

# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Montmorency

2020

Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1343

## Table of Contents

Contact Details .....	2
Minimum Standards Attestation .....	2
Our School Vision .....	3
School Overview .....	4
Principal's Report .....	7
Parish Priest's Report .....	9
School Education Board Report .....	11
Education in Faith .....	14
Learning & Teaching .....	17
Student Wellbeing .....	21
Child Safe Standards .....	28
Leadership & Management .....	29
School Community .....	33
Future Directions .....	35

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Philip Cachia, attest that St Francis Xavier Primary 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.

27/04/2021

**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 Francis Xavier School promotes equity and excellence, in a contemporary learning community.

Inspired by the model of Jesus Christ, we become successful learners; confident and creative individuals; and active and informed global citizens.

## School Overview

Located within the green wedge of the Diamond Valley, St Francis Xavier Parish School Montmorency is a safe and welcoming community and pervades a close village charm. The first St Francis Xavier Church was built in 1932 and was located along Para Road. It was just one large room and became our Church school, established by the Sisters of Mercy and had an initial enrolment of thirty-six eager pupils aged from four to fourteen. In 1961 the school was relocated to its present site in Mayona Road.

The 2020 student enrolment was 310. There were 205 families and 39 employed staff. School enrolment remains steady due to the reputation and good community standing. Fourteen (straight) class groupings with class population sizes ranging from 19 to 28 with an average of 22.14 students per class.

93% of the students are baptized Catholics and our school population includes 3% Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LOTE). Montmorency remains predominantly a middle class area and therefore the school is 104 on the Socio Economic Status Scale. A number of our parents (predominantly mums) are able to remain at home or have part-time employment which enables them to support the school in a variety of ways during any given week.

Enlivened by the Gospel Values, our school strives to be a vibrant, welcoming and inclusive place within our Parish community. As an inclusive community, we work in partnership with the parish of St Francis Xavier, Fr Michael Sierakowski, our Parish Moderator, Father Terry Kean, Pastor in Solidum, our Parish Pastoral Associates and team and with our sister school, Holy Trinity Eltham North and Our Lady Help of Christians Eltham.

Our teaching and learning takes place in well-maintained and modern school buildings, (a number of which have been recently refurbished) computer technologies and other contemporary learning tools.

Numerous refurbishments and improvements have been made to the learning spaces in the past 10 years, the more recent being a \$1.7M re-development of the original learning block currently occupied by our Year One and Two students. Works were completed in July 2017. The refurbishment included the upgrade of eight classrooms incorporating the original multipurpose room to create improved flexible student learning workspaces with the latest technology and resources. The upgrade also included work in the Out of School Hours Care room and installation of new internal student toilet amenities.

Our current Year Five and Six students also learn in well lit learning spaces within our BER building which was designed and purposely built in 2011 to meet the needs of 21st Century learners. This innovative, state of the art building, incorporates a purpose built Library (Discovery Centre), a Digital Technology Centre, a S.T.E.M Room and four other contemporary learning areas, leading to an outdoor learning area. We maintain that this contemporary learning

environment supported by contemporary learning technologies enhances student learning and improves student engagement and wellbeing.

Many of our general purpose learning areas have been modified and refurbished to meet the needs of our 21st Century Learners. Our excellent facilities (including a large Hall, Performing Arts Centre, meeting rooms, all weather synthetic oval and basketball courts) are used both during and after school for our Out of School Hours Care Program, netball and basketball training, tennis coaching, our Parish Catechetical Program and by a number of groups for various Parish activities.

Students attend weekly specialist classes of :

Physical Education, Performing Arts, S.T.E.M and L.O.T.E (Mandarin), Visual Arts, Digital Technologies. Students also visit the Discovery Centre (formerly known as the Library) on a weekly basis to borrow books and have their weekly library lesson.

Students are supported by a Student Wellbeing Leader. Learning Support Officers are also assigned to each year level with scheduled daily lessons with Special Needs students.

There are specialist Intervention teachers in each level:

Prep Support (2 days per week - English & Maths)

Year 1 - 3 Maths Intervention (3 days)

Year 1 - 3 English Intervention (3 days)

Year 4 - 6 Maths Intervention (3 days)

Year 4 - 6 English Intervention (3 days)

Year 1 - 6 Extension and Enrichment Program ( 2 days)

The Religious Education / Sacramental Programs are guided and supported by Parish Priest and Religious Education Leader.

The Learning & Teaching syllabus is the Victorian Curriculum guided throughout the school by the Learning & Teaching Leaders and by our Junior and Senior Leaders.

Opportunities to promote student voice and engagement are encouraged and celebrated through many channels. These include Prep to Year 6 SRC, Year Prep & 6 Buddies Program and Class Leaders. There is also an extensive Year 6 Leadership Program made up of a variety of leadership teams including School Captains. All Year 6 students participate in their area of interest and talent developing leadership capabilities throughout the course of the year teaching the students the values of service, persistence and dedication.

We welcome the involvement of parents and members of our parish community, as evidenced by our highly effective teams of dedicated parents who support us through our Parents Association, School Advisory Council, Uniform Shop and Social Outreach programs eg. St Vincent De Paul.

## Principal's Report

The 2020 School year began like many others. Parents, students and teachers beginning the year with great expectations, hopes and ambitions for what could be achieved. Having started at SFX Montmorency in November of 2019, this allowed me to re-structure school operations, employ new staff for new specialist subjects, and begin to plan the way forward to School Review and VRQA in 2021. We began 2020 with our Beginning of the School year Mass led by Father Michael and Father Terry. Little did we know that this would be the only time that we would gather as a Catholic school community in 2020.

We also welcomed new members to our School Advisory Committee and Parents Association, formalised their structures and procedures within each of their respective Constitutions.. The spirit and energy within each of these two groups was palpable and all seemed well for planning the year ahead. We thank all members of the School Advisory Committee(SAC) and the Parents Association (PA) for their involvement in what was ultimately a most difficult year.

The Federated structure of schools, instigated by Father Michael, saw the three schools coming together for the beginning of Lent, Ash Wednesday Mass. Our Lady Help of Christians School Eltham, Holy Trinity Eltham North and St Francis Xavier School Montmorency. Our Year 6 School Leaders representing each of our schools were able to take the sacred ashes back to each of their communities to celebrate Ash Wednesday. We were also able to begin the Sacrament of Penance through each of the three schools with two thirds of the students completing the sacrament before COVID closed all churches around the country.

