



# St Thomas The Apostle School Blackburn

2020

Annual Report to the School Community

# YOU BELONG AT ST. THOMAS'



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## Contact Details

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Angela Lacey, attest that St Thomas The Apostle School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2020 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

10/06/2021

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

## Our School Vision

St Thomas' is a Catholic school where everyone is known, welcomed and valued.

Our school community shares a faith in Christ and his values.

We recognise learning is lifelong and progressive.

St Thomas' is an energised environment where everyone shines.

## School Overview

St Thomas the Apostle Parish was founded in 1952. The school first began in 1953 when the Sion Sisters taught 50 students in classes from Prep to Year 2. In 1957 the Loreto Sisters took over and ran the school for the next 30 years. They developed a tradition of excellent education, community spirit, kindness, gentleness and warmth. Since 1986, lay principals have been in charge.

St Thomas the Apostle School is a co-educational Catholic school servicing the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle Blackburn. St Thomas' is nestled in the leafy Bellbird area of Blackburn. The school adjoins Morton Park, which has public ovals, parking and playing areas. It is only a short distance from Blackburn Lake Reserve and within close proximity to Blackburn Shopping Centre, the Library and Blackburn Station.

The school comprises 13 classrooms on two levels. The upper level is accessed via stairs and also a lift. There is an administration area, and a learning centre. This learning centre on two levels includes a library, computer lab, small breakout learning areas and a 'Kids Kitchen'. Additionally, there is a teacher resource area, staffroom, meeting rooms, a school hall, various offices and small rooms for special learning programs. There is a dedicated Before and After School Care room based in a large portable at the front of the property. A kitchen garden is located in a small area adjoining the front area of the school. Student amenities have been improved and extended over time. There are three playing areas, which include a P-2, 3-6 and shared passive play area. The school is secure, with gated access, and use of the ovals at Morton Park next door.

The school provides a dynamic sense of community and fosters a welcoming family atmosphere. St Thomas' has strong parent groups, who are vital to the sense of belonging in the school. Parents are welcome to participate in all aspects of the school, with the main support coming through the Parents' and Friends Association, Parish Education Board, Fair Committee and individual contributions in the classrooms through literacy helpers, and assisting with swimming, excursions or for special school events. St Thomas the Apostle School is highly regarded in the local area. Community involvement is a feature of the school. Former students coach a number of netball teams after school hours and there is a very active tennis club. The biennial Parish and School Fete is well attended, and supported by former students, school parents and parishioners.

## Principal's Report

**2020 ~ A Year we will not forget...** Despite a year of significant changes and challenges, we reflected on all that occurred to help us plan for a positive 2021.

- The Education Board and P and F continued to meet via Zoom to connect to parents and 'keep an eye' on the needs of our parent community
- The Term One P and F activities including 'Tea and Tissues' on the first day of school and the Prep and Year Six BBQ were positive community events
- The new website and our virtual tour assisted in enrolment enquiries
- The creation of photo montages and videos helped to keep our community connected
- There was a greater use of the Facebook page and weekly emails to parents about Wellbeing and activities to entertain their children during Lockdown, as well as regular communication (Newsletters)
- Online and video Assemblies weekly and online meetings offered to parents to clarify any questions about returning to school
- The staff planned a well structured program of learning during periods of Lockdown, and did an incredible job in a difficult year, transitioning between on site and remote learning
- As a school, I feel we did a fabulous job in maintaining the education and wellbeing of our students, as did every single parent! Our students demonstrated such persistence and resilience in these times, despite missing their friends, sports and other activities.
- When the students returned to school after each break, they demonstrated gratitude and a new confidence to work independently.

Towards the end of 2020, we learned that Fr Terry was moving to Sydney. We thank him for his involvement with the school, the students and families over the past six years. It was lovely to be able to celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation and Graduation with him in December before he moved. We wish him every blessing for the future and an open invitation to visit any time he is in Melbourne.

2020 was challenging, but, as a school, we have emerged stronger and more unified, even though we were apart for a time. We pray that 2021 is a more stable and healthy year for our country and the world.

## School Education Board Report

As Chair of the Education Board, I am pleased to offer an Annual Report to the St Thomas the Apostle School Community.

