2021 Principal Report

Kelly Campbell

St Margaret Mary’s School and Preschool has continued to be guided by the CESA Living Learning and Leading Framework. In 2021, we worked on putting this Framework into action by utilising the LLL Standard as a self-assessment tool to shape future direction and goals. The LLL Standard has four defined areas:

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| 1. Catholic identity | * School identity
* Education in identity
* Dialogue and reflection
* Formative experiences and relationships
* Religious Education
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| 2. Curriculum and co-constructed learning and assessment design | * Curriculum knowledge
* Learning design
* Assessment Design
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| 3. Student agency, identity, learning and leadership | * Student agency and engagement in learning, assessment design and dialogue
* Student reflections on their identity and capabilities growth as people, learners and leaders
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| 4. Community engagement | * Community involvement and engagement
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Our School Annual Improvement Plan is attached to this report and reflects the data and evidence collected in each area and outlines a plan for growth, improvement and accountability.

Catholic Identity

During 2021, our community continued to gather (at times this was done virtually) for community prayer reach fortnight. Community Prayer is student led and focusses on a theme or a time in the liturgical calendar. When COVID restrictions permitted, parents were also invited to participate. We were fortunate that we could still celebrate liturgies and Masses in our Church, albeit without parents due to restrictions. These celebrations are always led by our students and teachers plan for them to relevant to the student’s lives, as well as teaching moments, especially in Tradition and Scripture. We have been blessed to have Fr Charles Lukati and Fr Long Hai celebrate these liturgies with our students as they are always engaging and welcoming.

St Margaret Mary’s School works with Whitefriar’s School and St Patrick’s Primary School (the other schools within the Croydon Park Parish) to support Parish life, especially through the Sacramental Program. The leadership teams of each school meet once a term, with the Parish Team to discuss matters that related to the ‘Being Church’ document (Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide). A large part of these meetings in the second half of 2021 were devoted to discussing the Plenary Council.

St Margaret Mary’s School and Whitefriars School worked in partnership for the ‘Journey to Emmaus’ Program. This program brings together the Year 6 students from each school for leadership formation and an opportunity for connections before they move to Secondary School.

St Margaret Mary’s community celebrates its diversity in language, religious traditions and family background. We see our diverse community as a wonderful Catholic community that welcomes and accepts many faiths, with an invitation to authentic prayer and spiritual development.

**Curriculum and co-constructed learning and assessment design**

Our major focus in 2021 was the continued development of a structured and explicit literacy and numeracy program at St Margaret Mary’s School and Preschool. CESA introduced the ‘Leader of Learning’ program that enabled Lynne Osborn and Gretchen Welch to lead aspects of this teacher development. We continually collect and analyse student data of their learning – in 2021 this data included NAPLAN, PATR and PATM, FYOSLA (first Years of Schooling Literacy Assessment), phonics screening check, running records, LEAP (Learning English: Achievement and Proficiency) Levels and Oral language assessments. This continual assessment of learning and for learning enables our teachers to see where students require extra support and how to plan an effective program of learning.

Towards the end of 2021 we had made the decision to move towards a more structured synthetic phonics program for our Reception – Year 2 students. This decision was made after analysing the past 3 years of literacy data, research into the science of reading and visiting other schools who had made the change. We are implementing InitiaLit in all our R-2 classes, commencing 2022. This program will complement our existing MacqLit program of intervention in years 3-6. All R-2 teachers undertook training and professional development in InitiaLit, and we purchased the resources and decodable readers required. IntiaLit will be our tier 1 approach to teaching literacy. Our tier 2 (intervention) will still include specialist programs and intervention for students with English as an Additional language, Year 1 intervention (based on InitiaLit) and MacqLit for Year 3-6. We are excited that this whole school approach to teaching literacy will continue to ensure our students excel in this important area of their learning.

As almost 70% of our students come from a background where English is an Additional Language, our EALD program is an integral part of our whole school approach to literacy. Lucy Krause leads EALD learning in our school. In 2021, the revised LEAP levels were introduced, and all teaching staff worked with Lucy to develop genre writing plans that covered required writing elements, grammar and sentence structure for their year level. We were pleased with our student’s writing results in NAPLAN and will continue this process in 2022.

Lynne Osborn and Lucy Krause completed our 2-year research project with UniSA. This project started as a project to better our understanding of all evidence but was refined to concentrate on writing in Years 3-6, specifically using the LEAP levels and co-construction of success criteria. The report will be published by UniSA early in 2022.

Gretchen Welch led our professional development in numeracy. All teaching staff were a part of our professional learning program with the Primary Maths Association and Lisa-Jane O’Connor. From our data, we knew that our students required more explicit teaching in mathematics, and we wanted to audit and develop a better understanding of the Maths Australian Curriculum. Lisa-Jane led a full day professional learning at the beginning of the year, an evening session for teachers (on the Base-10 number system) and she also met with each teaching team each term to assist their planning in mathematics. This process will continue in 2022.