Then suddenly in Week 10 of Term 1 our schooling life would change to something we had never experienced - Remote Learning and COVID for an indefinite period. This was something that our staff had not encountered before, teaching like we had never taught before, expecting outcomes and output from students like we had never had before. Starting with worksheet distribution, to video taped lessons, to fully live and Remote Learning occurred within six weeks of Term 2. Not having a definitive end point to Remote Learning challenged teachers to keep 'changing up' their teacher delivery methods. Parents were very positive about the slow, considered and planned way that we delivered Remote Learning in which was ultimately Term 2 and basically the whole of Term 3. We were confident as a staff that learning did happen and that all stakeholders (parents, student and staff) were determined that 2020 would not be a wasted year of learning.

Term Four had two main objectives:

1. Getting students back into a school routine after 20 weeks of Remote Learning.
2. Consolidating what had been learnt in 2020 with a view to all students being prepared as greatly as possible for the following school year. What were the 'essential' parts of learning that were needed.

Congratulations to all families and all SFX staff. 2020 was an incredible roller coaster of a year that tested all of our resilience and fortitude. As Principal I felt that we made the most of a bad situation and whilst there are few positives from our COVID year, it certainly made us appreciate each other and the gifts of friendship, love and care.

In the words of St. Francis Xavier, *"Lord Help Us On Our Journey"*

Philip Cachia  
Principal

## Parish Priest's Report

### The Annual Report to the Families of St. Francis Xavier Primary School

Naturally I would prefer to share all the exciting things that are happening now - post our Covid19 lock down period of last year! But I will report, with pride, on the terrible time and immense pressure placed upon all of our Staff and Students and families in 2020.

To say that it was a shocking year and a terrible waste of time and energy for all concerned would be an understatement, even at times somewhat frightening. Near on empty Schools for several months - weekly changes to emergency arrangements announced by the Federal and State Governments meant that our School Principal and office staff had to regularly shuffle and micro manage timetables and expectations of everyone concerned - staff, students and parents. The whole thing - Covid19, and its impact on running a 'normal' school ( Day - Week - Term - Year ) was thrown out the window, and we were forced to make do with regular announcements from the Catholic Education Melbourne usually given at short notice - midnight Sundays! The Coronavirus Pandemic in 2020 was akin to a living hell on earth.

Such terrible pressure to live under for the whole of 2020.

So it is with special pride that I witnessed the amazing and dedicated work to help students and parents and staff achieve some sense of educational normal during these times! Homework 'packs', Zoom meetings, Health reports and nearly 24/7 open communications with anyone who wanted. These times asked for heroic actions from our School leadership in 2020 and to my amazement I witnessed this on a daily basis.

No one was planned or prepared for this Coronavirus Pandemic in Australia and its daily effects were felt by everyone!

By and large, the parent community were onboard with our school's new and urgent structures for basic learning - and while not everyone was coping with this terrible reality of 'isolation' and home bubbles - Government Health concerns dictated this new normal.

Philip, Patrizia and the office team worked well beyond their contracts and position descriptions for a normal school year! In fact it was amazing to witness and support throughout 2020.

It is not clear - as I write these simple reflections, the ramifications of this Coronavirus pandemic on any of us, our physical & mental health - as we have all clearly suffered through this time together. As a Catholic Community, I can only be proud of everyone involved and the enormous efforts made during 2020 to keep connected and keep safe!

Naturally, all School Sacraments were put on hold during 2020 and our local Catholic Churches were locked for a period of 9 months. Again, the concern and understanding from families and students during this Coronavirus Pandemic first year was deeply appreciated. My heart is filled with pride at the way we have all survived these 12 months. Hopefully, the worst is over - and goodbye to the year that was 2020. But we are clear that we are all under the guidance of Federal and State Health Authorities as we move into 2021 in a Covid Safe normal.

Warmest thanks and love to all of you who helped us in 2020.

What a year!

Michael F. Sierakowski

Moderator



## School Education Board Report

### School Advisory Committee Report

The year of 2020 presented many challenges to all elements of the community, however the School Advisory Committee (SAC) continued to be productive and pave the way for an effective return to school for all of our school community. The SAC continued its monthly meetings via the online platform of Zoom during the COVID lockdown.

Over the year, some of the items on the agenda which were discussed and actioned are as follows:

- Numerous policies
- The impact of COVID on students, staff and the wider school community.
- What school would look like for students upon their return. How the school was going to deal with student and staff welfare, COVID impacts, social skills and education after such a long time away from the school environment.
- Physical improvements / changes to the school and the impact these would have on the school community
- School security
- Revised On-line learning procedures
- Revised return to school with the new "COVID Normal" restrictions, including restrictions on parents entering school, the "Kiss and Go" system, traffic issues surrounding the school due to new restrictions.
- Discussed and revised school's I.T. situation

I would like to thank all of the members of the School Advisory Committee who have contributed in their own way to ensure the school remains a progressive and positive place for learning and growth. A team of like-minded individuals who are striving to improve the school, worked extremely well together under difficult circumstances and continued to improve the school for the communities benefit. I would like to specifically mention Kirsty Reedy. Kirsty has been involved in the SFX community through various committees for numerous years. Through Kirsty's unselfish involvement, the entire SFX community has benefited in some way, shape or form and we thank her for her tireless efforts.

Additionally, I would like to thank and commend Philip Cachia and Patrizia Rinaldo for their dedication and professionalism throughout an extremely trying time for both educators, students and parents. Both Philip and Patrizia have brought their own fresh and innovative ideas to the school community and through solid leadership principles, they were both able to navigate the complexities that 2020 presented to us all, and guided students, staff and parents through unchartered territory.

Brigid Douglas - Chair SFX SAC

### Parents Association 2020

The St Francis Xavier Parents' Association aims to support the school in creating a strong, positive, and inclusive community spirit that makes every family feel welcome. We aim to

enhance the education of the students through fundraising for resources and equipment that all children at SFX will benefit from, as well as create opportunities for parents to be involved in the school community.

This year has been incredibly difficult for many of our families and members of our school community. We have had to navigate through so many unknowns and ongoing restrictions in response to Covid-19.

The lockdowns and restrictions meant that the Parents Association was unable to deliver on many of our annual social and fundraising events. Even after some of our PA volunteers had worked hard on preparing for events, we found ourselves having to make last minute decisions to cancel or defer due to government guidelines. Whilst frustrating, it was necessary to support our government's public health response and protect the wellbeing of our school community.

In 2020, we decided to shift the focus from event planning to directing our energies in staying connected with our school community. We worked hard to deliver messages of support and services available to help families navigate through the difficulties endured over the year.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Mia Jones, our PA Social Media Manager, who worked tirelessly in supporting and keeping our community informed throughout the year. Thank you Mia. You have no idea how much we appreciate all that you do.

I received a lot of positive and constructive feedback from families over the year, all of whom appreciated the regular social media posts and emails as it not only kept families informed, but it also encouraged them to actively connect with each other. One of the few redeeming features of this time has been the outpouring of support for one another. The absence of physical company and an awareness of our mental health and wellbeing became paramount. Many of our families have been impacted financially; therefore, as part of our event planning for the new year, the Parents Association will shift its focus to the importance of re-connecting.