As with most aspects of life in 2020, the St Thomas' Board traversed a different path to its envisaged one in February this year.

The Board of 2019 viewed their work through the lens of 'Promotion'. In February 2020, Cameron McLellan presented the 'School Promotional Pillars' to this year's Board and School Leaders who endorsed its use and action plan. 2020's Board wished to leverage off this detailed work and focus on 'Engagement' - engagement of students, teachers and parents with students' learning.

We began to explore how parents were wishing to be more engaged with the school through reviewing the Net Promotor Score completed in 2019 and drafting an Engagement Survey for parents to complete.

In March and April the Board pivoted to focus on how to maintain parent/student engagement throughout lockdown and how to promote the school specifically for 2021 enrolments given the likelihood that the school would not be physically accessible. Board members assisted with ideas, content and filming of videos to the School's Facebook page, newsletter and web page.

A proposed new vision for the school was explored and the Board facilitated parental input which resulted in much constructive feedback. This endorsed vision will be shared with the Student Representative Council and parents in 2021 and added to the School's new website, which went live mid-year.

Financial updates were provided by St Thomas' Business Manager in June and in September the Board endorsed the proposal that school fees would not increase in 2021. The Board also acknowledged the plan to extend the ICT Device program to include Chromebooks for students in Years 3 to 6.

We were provided with a number of curriculum updates throughout the year which greatly assist the parent representatives to better understand the professional program of teaching at St Thomas'. We also updated a number of our Policies which can be found on the school's website.

With our students completing 172 days of remote learning this year, our community changed; in how we connected, in our roles as student, parent, teacher. The St Thomas' staff provided and facilitated a new learning environment where many of our students continued to flourish. They went above and beyond to provide support and ENGAGEMENT like never before between student, teacher and parent. The Board set out to focus on engagement this year never thinking

it would be through this means. As parent representatives the Board say THANK YOU to our wonderful teaching staff.

I would specifically like to acknowledge Angela Lacey and the Leadership team who championed many initiatives and set the tone for us to get through this time as best as possible. Also a special thankyou to Father Terry who, over the past 6 years, has led us in faith and provided his guidance to the school community. You have been an integral part of our community and we wish you well in your new parish. You will be missed.

Our school community continues to be a healthy and robust place for our children to feel safe, welcomed and ready to learn.

Bec Heine

CHAIR OF THE EDUCATION BOARD



## Education in Faith

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To deepen the Catholic faith journey of the school community within the contemporary world.

Intended Outcomes

- That students, staff and parents will make a direct link between their lives and the teachings and practices of Catholic Traditions.
- That students and staff will be fully engaged in the teaching and learning of Education in Faith.

### Achievements

- Our school year began with an Opening Mass.
- There is regular opportunity for classroom prayer and reflection. All classrooms have a prayer table, prayer cloth and candle.
- The four School Captains, the REL and a Learning Support Officer represented our school at the St. Patrick's Day Mass at the Cathedral.
- Only the sacrament of Confirmation was able to be celebrated in 2020. All other sacraments were postponed to 2021.
- Our students participated in raising awareness and funds for organisations including Caritas (Project Compassion during Lent), and The Winter and Christmas Appeals for the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
- Our Year Six students were able to graduate with Mass.
- The school year concluded with a paraliturgy.

### VALUE ADDED

- We have a whole school approach to Sacramental Programs, so that all students have an awareness and understanding of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation, when specific groups of children are receiving these sacraments.
- Assemblies begin with our School Prayer and often include a special liturgy to celebrate children receiving sacraments, or commemorate occasions such as ANZAC Day.
- Connections are made during planning sessions for the integration of the curriculum focus area of Inquiry Learning units with Religious Education. Continued implementation of the Catholic Social Teaching principles was incorporated in our units of work.
- The weekly Newsletter always includes a Reflection on the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday or other religious events/activities.
- The Principal and REL met regularly to discuss Religious Education and maintain ongoing communication with the Parish Priest. These meetings develop the parish / school partnership, as well as providing an opportunity to discuss upcoming events and broader school, parish and Church matters.

- Fr Terry takes great care to share the gospel messages in our Masses at a level which engages the students and reinforces Jesus' message.

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

The goals for the year were to:

- Build knowledge of the curriculum;
- Build knowledge and use of a range of data sets; and
- Build knowledge of the progression of learning.

