Principal’s Report – February 2012

Priority 1: Mission and Religious Education

- During the January professional learning days the teachers engaged in a workshop to assist them to plan Religious Education units of work. The workshop introduced the teachers to elements of the new Religion Curriculum being introduced in all Catholic schools across the archdiocese. Brisbane Catholic Education staff are still in the process of writing and developing the curriculum for full implementation in 2014.
- The Opening Year Mass will be held in the St Joachim’s Church at 9.00am on Wednesday 8 January.
- Amanda Sheridan, Assistant Principal – Religious Education, (APRE) is released from the classroom each Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. This allows greater consistency for the Year 3 students. In previous years the APRE was released for 1 or 2 days but was often required for administrative duties. Donna Jacks works in the Yr 3 classroom on the days Amanda is in the office. This new arrangement also allows Amanda to greater assist me in ensuring policies, programs and practices at St Joachim’s articulate the nature and purpose of Catholic schooling.
- Amanda will take a specific leadership role in developing the Religion Curriculum to ensure that is promotes knowledge, deep understanding and skills about the Catholic and broader Christian tradition.

Priority 2: Learning and Teaching

- Amanda Sheridan is the APRE and Curriculum Support Teacher for 2012.
- Stephanie Sims is the Support Teacher Inclusive Education and is assisted by Trish Geritz.
- Australian Curriculum Update: In 2012 all teachers are implementing the new English Curriculum. All teachers are engaged in implementing aspects of the History, Mathematics and Science curriculums. These will be fully implemented in 2013.
- The prep students are involved in a sensory project facilitated by the Australian Catholic University. The trial, funded by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, explores the effects of a daily sensory motor development program on children's development and education. Both prep class teachers have been trained to implement this exciting new program.
- The Yr 3 to 7 teachers are involved in an exciting project to improve the learning and teaching of English. All teachers in this part of the school are involved in the Reading to Learn (R2L) project facilitated by Brisbane Catholic Education. R2L focuses on both reading and writing (including comprehension, grammar, spelling and sentence construction).
- New report cards will be implemented this semester (end of June). The new reporting process is a mandatory requirement from Brisbane Catholic Education. Over the coming months Amanda Sheridan will provide information about the reporting changes. The major change will be that teachers will use an online program called the Student Reporting System to report what students know and can do across all Learning Areas. Parents will continue to receive a printed and signed report card. An A-E standard for each year level will indicate student learning achievements.
Priority 3: Professional Practice and Collaborative Relationships

- January Professional Learning Days focused on: Curriculum Differentiation, the Science Curriculum and the Religion Curriculum. An occupational therapist and speech therapist ran con-current workshops with the staff.

- St Joachim’s Profile for 2012:
  - 163 families
  - 240 students
  - 10 classes
  - 33 staff members
  - 12 teachers
  - 15 school officers
  - 2 secretaries
  - 1 groundsman

- The growth of the school is an issue that I have been working with Sr Kari, the School Board and personnel from Brisbane Catholic Education Office for the last 12 months. In the coming months I will be engaging in a wider consultative process regarding seeking permission from the archbishop’s office about St Joachim’s School moving from a 1½ stream school to a 2 stream school. Issues to consider would include, but not limited to:
  - School ethos and vision, class size, play space, admin space, parking, number of classrooms, amenities, waiting lists, projected enrolments at St Joachim’s and at other local Catholic schools etc.

- Individual Health Care Plans are currently being established for students and staff with specific medical needs – anaphylaxis, diabetes, asthma etc.

- Each teacher will meet with me to present their professional learning plan and goals for 2012. These are reviewed in November each year.

Priority 4: Strategic Resourcing

- The development of a school renewal plan and annual goals is an important aspect of school renewal. A major sign of a healthy and developing school community is its capacity to renew itself. The staff, parish and community will be invited to be involved in the process of developing the 2012 – 2016 School Strategic Plan.

- Water tanks are being assessed and reconnected.

- The parish is planning to install a bathroom in the hall. The parish would like to install this in the space where the uniform shop is presently located. This effectively means that the uniform shop needs to be moved from the hall before Easter 2012.

- The school would like to thank Robert Lightfoot for the donation of a fax machine, filing cabinets and more laptop computers. These will be well used by the students and staff.

- In 2011 the P&F successfully received a grant to assist in the fit-out of the new tuckshop and uniform shop. The funds were deposited in the school’s bank account and a cheque for $31 000 has been presented to the P&F.