Thank you to the members of our Executive- Lisa Van Campfort (Secretary) and Peter Fiasco (Treasurer) - and active committee members Ben McDonald and Zoe Hamilton. You have all been such a tremendous support to me over the year. I would like to wish Lisa and Peter all the very best as they step down from their roles within the Executive next year to focus on family and work commitments. Your passion and commitment to making things happen over the last couple of years has been truly appreciated.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Zoe Hamilton to the role of Vice President, Kirsty Dray as Secretary and Amy Jewell as Treasurer. I look forward to working with you all in 2021.

Maree and Nella - thank you for your assistance as admin and finance support throughout the year.

Lastly, I would like to recognize the incredible contributions from Philip Cachia (Principal) and Patrizia Rinaldo (Vice Principal). You yourselves were both new to our school yet threw yourselves enthusiastically into supporting our Parents Association. I imagine it has been quite a baptism of fire, but I am pleased to say that you have both been wonderful and we thank you.

As we look back on 2020, we move forward with hope, compassion, and the excitement in re-connecting in 2021 and welcoming all of our new families to our fabulous school community.

Thank you everyone. Stay safe, healthy and God bless.

Kate Harford

President - SFX Parents Association.

## Education in Faith

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- That staff, students and parents engage in and contribute towards strengthening a re-contextualising Catholic school identity.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

- Introduction of SFX RE planning Folders to staff. This includes introduction of a whole school RE planner, introduction of The Catholic Social Teaching Principles and a Prayer and Parts of the Mass Scope and Sequence
- Purchase and update of Class Prayer cloths for the Liturgical Seasons of the Church for Class Prayer Tables.
- Prayers carried out before Staff and Professional learning meetings.
- Prep children received a Prep Prayer Booklet to introduce Prayer and Parts of the Mass appropriate to their level of learning.
- Faith Formation night held for parents for the Sacrament of Reconciliation with Parish Schools.
- Introduction of 'Parent initiated, School Supported, Parish Based' Sacramental program within the Montmorency and Eltham Parish with the 3 Schools, HT, SFX and OLHC.
- Introduction of Kathy Horan Books Becoming Catholic for Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation as a family resource to assist with preparation of Sacraments and extend the "God talk" to home.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation celebrated as a 'Communal Rite of Forgiveness'. 2 out of the 3 celebrations were carried out and one was postponed due to Covid-19 Lockdown.
- Sacrament of First Eucharist preparations began for our Year 4 students but the Faith Formation nights and Sacrament were postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Sacrament of Confirmation-Students and Parents were informed by newsletters and formal correspondence regarding the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Students were prepared for this Sacrament in the 2020 school year but their Sacrament of Confirmation was postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Year 6 Students celebrated a Year Level/Class Mass with their fellow Year 6 students presided by the Parish Moderator and Education in Faith Leader to acknowledge their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Students were awarded a Certificate of Recognition for their Confirmation preparation.
- Year 6 students were involved in a Zoom meet with Bishop Terry Curtin. They were presented the historical perspective of Confirmation and were involved in a discussion about living the Sacrament of Confirmation in their daily lives, emphasis was on living the Gifts of the Spirit.

- Year 6 students completed a Sacrament of Confirmation workbook.
- Some classes attended Parish Masses with their class but such celebrations were unable to continue due to the Covid-19 restrictions.
- Education in Faith leader provided Prayer/Reflection Services via Slideshows, whilst students were home learning, to be viewed at home for the following liturgical celebrations:
- Feast of the Sacred Heart, St Francis Xavier Feast Day, Easter and Advent. These were well received by the community.
- Education in Faith Leader introduced and invited staff and students to be involved in a Sacred Space Blog for resources for faith development and to complement Religious Education lessons.
- Due to the impact of Covid 19 a free Subscription offered to SFX for the Digital To Know Worship and Love Resource. Students and Staff used where appropriate.
- Subscription to the Understanding Faith website to assist teachers and students with their Religious Education lessons as this resource could be accessed online and proved interactive for students in both a School and Home Learning environment.
- Staff mass celebrated at the beginning of the school year with staff from OLHC and HT at St Francis Xavier Church to begin school partnerships. Unfortunately, we could not do this at the End of the school year.
- Smiling Mind Meditation App introduced to school to be used in classrooms for Student Well-Being and once per week implemented every morning in classrooms. This was introduced as a means of meditation before formal Christian Meditation to be introduced via PD from WCCM. Singing Meditation Bowls ordered for classrooms for 2021.
- School Community managed to raise a considerable number of non-perishable food items for the St Vincent de Paul Winter Food Appeal. The collection began on the Feast of the Sacred Heart and concluded on Holy Trinity's feast day.
- Continued implementation of the new RE Framework and Horizons of Hope document for the planning of RE curriculum and the framework was continued to be used for reporting against the learning descriptors and reporting progression.
- Introduction of the use of Catholic Social Teaching Principles, Caritas units of work and Understanding Faith website to complement the planning of RE units and Inquiry.
- RE Professional Learning Meetings carried out where appropriate for completion of Enhancing School Identity Data and planning of RE lessons.
- Education in Faith Leader attended Level planning where appropriate either onsite or via Zoom.
- Education in Faith news published in newsletters.
- Community invited to participate in the Light in the Darkness to light a candle for our suffering World in August.
- Continued and maintained links between SFX and Buhisan Elementary in the Philippines.
- Continual update of scripture resources for classrooms and teacher reference.
- Make connection between School Wide Positive Behaviours Strategy (SWPBS) and Values Education and Gospel values.

- Continuing and enhancing our responsibility of being a FIRE Carrier School via Aboriginal Catholic Ministry,
- Attendance by our community at Community Memorials such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day in line with Covid restrictions either at home or via virtual links.
- Graduation Mass held at SFX on the Basketball court followed by a Graduation dinner held at the Montmorency RSL.

#### VALUE ADDED

Links introduced and maintained between the three parish schools of Montmorency and Eltham: Holy Trinity, Eltham North (HT) and Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham (OLHC) with St Francis Xavier, Montmorency (SFX). This includes fortnightly Federated Schools' meetings with Parish Moderator and Principals and Education in Faith Leader.

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To improve student performance and engagement in our identified core learning areas

To enhance a culture of utilising data to inform teaching and improve student learning

To further develop an active, informed, responsible and creative learning community.