Underpinning this were three aspects to facilitate progress towards this goal:

- To create consistency of practice; and
- Ensure effective communication exists between all stakeholders; to specifically
- Improve student learning.

Intended Outcomes:

- That students will be engaged, independent and confident learners in a stimulating contemporary learning environment.
- That literacy and numeracy outcomes will be improved.

### Achievements

- In Term One, the leaders visited classrooms to gather data from the students about their learning (Learning Walks).
- All students participated in one to one assessment with their teacher/s before school commenced to ascertain reading accuracy and comprehension levels.
- The staff participated in four days of professional learning this year (outlined below), with some face to face, two completely online and one a mix of group and online work. Staff also engaged in professional learning online at other times of the year.
  - Term One: Maths
  - Term Two: Introduction to the ReLATE Model
  - Term Three: Continuation of training in the ReLATE Model
  - Term Four: Preparation for the 2021 Review
- Number Intervention, Reading Recovery, a Literacy Intervention program (LLI) and a Maths Support program were all conducted online during remote learning.
- A number of students receive funding through the NCCD process. In order to support the child's learning and development, a Learning Support Officer (LSO) works within the classroom to provide additional assistance. Personalised Learning Plans are created for most of these students, detailing the goals to be achieved in the short and longer term.
- The usage of ICT is classroom and specialist based. Our Year 3-6 students were encouraged to 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD). We learned through remote learning that Chromebooks are better for the older students, so a purchase program was implemented.

- Student Learning Conferences were held for Years 1-5 students at the conclusion of Term One and then again in Terms Two - Four (for P-6) due to remote learning.
- The staff provided many opportunities for the students to be involved in extra curricular and special events including: a Tabloid Sports day, the 3-6 Swimming Carnival, the Open Water Learning Experience for Years 5/6 and Water Safety program for 3/4s, the International Competitions, the garden and chickens, Dress up Days and fundraisers, and various incursions and excursions.
- The new website became operational, including a virtual tour when physical tours were not permitted.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The students complete a reading and comprehension assessment prior to the start of the school year. The teachers use this data to group the students for teaching in small Focus Groups.

Prior to most Maths units, the students participate in a Pre test to find out what they know, then they work on specific tasks to build their skills, with one group per day working in a Focus Group with the teacher. The Post test shows the teacher what has been learned.

During remote learning, the teachers and LSOs conducted regular assessment of the students in reading, sight words, writing and number through online meetings and through their work.

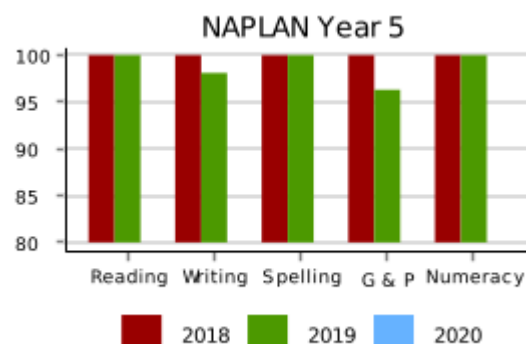
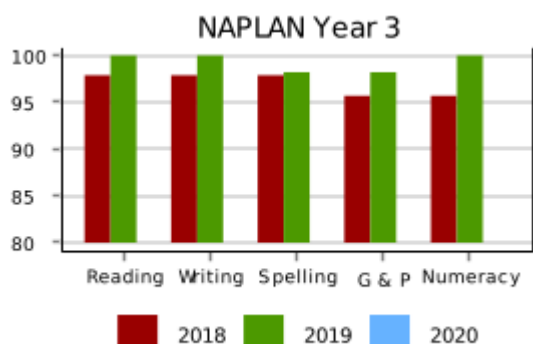
When we returned to school in Term Four, the PAT-R and PAT-M formal assessments were conducted with students to ascertain their levels in reading and number. The Prep - Year Two students also completed the Reading Assessments required in November.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	95.7	98.2	2.5		
YR 03 Numeracy	95.7	100.0	4.3		
YR 03 Reading	97.9	100.0	2.1		
YR 03 Spelling	97.9	98.2	0.3		
YR 03 Writing	97.9	100.0	2.1		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	96.3	-3.7		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Writing	100.0	98.1	-1.9		

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



## Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

**To develop students who are resilient, engaged, confident and motivated learners.**

That students will be empowered and challenged to be active, engaged learners.

