staff in our Admin/Finance Officer, Karien

Rollinger, and her Admin Assistant, Rita Willmott, who ensure our office administration operates at such a high level of efficiency.

A special Thanks to Mr Michael O'Brien, who works exceptionally hard in his role the Assistant Principal, coupled with the Religious Education Coordinator and the Phys Ed Teacher. Thank you also to Terri Ross and Jane Wolf who have taken on extra responsibilities this year on top of their classroom teaching.

Our Sacramental Programmes are an important part of our school priorities. Once again, we have joyfully celebrated Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Thank you to Fr Mars, staff, parents, students and parish for working as a team to enable our students to take this important step in their faith formation. As I said earlier, one of our School Improvement goals this year, and will continue, is to enhance the relationship between the school and parish. Thank you again to Fr Mars for being so willing to allow us to try new and sometimes different things.

St Thomas More has continued to FLOURISH with the composition of all the students and families that make up and bring joy to our school community. We have recognised that to FLOURISH is the number one wish of all in our school community and have designed our school core values of FAITH, LOVE, OPPORTUNITY, UNDERSTANDING, RESPECT, INCLUSIVITY, SERVICE and HONESTY with this in mind. As the Principal, I wish to have a flourishing community, students, parents and staff. I do believe we are doing a great job of this currently.

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.

I would like to wish you all the best for the festive season and the new year and look forward to working with you all again in 2017.

THANK YOU,

MARTIN MAJOR
PRINCIPAL.