### Achievements

2020 proved a year like no other, a year that educators, like all members of the world community could not have predicted, a year that made us all think on our feet and change the way we delivered our teaching and learning program for 50% of the year. The announcement of Remote Learning, hot once but twice made many teachers relook at and evaluate how they would engage students in learning without the live face to face in a classroom setting. Our staff, students and parent community rose to the challenge with three distinct stages - static delivery of lessons via Google Classroom, moving onto filmed lessons delivered through this platform and finally live lessons with whole class, small groups and individuals. Whilst initially challenging for many, our survey data and daily attendance demonstrated the majority of our students engaged in lessons, submitted work and used feedback to continue to push their learning.

As part of a CEM (now MACS) Eastern Region initiative, St Francis Xavier School was part of the intake 3 Learning Collaborative, a project in partnership with Dr Lynn Sharratt. School based leaders took part in webinar around 'What matters most in Learning, Teaching and Leading: 14 Parameter Research. Dr Sharratt's work identifies Shared Beliefs and Understandings, Case Management and Shared Responsibility and Accountability as non-negotiable for moving a school forward in improvement. This information was then shared and further unpacked with the staff via a zoom meeting. At this meeting, staff worked together to gain a deeper understanding of the 14 parameters and their impact on high quality school improvement. From this work staff identified another goal and focus to action as a school - 'Quality Assessment Informs Instruction'.

Targeted areas of improvement were in the areas of Reading and Writing where teaching staff, guided by Ms Julie Stewart from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (formerly Catholic Education Melbourne), undertook professional development in these areas. The leadership team met with Julie in Term One, and after analysis of NAPLAN data from the previous three years, identified writing as a focus point for whole school improvement. Despite the setbacks of remote learning, Julie was able to work onsite with the whole staff for a professional development day. On this day, staff analysed school data in Reading and Writing and engaged in professional reading and robust discussion around the key features of effective literacy teaching. They were asked to consider what areas of Literacy required explicit teaching and, within year levels, give a suggested time allocation for focused teaching and independent learning. The leadership team then used this feedback to develop the "SFX Design For Responsive Literacy Teaching". Staff also identified areas of Literacy instruction that they would like further development in, and this was the driver for Professional Learning Meetings (PLMs) over the course of the second semester.

It was identified that our students needed a 'balanced approach' to the teaching of Literacy as although students could use decoding skills effectively, their reading comprehension skills needed improving. Exposure to rich text, both fiction and nonfiction, within the classroom on a daily basis would enhance student learning in reading comprehension, and would provide strong model texts on which to develop their own writing.

Staff PLMs facilitated by the Learning and Teaching and level leaders in the areas of Guided Reading, reading assessment and the teaching cycle of the writing process enabled staff a greater understanding of the knowledge and skills required to effectively teach these areas of Literacy. Teaching staff engaged in over 14 hours of external professional learning facilitated by Julie Stewart, with a focus on the teaching and learning cycle of writing, and using a balanced literacy approach to improve student outcomes in reading and writing. A number of teaching staff also undertook 6 hours of external training in Spelling in Context, facilitated by Misty Adoniou, Associate Professor in Language and Literacy at the University of Canberra. This has led to increased student performance and greater impact on student learning outcomes, as shown through teacher observations and assessments. This Professional Development was also important in the subsequent revamping of the reading and writing planning documents used by teachers in the 2021 school year.

In support of these planning documents, a whole school 'Scope and Sequence' was also written following the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority guidelines, in the areas of Writing and Spelling. An SFX Literacy handbook was devised at the end of 2020 and contained these scope and sequences, along with other curriculum documents to assist in the planning, preparation and assessment of Literacy instruction.

Staff rose to the challenges of online learning during the COVID-19 lockdown, meeting with students to conduct 'live' (face-to-face) classes in both Literacy and Numeracy. Weekly planning meetings and professional learning meetings were also held in an online format. These meetings ensured that all teachers were involved in planning learning experiences based on student data and that the learning needs of students were being met in this remote environment.

The staff Professional Learning Centre (PLC), located next to the staffroom, underwent an overhaul. A stocktake of teaching and learning resources was carried out, with student resources being redistributed to classrooms and teacher resources stored predominantly within the PLC. Purchases for hands on mathematics learning support materials were made to support student understanding of abstract concepts through use of concrete materials. Take-home books for the junior school were relabeled and rehoused on portable trolleys for easier access by students.

The key achievement which underpins this success is the establishment of key networks with MACS Literacy and Numeracy staff with our School Leadership Team. Maintaining and strengthening this relationship is paramount to ensure the future growth and success of St Francis Xavier Primary School in its pursuit of being a high achieving school.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Staff tracked student progress using a number of assessment tools, both formative and summative. Over the course of the year running records, letter identification assessment, Essential Assessment in Reading comprehension, PAT-Reading and teacher professional observation and judgement, demonstrated an improvement in student reading ability and engagement in various types of texts. Writing moderation across levels using 'The Australian Criterion Scale" allowed staff to use a common tool to appraise student's writing, demonstrating an increase in student knowledge in some of the essential skills of writing, including plausible attempts at spelling, use of punctuation and improved sentence structure. The introduction of Reading Intervention across Years 1-6 and assessments conducted by these teachers (YARC, BAS, LLI) also demonstrated, that despite Remote Learning, targeted students reading levels increased and students were beginning to engage with their class program with less support.

The Mathematics Interview was conducted by the SFX Maths Intervention team to identify the students to be withdrawn for support. Their post data demonstrated an improvement in student knowledge of place value and counting and student ability to access classroom curriculum. PAT-Maths and Essential Assessment data, as well as student work samples were used by classroom teachers to assess Mathematical knowledge. It was noted that students were improving their ability to formally use the four processes (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division), however the application of these as well as using the most efficient strategies to solve problems needed improvement.

St Francis Xavier Primary School, acknowledges that Remote Learning proved to be a challenge in collecting unbiased and accurate data and that this form of learning did impact on student outcomes. Some of our students flourished with this style of learning, however some of our students were challenged by it. We look forward to continuing to increase our use of quality assessment to directly inform our teaching in order to improve student outcomes.

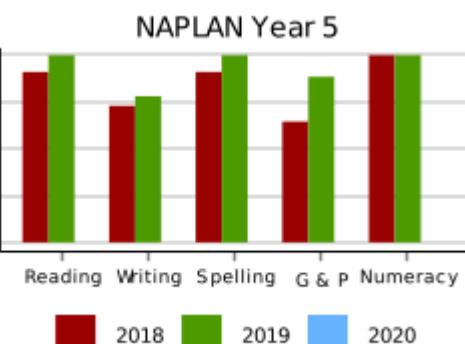
**PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS**

NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Changes %	2020	2019 – 2020 Changes %
	%	%		*	
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Reading	97.4	100.0	2.6		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	92.9	97.7	4.8		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	98.2	100.0	1.8		
YR 05 Spelling	98.2	100.0	1.8		
YR 05 Writing	94.6	95.6	1.0		

\* 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 further improve the Wellbeing of all by enhancing Relationships

Plan for designated staff meeting time to discuss SWISS data and plan improvements from this

### Achievements

In 2020, St Francis Xavier's goal regarding the discussion and planning of SWISS data ceased, as the program was no longer used.