### Achievements

- The year began with a focus on the ongoing professional learning of all staff in the Child Safe Standards.
- We held our Leadership Training with Year Six students.
- Student Leadership through the SRC and the Year Six Leadership roles began.
- During remote learning, we shared articles, webinars and specific agencies with parents weekly to provide accurate, regular communication to families (medical, psychological and anxiety information) as well as support to families of a practical nature (websites with activities to enjoy together, Family Challenges, etc).
- All students P-6 participated in some interactive cyber safety presentations at the start of Term Two, so that they were aware of the safety and use of online platforms.
- We initially shared Assembly via recorded videos and then moved to live online Assemblies.
- Our community was connected via photo and video presentations for Mother's Day and Father's Day.
- The staff filmed videos to welcome the students back to school and created stories to show the signs and hygiene practices to use at school.
- When we returned to school, our focus was on wellbeing and routine, and we used the phrase 'You Belong' to promote security and familiarity.
- We encouraged greater opportunities for student voice during remote learning, including our School Captains hosting '**Captains Meets**' with small groups of students **in every year level**.
- Classes also had times where 'social chats' occurred, to give the students time to connect.

### VALUE ADDED

- Continued focus on the explicit teaching of social and emotional learning through 'You Can Do It!' Program Achieve.
- All classes established their own reward system at the beginning of the year which provided a goal to work towards.
- The students continued to link and build relationships through the Buddy program, Circle Time, and other Mindfulness activities.
- The 3/4 students are responsible for the management of the kitchen garden and the chickens.

- Our Counsellor from OnPsych continued to provide great support to students and families dealing with a range of issues.
- We have continued to offer opportunities beyond the classroom such as the International Competitions, as well as some lunchtime activities and support on the playground in Terms One and Four.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

If I asked a question about the work, I would get an answer really quickly. *(Student)*

The best thing my teachers did to help me was sharing their screen with the class and explaining it well. *(Student)*

They did a fantastic job and really demonstrated their care for, and commitment to, our children. *(Parent)*

A huge thank you for the immense amount of work that was invested in ensuring my child had the best experience possible experience with home learning and then with his safe transition back to school. The additional communication from the principal and the encouraging messages/videos throughout the remote learning period were appreciated and so thoughtful. They really made us feel connected to our school community. *(Parent)*

The school has put in a super human effort and should be applauded for their dedication. They have helped us know better our own children's learning needs. They have maintained my children's engagement in learning during this time and helped to provide structure for the family. A massive thank you to them. *(Parent)*

It was a positive experience and the school did an exceptional job. Also school's ability to arrange diverse opportunities like the online NGV excursion. *(Parent)*

It has provided a greater insight into how our child learns and what we are required to do at home to reinforce the learning that occurs during the day at school. *(Parent)*

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

At St Thomas the Apostle School, we have a separate phone line for the reporting of Student Absences on any day, in addition to the facility for parents to email the Office regarding absences. Following the collection of information regarding those students who are absent without an explanation, an SMS is sent to the parent and if a phone call response is not received by a set time, our Administration Officers make individual phone calls to parents to identify the reason for non-attendance at school that day.

Absences are monitored on a weekly basis. Unexplained absences and high levels of absenteeism are investigated by the Principal and Deputy Principal with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.

During remote learning, the morning Google Meet included the roll call. Whilst we were aware of technical issues which did arise from time to time, contact was made by teachers and the Principal if students were not online regularly, as expected.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	97.5%
Y02	96.8%
Y03	95.5%
Y04	94.6%
Y05	95.0%
Y06	96.1%
Overall average attendance	95.9%



## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

At St. Thomas the Apostle, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel ([CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

*The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching:  
that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.*