Supporting students with Additional Needs is an important part of our mission as a Catholic school. In 2021, 24.7% of our students were included in our Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for Students with Disability – indicating these students all had personalised plans for learning (PPLs), adjustments and monitoring of their learning and consultation and collaboration with parents/allied health professionals. Our school, along with 4 others in the region, put forward a proposal through the Partnerships in Inclusive Practice Initiative (CESA) and have secured the employment of a speech pathologist for 3 years.

Student Agency, identity, learning and leadership

In 2021, all students R-6 participate in the PULSE survey each term. This survey aims to provide the staff with evidence of how students are feeling in relation to their own well-being, specifically their sense of belonging, safety and connection with community. Each term, teachers review student responses, and we identify those student we see as ‘at risk’. Our plan is that every one of these students re connected with either of the following: our school counsellor, an adult mentor, ‘What’s the Buzz?’ support group or Drumbeat.

As a part of our literacy and numeracy program, many teachers have worked with their students in identifying personal learning goals. Using rubrics and co-constructed success criteria, our year 5/6s used these goals to refine their writing and were able to see their own areas for improvement. This process was very successful and will continue in 2022.

David Hillard and Lucy Centofanti led our Student Leadership Team (SLTs). These students were responsible for leading whole school events, social justice activities, ecological projects and specific liturgies (such as Holy Week liturgies in classrooms). Senior students also were able to lead their peers as Sports Captains.

Sport and Physical Education continues to be an important part of school life at St Margaret Mary’s School and Preschool. Celeste Brown leads this area and had organised many successful events, carnival and opportunities for our students to engage in physical activity. She also coordinates our external sport program and in 2021, we had teams in the soccer and basketball competitions – our Year 4/5 team won the grand final! Celeste had secured a Sporting Schools grant in 2021 and we were able to fund many of the clinics and equipment with this grant money.

Community Engagement and Resourcing

COVID-19 impacted our ability to offer events to all our community in 2021. However, we did manage to still have some in-house events for our students. From our feedback in the LLL surveys (detailed in the 2021 School Performance Report), we pleased that St Margaret Mary’s School is a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families. Our School Board membership has become more diverse, better representing the families in our community. We aim to have 100% attendance at our parent/teacher conversations and Review meetings each year and we almost achieved this target. This will; continue to be a gaol for us as we know that 1-1 conversations centred on student learning and wellbeing is an important indicator of student success and a sense of belonging.

I thank the whole community for their patience and flexibility with the $5.25 million building project that has just been completed. This project has transformed our learning spaces to be more welcoming, flexible and meeting the needs of our learning program. The project took over 2 years to complete and we are looking forward to being able to welcome our families through our facilities once COVID-19 restrictions have eased.

The pandemic required our community to be creative in delivering a learning program online during lockdown. We purchased the full version of SeeSaw to better engage with families and will continue to use this as a major form of communication with our families.

The school purchased 60 new laptops to enable all our students from Years 3-6 to have daily access to technology, with our Year 4-6s having a 1-1 laptop program. Year 1/2s utilise a shared laptop trolley and iPads. Many new screens were installed in classrooms, replacing the aging interactive whiteboards. Our teacher desktops are being phased out and we have purchased laptops for teaching staff to enable their programming and teaching to be more flexible.

Other events and notable activities in 2021 include:

Trauma Sensitive Practices training (selected staff) Ash Wednesday Liturgies

PPL review meetings Clean up Australia Day Parent/teacher conversations

LEAP levelling UniSA literacy project First Years of Schooling literacy assessment

Catholic Schools Music Festival Pulse Surveys Preschool parent evenings

R-6 swimming NAPLAN Catholic Education Week

Base 10 numeracy PL Sports Day Sacramental preparation program

Oral language levelling Feast of the Sacred Heart Term 3 Foundation Transition Program

Australian Early Development Census Preschool Sports Day

Year 6 netball carnival Preschool celebrations of learning

SEQTA training and implementation Journey to Emmaus

School Disco Year 5/6 camp Preschool Health check ups

eMPower Day TriSkills R-6 Mid-Autumn Festival

Tennis clinics Interschool swimming Robotics/Lego incursions

Reception Transition Program Class refection days Playgroup

Occasional Care Outreach Day Book week

Year 6 Graduation End of Year Mass

At the end of 2021, we farewelled David Hillard as APRIM (Assistant Principal, Religious Identity and Mission) after 13 years of service to our school. Josh Page fulfilled the Assistant Principal role in Terms 2-4 whilst Alicia Boylan took on an Acting Principal role at St Pius X School.

Our school board has been a wonderful support and a great group of parents, working to shape the future of our community. I especially thank Nick McCormick for his leadership as School Board Chair for the past 2 years.

I’d like to thank the dedicated and professional staff at St Margaret Mary’s School and Preschool. All our staff, teaching, student support and administration are committed to ensure our school is a welcoming and inclusive community, always striving for excellence in learning.

Thank you for your continued support,

Kelly Campbell

Principal