Following the onset of Covid-19 in the early months of 2020, the year turned out to be one like no other. St Francis Xavier continued to work towards our goal to improve the wellbeing of all by enhancing relationships through a range of activities and interactions, both onsite and remotely.

New to the Student Wellbeing role in 2020, there was a lot to learn and lots I wanted to implement. I started out with training for Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) with the Department of Education and Training, network meetings through Catholic Education Melbourne for those new to my roles and plenty of reading. Throughout the course of the year, I took part in a range of professional learning opportunities offered online, particularly affiliate with support students and families during the pandemic, upskilling myself to ensure I could support our community to the best of my ability.

### Term One, 2020

Term One 2020 began onsite with our Prep parents welcomed on a very hot first day of school with a 'Cuppa and a chit chat' in the hall, an opportunity for new relationships to be formed. SWell week (Student Wellbeing Week) commenced for our students and teachers, an annual opportunity to spend the first few days of the school year getting to know one another, establish and renew relationships, set goals and expectations and settle into a new classroom and school year. The theme for SWell Week was 'Bucket Filling', a concept associated with filling another person's 'bucket' with your words and actions. Teachers were provided with a number of resources to facilitate this idea into their SWell week activities.

SWell week featured a number of whole school activities, including a Staff vs. Students novelty circuit on the school oval, raising money for our sister school in the Philippines through a coin line and a whole school assembly where we introduced all staff members, as well as a student favourite, 'Guess the teacher' using photos of when teachers were children.

In my new role as Student Wellbeing leader, I created a wellbeing space in the school where all teachers and students were welcome throughout the school year. All classes were invited for a session with myself in the Wellbeing room for an immersion in the new space as well as adding to a communal 'Blanket of Happiness.' To this blanket, each student and staff member added a

picture of what makes them happy alongside their name, when finished, representing all the things that make the staff and students at St Francis Xavier, happy. This wellbeing space would later be opened once a week for half of lunchtime as a quiet option away from the busy playground.

2020 saw the revamp of what used to be known as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), now referred to as Positive Behaviour Management (PBM). The changes to this framework at St Francis Xavier saw the introduction of six school rules;

- Follow directions
- Use your hands, feet and objects in an appropriate way
- Listen without disruption
- Speak appropriately
- Treat all property with care
- More safely around the school

Alongside these rules, the revamp also included a review of the current rewards system, both individually and at a whole school level. We introduced Gotcha Points, an adjustment to previous Gotcha's, a system of positive reward for showing our school values of Respect, Resilience, Safety and Responsibility. Working towards an achievable goal, students would aim to receive a certain number of points, to then be rewarded as a whole school for their positive behaviour. Bucket Filler Awards were also introduced, student voice at the pinnacle, an opportunity for students to nominate someone in their class for being a bucket filler. Sadly, within days of the introduction to students and teachers, we would be put into Covid lockdown, putting a hold on any further implementation.

Students finished Term One early without much warning, beginning their holidays early in a strict lockdown. In response to this lockdown and knowing children and families would be restricted over the holiday break, I created a Wellbeing home resource document which was sent out to all families as a means of support and guidance. This document was filled with activities and resources that children and families could enjoy at home.

### **Term Two, 2020**

Google Classroom took the place of our usual four-walled classrooms, our new platform for learning during Remote Learning. I created a Wellbeing Google Classroom which featured further activities and links that students could engage with at home. Social stories were put together to assist children with understanding what learning from home looked like and also what coming into school for supervision would entail.

As lockdown continued well into Term Two, weekly additions were made to the newsletter with resources for families and students regarding coping with, discussing and getting through the global pandemic in their own homes. The staff got creative, putting together a video for our students as a means of staying connected, being entertained and reminding them how much we care. 'Hakuna Matata' was a real hit - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhgGinvdka0&feature=youtu.be>. When the announcement came that students were returning to school for the final few weeks of Term Two, the staff decided

to celebrate once again through a video, showing our community how excited we were to be coming back! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOfS0pA6418&t=4s>

In preparation for our students return to school following a six week stint of Remote Learning, social stories were prepared to support students and families with the changes that would be seen and experienced at school, ranging from staggered drop off, to copious amounts of hand sanitiser.

Upon their return, each student was gifted a pack of chalk to, 'Chalk it Up!' and cover the school walkways with colour and celebration of being back at school. The students were commended on being;

Courageous

Helpful

Accepting

Loveable

Kind

Each family received a certificate of recognition for being supportive, flexible and working so hard with their child/children during Remote Learning. Students also received an individual acknowledgement certificate for the excellent effort shown during Remote Learning.

For staff, they were recognised for their significant efforts with an, 'I survived Remote Learning' handmade mug. Every sip of coffee a reminder of the hard work and dedication that showed the children at St Francis Xavier.

When back together, life at school was different, but the students soldiered on adjusting to the new changes. Wellbeing Wednesday was enacted across the school, every level taking part in a wellbeing lesson on a Wednesday.

### **Term Three, 2020**

Unfortunately, the celebration of returning to school was short lived, and during Term Two school holidays, the state of Victoria was sent into another harsh lockdown. Remote Learning was reinstated, bigger and better than before. Little did we know that this time, we were in it for the entirety of Term Three.

The staff were at it again in Term Three with another video for the community, this time adding a competitive component with, 'Who's behind the mask?' A competition to guess which teacher was behind the masked disguise. Wellbeing additions to the newsletter continued, this time adding photos of 'What's happening in lockdown?', where families and teachers were encouraged to send in photos of what they were getting up to in lockdown to share with the community.

New to the Learning Diversity component of the Wellbeing role, there was a lot to learn about the funding framework used in schools. Term Three saw the National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) submissions lodged, 83 students included. This saw the school receive \$624,821 in funding. Each school choosing how their funds are distributed, St Francis Xavier puts this funding into the employment of Learning Support Officers (LSOs) and intervention staff.

## VALUE ADDED

### Term Four, 2020

Before we knew it, we were rejoicing at the news that we were returning to school once more! After a difficult term of Remote Learning, we were heading back to school (once again), alongside several changes to what 'the norm' at school used to be.

Feeling like the school year was starting all over again, and knowing about the anxieties that our children and families were experiencing alongside Catholic Education's number one priority being our student's wellbeing, we decided to have another SWell week. This gave teachers and students the opportunity to reconnect and celebrate being back together. The focus of SWell week this time round was, Gratitude.