*(Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, n. 9)*

### Achievements

- The school's Commitment to Child Safety Policy and the Code of Conduct were reviewed by staff in 2019. These are included in all advertisements for positions and in Letters of Appointment.
- The Education Board revised the Commitment to Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct in 2019.
- The school has a Child Safety Team comprising the Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing Leader.
- The Student Wellbeing Leader provides updates about procedures, documentation and expectations to staff at Staff Meetings.
- The PROTECT posters are displayed in the Staffroom for staff to refer to if they have any concerns regarding a child's safety.
- All staff complete the Mandatory Reporting online module in Term One each year.
- Every three years, the staff also complete the Disability Standards so that they are aware of the legislation and expectations for including students who have a disability.
- Child Safety remains a standard item at staff meetings, Education Board meetings and where parent or community involvement is planned.
- The Code of Conduct was amended to include the allowance of alcohol at the Parish and School Fete. A Risk Assessment was conducted and procedures of operation established for this.
- The Code of Conduct is displayed when signing in as a visitor / contractor.
- Risk Management of excursions and camps has been a priority.
- Following Board meetings, members were encouraged to discuss the Child Safe processes and policies proactively within the parent community.

- Child Safe procedures are in place for social and fundraising activities and events where children are present.
- The school implements the CECV Employment procedures and pro formas when seeking and engaging new staff.
- Volunteers and regular contractors complete Application Forms along with the provision of their Working With Children Check cards.
- A Working With Children Check register is maintained by the Administration Officers.
- Child Safety discussions are held for specific activities such as P-2 Swimming.
- Parents are informed about Child Safety requirements via the Newsletter and separate communications. It is discussed at Education Board and Parents' and Friends Meetings, and at the Prep Parent Information Meetings (before commencement and at the start of the year).
- Improvements to the physical environment of the school to secure access and to re-develop internal spaces to be 'Child Safe' have been completed (ie glass in every door).
- The students participate annually in the National Day against Bullying and Violence and White Balloon Day.
- Child Safety ratios have increased for excursions and events, in that students are accompanied by an additional staff member/adult on all occasions.
- Risk assessment checks and procedures are expected and documented for all off site activities.

# Leadership & Management

## Goals & Intended Outcomes

**To embed a vibrant professional learning community, with a shared vision.**

That the elements of empathy, role clarity, engagement and learning will improve and be balanced.

## Achievements

- Staff participated in professional learning twice per week to discuss the curriculum and practice.
- Ongoing support was offered for staff engaged in further study (Cert IV and Sponsored Study).
- The classroom structure for 2020 was: Prep x 2 classes; 1/2 x 3 classes; 3/4 x 4 classes; and 5/6 x 4 classes.
- Specialist classes for forty minutes weekly including Performing Arts, LOTE - Mandarin, PE and Digital Technologies.
- Intervention programs included Reading Recovery and Number Intervention, with further Literacy Intervention provided in LLI and Number Support offered.
- Our Graduate Teachers managed teaching online in remote learning very well, with excellent support from their team members and our curriculum leaders. In 2021, the Graduates need to complete their VIT process.
- Staff were allocated a Leadership Team member during remote learning as their contact person, to distribute the load and allow for regular check-ins.
- St Thomas the Apostle received excellent feedback from our parents and others for our remote learning program.

### EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

#### Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

The staff participated in four days of professional learning in 2020, with some face to face, two completely online and one a mix of group and online work. Most staff engaged in professional learning online at other times of the year. The days provided were:

1. Term One: Maths
2. Term Two: Introduction to the ReLATE Model
3. Term Three: Continuation of training in the ReLATE Model
4. Term Four: Preparation for the 2021 Review

Staff and PLT Meetings occurred in Term One and Term Four as per our schedule, with the difference being that we could not always be together for these when school returned in Term

Four, so some of these were online. In Terms Two and Three, all meetings were online. Staff missed the professional interaction and collegial nature of meetings.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	30
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$357

**TEACHER SATISFACTION**

I think that the opportunity to share skills has always been capitalised upon in schools and people appear to share knowledge and experience freely.

We saw that planning does not have to be completed on site to be effective; we saw LSO staff and teachers working together to adapt tasks and creatively working out the ways in which groups could be structured. These practices will be sustained.

The staff found fabulous ways of presenting the tasks for students. These included visual and verbal forms, often videoing themselves to show something specific, as well as practical tasks to do with those at home and then share. Being able to offer more online options in the classroom will be beneficial to all learners.

Parents were able to access teachers more readily, they could see exactly what was happening and when and there was a lot more conversation about students and their learning.