The students were gifted with bubble wands on their return to school this term, representing the staff at St Francis Xavier being 'bubbled with pride and blown away' looking forward to the 'return to school being bubbling with fun.'

It goes without saying that 2020 was a challenging year. The resilience shown by staff, students and parents was unequivocal. The challenges we faced as a community were something we could never have been prepared for, but faced with resilience, determination and a strive to do our very best.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

Two CEM Surveys were conducted in July and September to gauge the effectiveness of Remote Learning. These surveys hosted by Orima Research gave valuable Information and feedback to schools as to how the children were progressing with their learning in such an unusual learning year.

Here are some of the questions:

- What did you most enjoy about remote learning?
- What did you find most difficult about remote learning?
- What two digital platforms/tools/apps helped your learning the most?
- How did these platforms/tools/apps help you with your learning?
- What was the best thing your teacher(s) did to help you with remote learning? What further support would have helped you with remote learning?
- What strengths did you see in yourself during this time?
- How did you get better at organising yourself during this time?
- Which parts of remote learning should we continue when school returns face to face?
- What was different about the second remote learning period in comparison with the first?

#### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

### Student Attendance

School attendance is a priority focus with early intervention processes in place to promote student connectedness. Our electronic roll system has streamlined our records of student attendance and the reasons for absenteeism and late arrivals at school. Class teachers work with parents to ensure all children are attending school with the support of the Student Wellbeing Leader and School Principal. Some families take extended holiday breaks to holiday and visit family members interstate and overseas. This affects our absentee rate.

In 2020 our school implemented a new policy in regards to unexplained absences in accordance with the Attendance Guidelines implemented by the Minister for Education in 2017. 'Schools must advise parents/guardians of unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable, including for post-compulsory aged students.

St. Francis Xavier School uses an electronic roll system (Nforma). At St. Francis Xavier School, the following guidelines are used to assist in the implementation of the policy:

- The Electronic Roll is to be completed by 9:30 a.m. each morning and before 2.30 pm each afternoon by the supervising teacher.
- The school will send an SMS notification to parent/guardian each day when a student absence has remained unexplained by 9:30am on that day
- In the event of emergency procedures, measures are in place Eg. Class teacher brings a class list out to a DISPLAY, School Officer/Bursar brings a master list of all students
- Students arriving at school after 9 a.m. must report to the School Office with their parent/guardian and sign in using PassTab. There are two Ipads located in the office foyer.
- Where a child has missed numerous days of school (3 or more days) for no valid reason initially contact should be made with the parents to ascertain why this is happening.
- The number of absentee days are recorded on each child's mid-year and end of year school reports, and teachers are encouraged to make a statement at reporting times when attendance has been unsatisfactory. These statements remain saved within the child's electronic student file in Compass
- A referral should be made by the classroom teacher to the Student Wellbeing Leader for assistance and intervention where absenteeism becomes habitual
- Parents/Guardians collecting students at any time during the day must report to the School Office to sign out their child using PassTab.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	80.0%
Y02	95.0%
Y03	97.1%
Y04	95.9%
Y05	82.5%
Y06	95.9%
Overall average attendance	91.1%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

The safety and wellbeing of the students at St. Francis Xavier School is our utmost priority.

### Achievements

The development of Child Safe Policies including the continuing sign-in procedures and checking to ensure adults who enter the school have the appropriate Working With Children's Check (WWCC), including families, emergency teachers, external service providers. A code of conduct is signed by everyone who works in a paid and voluntary capacity at St Francis Xavier school. A staff meeting was allocated in Term One for all school staff to remain current and updated on latest changes and requirements by completing the e-learning module, Protecting Children-Mandatory Reporting and other obligations. This is an annual requirement for Staff to remain compliant and registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).

## Leadership & Management

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To enhance the leadership and management culture to further engage, challenge and support staff to contribute actively to the growth of the school.

To further develop staff team capacity in the development and implementation of school improvement plans

### Achievements

In 2020 we began our new streamlined leadership structure. This structure will be evaluated every two years, along with all specialist positions at SFX school.

Thus the 2020/21 Leadership structure as approved by the Consultative Committee will be:

Principal - Philip Cachia

Deputy Principal / Learning & Teaching Leader- Patrizia Rinaldo (0.4/0.2)

Education in Faith Leader - Kathy Toomey (0.2) POL 1

Student Wellbeing Leader - Rachel Giusti

Junior School Leader - Guy Toomey (0.2) POL 1

Senior School Leader- Sarah Karakaltses (0.2) POL1

The objective behind reducing the number of POL positions at the SFX School is to have more teachers in face to face roles in classrooms with the students. That is the only way greater learning can occur. As a result of this rationalisation we were able to commence weekly specialist Visual Arts classes and weekly Digital Technology classes for all students Prep to Year 6, and quadruple the amount of Intervention support in English and Maths through the school. There would be few schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne or any Government school that would have seven specialist classes each week, as well as the level of Intervention support across the school. The main role of Junior and Senior Leaders being an involvement in resourcing and classroom planning with teachers each week thus supporting a 'true' culture of learning throughout the school. During COVID and Remote Learning this added an extra degree of difficulty with teachers working from home and having to produce engaging lessons that provided for a continuity of learning.

The role of the Deputy Principal and Learning and Teaching leader over 2020 was twofold:

1. To audit school policies and their currency in preparation for VRQA audit in 2021. As such whilst the students were away from school in Remote Learning a lot of the ground work was done with basic elements of school policy writing especially in the area of Child Safety.
2. To begin the process of auditing the way English, Maths, Inquiry and Religious Education are taught across the school in the light of contemporary teaching methods and resources. As such the school focussed on the area of English, working with Literacy Consultant Julie Stewart from Eastern Regional Office to ensure best teaching practice in this area.

Obviously much time, effort and energy was devoted to the implementation and development of Remote Learning through the school. This was a method of teaching not experienced before that challenged all staff to move beyond the 'comfort zone' of teaching onsite per se. I was very proud by the way our whole school community - parents, teachers, learning support officers, students-all partnered together to keep learning on the boil and children engaged with school and peers over a very long and indefinite period of offsite learning.

## EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

#### Professional Learning 2020

- English - Reading and Writing curriculum - 20 hours of Professional Development in Term 3 & 4. Whole school closure day and then 5 Zoom staff meetings with Julie Stewart Literacy Consultant Eastern Region MACS.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	38
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$0

## TEACHER SATISFACTION

During Remote Learning SFX School Leadership conducted a staff survey to illicit feedback about how they were travelleing both professionally and personally.

Twenty Four responses were received from SFX staff, most very appreciative that leadership were in constant contact with and showed constant interest in the wellbeing.

The survey questions were as follows:

- The best thing about Remote Learning was...
- My greatest success during Remote Learning was...
- My greatest challenge during Remote Learning was...
- Once we were directed to make contact with families, I engaged with my students...
- I engaged with my students by...
- I engaged with other staff members by...
- What support did you most value from members of the Leadership Team?
- How did this support assist you?
- What personal IT Professional Learning did you undertake in order to be successful with Remote Learning?
- What strategies, tools, resources, human resources did you personally use to achieve this IT professional learning?

- Approximately how much time did you dedicate to IT Professional Learning?
- What are some practices from Remote Learning that you will continue to implement now that we are back to onsite learning.?

Here are some of the responses from SFX Staff:

- I liked the challenge of learning something new( even though it was very stressful) . I now know how to use Google Classroom and Screencastify
- Opportunity for ingenuity, creative thinking and the possibility for change in the way education is viewed, developed and delivered. Opportunities for children and families to reconnect, slow down, engage and indulge their personal interests at pace and place where they are most comfortable.
- My students were happy with how we were delivering the work. We had really positive feedback from the students.
- Running PSG meetings virtually, Organising the chalk gifts for students Social story for returning to school, Two whole school videos to the community. WB Google Classroom.
- The excitement my students showed toward making video presentations of their work. Some of them were very creative and learnt how to use other programs such as iMovie.
- Creating dynamic, rigorous & flexible learning opportunities for at-home learning through links to technology and combining with external agencies that would not have been possible on-site. Safety & wellbeing of all children, families and staff.
- Good communication with a few parents and I got to know the other teachers better.
- Keeping on top of corrections, planning, responding to emails, parent phone calls, etc. Also being able to 'switch off' on non working days
- Conversations weekly with Philip. Open communication (Weekly Zoom meetings) and guidelines. Knowing Phil and Trish were onsite every day for me to call or actually talk to in person, weekly zoom with Phil, Rachel's Wednesday morning coffee
- The slower, staged approach taken to introduce different aspects of Remote Learning.
- Getting back to me promptly. Supporting my program. Understanding what teachers were going through. Treating all teachers/specialists as important even if our programs were not compulsory. Thank-you!
- Receiving Positive Feedback was really helpful and being able to share concerns and address them.
- I felt a strong connection with the workplace - seeing people daily working at school, hearing bells and music in the background, seeing other supervising staff members during my own class Meet's was a calming and reassuring sense of normality, it helped me remain focused and just look at it like just another day at work
- This made the task of Remote Learning feel manageable and I didn't feel so overwhelmed by the enormity of it all. It gave me confidence and a 'Can Do' attitude.

**TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE**

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	92.6%
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**ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE**

Staff Retention Rate	79.5%
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**TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	16.7%
Graduate	25.0%
Graduate Certificate	4.2%
Bachelor Degree	75.0%
Advanced Diploma	33.3%
No Qualifications Listed	8.3%

**STAFF COMPOSITION**

Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	30.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	24.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	16.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	15.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## School Community

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To sustain and enhance a school community in which all members work together in effective and positive partnership

That the communication and connection within the school community will improve

### Achievements

In partnership with families, Parish and the global community, St Francis Xavier celebrates our shared story and the richness people bring. With this in mind we reflect on the 2020 school year.

Our year began with our Opening School Mass, attended by many of our families and on 25<sup>th</sup> February our Parents Association cooked up a pancake storm to help us celebrate Shrove Tuesday and lead us into the period of Lent. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all and we are grateful for having had this opportunity to celebrate and share in something special as a school.

St Francis Xavier Primary School acknowledges our parents and guardians as the primary educators of their child and as such play a vital role within our school community and our learning programs. With the need for Remote Learning for 50% of the school year, our parent community support was vital. Not only did parents and guardians need to consider how they would work from home but also how and where their child would learn best within the home. As a school we thank our families for the support they provided, the flexibility and resilience they showed and their positivity in meeting the extremely difficult challenge of being and learning in a lockdown situation.

The need for offsite learning by Victorian schools on two occasions over the 2020 year, meant that as a community we needed to think on our feet in order to continue to engage and connect with other members of our school family. A number of surveys were conducted to seek feedback from families in regards to not only remote learning, but ways that as educators we could improve the experience for students. From these surveys, many indicated their satisfaction of the way staff were conducting lessons via the digital platform, some suggestions were made and some changes to the delivery of our program were enacted to further support our students from home.

The wellbeing of our students was paramount during this time and as a staff the need to connect was always at the forefront of our thinking. As such, St Francis Xavier staff put on their performing hats to produce a number of videos to share with the community. This included 'Hakuna Matata - No Worries', 'SFX Return to School' and 'SFX - Who is Behind the Mask' competition. The measure of the impact of these videos was the emails and words of gratitude from various members of the school community fair & wide.

From our student feedback, many enjoying virtual fort making, dress up days and cooking sessions with their teachers, the SFX Virtual School Disco was also born with 120 students dancing in their living rooms on a Friday afternoon whilst being DJed remotely and

online. Enjoyed by so many, the need for a second one was evident. We thank all those who contributed to the event in their own special way.

SFX Spoonville was also created, led by our Visual Arts teacher Ineke Waller. On their daily COVID walks, members of the school community created and added their own character, bringing colour and smiles to the face of the many passer-bys. In November our school community was blown away by the Virtual Art show also put together by our talented Visual Arts teacher, showcasing the wonderful skill-base that she has developed in our students over the year. It was a true display of the many talented and gifted Visual Artists at our school.

Whilst 2020 proved challenging in terms of community involvement as was in the past, we are grateful for all the ways we were able to connect and build social relationships

#### PARENT SATISFACTION

[Remote Learning Feedback Survey #1](#)

[Remote Learning Feedback Survey #2](#)

## Future Directions

### **2020 - A MOST MEMORABLE YEAR IN EDUCATION**

Dear Families,

Welcome to our last edition of the newsletter for 2020. This year was an 'incredible' year in so many ways. I use the word 'incredible' from its true latin etymology and definition; the word 'incredibilis' - a year that has been 'hard to believe' and 'surpassing belief as to what is possible' and 'extraordinary'. I am sure that we will look back on this 2020 year in the future and tell our children and our grand children of our COVID19 year together that revolutionised the way we learnt, the way we ate and drank, the way we interacted with each other, where we went, what we were allowed to do....even the way we breathed in and out each day. As Principal of SFX School, I am so proud of the resilience our school has shown though 2020. To our SFX Staff and teachers well done to each of you. Being 'Virtual Online Teachers' is something that was never part of our teaching degree and probably something that most teachers never signed up for. Yet our SFX teachers have had to be agile, learn quickly, adapt and change their delivery if we were going to see our student grow from this year. It would not have been possible if parents did not 'step up', change their work patterns, make sacrifices, go out of their way in partnering with SFX staff in ensuring that learning continued to happen both at home and then when students returned to school. Finally our students are the greatest heroes in the 2020 year. They have taken things in their stride, listened to their teachers and parents, and made the most of their learning opportunities. I can assure the community, that our assessments over the past few weeks have shown that SFX students have indeed progressed with their learning this year and that they are ready to move to the next year level. I am also thrilled with the way they have reconnected with their peers and looked out for each other. Congratulations to the whole SFX school community it has been a challenging yet mighty effort.