It (Remote Learning) fostered a higher level of independence, problem solving skills and in many cases, enhanced creativity.

**TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE**

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	85.3%
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**ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE**

Staff Retention Rate	75.5%
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<b>TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	27.8%
Graduate	16.7%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	88.9%
Advanced Diploma	33.3%
No Qualifications Listed	5.6%

<b>STAFF COMPOSITION</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	36.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	28.0
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	27.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	22.5
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## School Community

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

**To promote inclusive Catholic school community, fostered by strong partnerships with parents, the parish and the broader community.**

- That the school continues to deepen and enliven leadership by increasing awareness of the school's vision.
- That Parent Satisfaction on SIS is increased enhancing our community connectedness and promoting an 'outward facing' school culture.

### Achievements

- In Term One, we offered our Parent Helpers course and refresher, with volunteers ready to commence assisting in Term Two; unfortunately, we went into remote learning and even in Term Four, when we were back at school, parents were not permitted on site.
- In Term Two, Parent Information sessions were offered in cyber safety, gaming and social media as we had moved into this online space and the boundaries between learning and social time were less clear during lockdown with limited outdoor opportunities.
- We initially shared Assembly via recorded videos and then moved to live online Assemblies. Disco Thursdays and Fun Fridays often involved the families in promoting a break in the routine of lockdown.
- Our community was connected via photo and video presentations for Mother's Day and Father's Day, and with a Welcome Back video from the staff.
- Our Parent Community organised a 'Spoonville' in our front walkway for our return in Term Four.
- The sacrament of Confirmation and the Year Six Graduation permitted families the chance to see each other and say goodbye prior to the move to secondary school.
- In response to COVID, there was greater awareness of staff, students and parents in supporting others during the Winter Appeal and Christmas Appeal for St Vincent de Paul.
- We promoted opportunities for social connection of new parents in the parent community through events including the Welcome BBQ for Prep and Year 6 buddies and their families and Wednesday Play sessions at the park; after Term One, this was not possible on site.
- The Education Board is a strong feature of our engagement with parents in school life and it demonstrates excellent procedures and documentation. The meetings were held online from Term Two.
- The Parents' and Friends social and fundraising activities included: a bulbs fundraiser, the Mango Drive, and the Dads and Kids Weekend away. Fundraising was curtailed.
- St Thomas' Outside School Hours Care Program, run by Camp Australia, is a wonderful service for our families. In 2020, for much of the year, it was a fantastic support for the families of essential workers.

- In order to have effective home-school partnerships, I offered Google Meets each Friday in Term Two, when we were all new to remote learning, and a weekly email of an article, a webinar, activities to do as a family.
- Our methods of communicating are both written (weekly Newsletters, Semester Reports, Level Newsletters, etc), and verbal (Learning Conferences each term in 2020, and online Program Support Group Meetings).

## PARENT SATISFACTION

### **What would you say has been the most positive experience for you as a family of remote learning?**

Seeing my child's learning style and approach to learning. *(Parent)*

It showed that the school was invested in making remote learning a successful experience for families. We saw that the school was agile and could react to changes that needed to be made to support students and their families. We could not have done a good job without guidance from our school. *(Parent)*

We always believed in the importance of partnership with teachers as instrumental to our child's learning. What did become clear though is how agile our teachers are. They have gone above and beyond to help us home-school our child; they've helped us feel equipped to do this. We admire them even more. *(Parent)*

## Future Directions

The focus in 2021 will be our preparation for the School Review, to be held in Term Three.

Our Annual Action Plan for 2021 will continue to develop:

- **Catholic Identity** ~ Vision. We need to complete the work we commenced on a new/revised vision. In 2021, we will provide the opportunity for staff faith development.
- **Learning and Teaching** ~ Increased knowledge in Spelling and VCOP to assist with planning, to foster deeper student engagement in their learning. The staff will also create a shared statement of the purpose of assessment and reporting.
- **Student Wellbeing** ~ Strategies to improve student safety and student voice. Continue the work of 'Respectful Relationships' and ReLATE.
- **Leadership and Management** ~ The staff need to collaborate when planning the curriculum in each level. We will continue the work of The Learning Collaborative and the 14 parameters.
- **School Community partnerships** ~ We need to continue to seek parent engagement in/with their child's learning.