### **Farewell and Thank you**

We bid farewell to our departing staff who have served our school community over many years. We wish them well in their future endeavours.

- Laura Annett - As announced Ms. Annett will be leaving us to have her first child in February. We wish Laura, Matthew her husband and baby Annett all the best for the 2021 year and beyond.
- Michelle Harriss - After 16 years of service, Ms. Harriss will be moving to a part time teaching position at Glowrey Catholic Primary School in Wollert
- Cath Vear - Having served in many positions at SFX over 16 years, Ms. Vear changes pace and moves into a Visual Arts position at Glowrey Catholic Primary School so as to pursue another one of her great passions in life.
- Jeanine Sutherland - Having taught many students over a 14 year period at SFX, Ms. Sutherland will be moving to St. Martin's School in Rosanna. She will be teaching Year 2.
- Maree Power -Maree has worked many roles in administration over 14 years, most recently as Bursar, and has will be employed full time at St. Paul the Apostle School Doreen
- Lana Brockenshire - Ms. Brockenshire will be moving to a school closer to home after 6 years of teaching at SFX. She will be moving to St. John's School Heidelberg as Year 6 teacher.



- Ms. Belinda Jackson and Ms. Charlotte Hunter have requested 12 months leave without pay from SFX to pursue other interests. We wish these two staff members well in their year away from teaching at SFX and look forward to their return in 2022.

Welcome to our new staff members

- Welcome back to Ms. Siobhan Morello who will return as apart time class teacher after a year of parental leave.

We also warmly welcome:

- Ms. Kara Germano who has come to us as an experienced class teacher from St. Paul the Apostle in Doreen
- Ms. Anne Hibbert who has experienced both Catholic & Government schools over the years and will be one of our class teachers in 2021.
- Mr. David Mithen has had a distinguished career across both Catholic & Government Schools with his most recent appointment being St. Mary's School Greensborough
- Ms. Deb Butler arrives from the other St. Francis school in Mill Park and will be a welcome addition to our Literacy Intervention team
- Mr. Brian Anderson arrives from St. Peter's School Epping and will be our Physical Education teacher next year

- And we have already welcomed Ms. Amelia Burnie in a previous newsletter who will be one of our Prep teachers next year



### **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR STUDENT LEADERS RUBY RAYNES & HANNAH KULKENS**

Who were both presented with the David MacKenzie Award for exemplary leadership, a commitment to social justice and care for fellow students during the 2020 school year. Vicki Ward, MP for Eltham, presented this special award to these fine, always well mannered, outstanding young ladies before their parents last week.

Well done Ruby and Hannah. We are all proud of you!

### **LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021**

It has been so great over the past week to begin to do the 'normal' things at school, like morning assembly, students mixing outside their 'bubbles' and it is my hope looking forward, that our 2021 will begin with few restrictions, so that we can warmly welcome parents back into our school again.

Sacramentally things will be different in 2021 as we try to make up for students who missed sacraments this year. In 2021, our final Year 3 group from this year will make their Sacrament of Penance. The Sacrament of the Eucharist will happen in Year 5 (as the students missed out this year) and these Eucharist celebrations will begin at Masses over successive weekends beginning the Feast of Corpus Christi (6th June). The Sacrament of Confirmation will be held for 2021 Year 6 students on Sunday 24th October at St. Patrick's Cathedral at 2.30pm. As for this year's Year 6 students who also missed out on Confirmation the Parish is currently negotiating arrangements with various secondary schools. Further details will follow in 2021.

### **WELCOME PICNIC - Tuesday 16th February from 5.30 pm to 7.30pm**

This will be our first of many Parents Association events for the year. One of the main objectives of the Parents Association is to encourage 'connectedness' amongst both new and current families. This will be a great night with a Parents Association BBQ, BYO picnic hampers and we may even have 1 or 2 jumping castles in our school yard. Let's re-unite all the members of our school community after being apart and isolated for so long. Let's get back to making connections in our school community, something the SFX community has always been good at.

### **SCHOOL REVIEW & VRQA COMPLIANCE AUDIT 2021**

This occurs at all schools every four years by Catholic Education Melbourne and is an evaluation of two aspects:

1. School Review looks at school operations and delivery in 5 areas:

Religious Dimension-Learning/Teaching-Student Wellbeing- Leadership/Management-School Community

1. VRQA - Reviews school policies and procedures and give our school our license to operate for the next four years

The objective of the School Review is to look forward for the next four years, set our strategic plan, and set our goals for where we want SFX school to be in four years' time. Parents, teachers and students will be involved in this process and is a most exciting phase in a school's development.

## 2021 SPECIALIST SUBJECTS

There will be no change in this area and the students will be the fortunate recipients of seven specialist classes each week. I am yet to find a Catholic or Independent primary school that provides these offerings and such a rounded education. (Physical Education, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Discovery Centre, STEM, LOTE - Mandarin, Digital Technologies)

Plans are well advanced for our 2021 Performing Arts Musical Spectacular that will showcase the children's music, dance and drama talents on stage. It will be one of the many highlights of the 2021 calendar. It is also our aim to have a Twilight Athletics Carnival at a nearby athletics track in Term 4; yet another whole school family event.

We will also be able to maintain our Specialist intervention programs in English and Maths

English Intervention(Year 1 to 3 - 3 days)      Maths Intervention (Year 1 to 3 - 3 days)

English Intervention(Year 4 to 6 - 3 days )      Maths Intervention (Year 4 to 6- 3 days)

Enrichment Intervention (Year 1 to 6 - 2 days)   Prep support (2 days a week)

As families would appreciate, there is going to be an additional impetus for learning, learning, learning in 2021 in order to make up for content that was missed this year. Our teachers are already making plans to deliver an exciting and comprehensive curriculum. With parents continuing to support their child with home reading and homework, ensuring that children are at school each day, and working positively with their 2021 class teachers, we will achieve great things. It is a powerful and positive home-school partnership that will make learning in 2021 fulfilling and prolific.



On behalf of Father Michael, Father Terry and the all the SFX staff, thank you for your support and affirmation during 2021. My prayers for you and your family are for a blessed Christmas, peace, a time to reflect on our year, how we have grown and what positives we take out of 2020.

Philip Cachia

Principal