



# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2020

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all present and thank you for attending our Annual Community Meeting. Let me begin by thanking you all for your support and understanding as we, as a nation and community, responded to the unexpected invasion of COVID-19 in March of this year. I am very proud of the way our students, parents, staff and community members handled the demands we were faced with to protect everyone as we continued to educate our students during the most unusual of circumstances.

As this unprecedented school year draws to a close, I would like to take a moment to share a few thoughts and sentiments on behalf of the Leadership Team here at Liwara Catholic Primary School. While we certainly celebrate our community gathering together here this evening we thank God for all the learning opportunities that we have experienced this year as part of our teaching and learning at Liwara Catholic Primary School.

We want to thank you for your kindness, grace, support and cooperation as our staff members worked diligently to provide quality remote learning experiences for our students and to support their efforts to learn online, from home. We have been amazed by the flexibility, tenacity and creativity that our students have shown as they have navigated this new and different way of accessing their education. They are resilient and we know that they will come through this difficult time having learned important lessons about themselves as learners. Our gratitude flowed out to our parents and carers, who made your homes your school while many were trying to work at home but still making the time and effort to teach and support their children.

It is fitting to remind ourselves that amidst the joys and sorrows of our everyday lives, amidst the busyness and activity of school life here at Liwara, God sits at the very centre of it all and serves us all individually and collectively as we strengthen our faith and trust in Him. As 2020 draws to a close and I begin my reflections on the year, I am truly in awe at what has been achieved this year through teamwork, dedication, commitment, inspiration and hard work, by all members of the Liwara school community.

We celebrated our inaugural Wellness Week for students and staff this year where the students all engaged in relaxation and mindfulness activities. The Year 2 students worked in teams to plan and construct a house for the three Little Pigs and also baked pizzas! Some students went on a 'Wellness Walk' between lessons and played games together. The Year 5 students worked in teams to complete a mini 'Amazing Race' around the school.

During Wellness Week what better way to show your appreciation for the teachers than creating a beautiful prayer. I would like to share the beautiful prayer our Year 6 students created during the Wellness Week highlighting the times teachers around the school have displayed all 4 School Values.

Once again students and staff alike got right into the spirit of our Book Week celebrations and this year we had an extra special guest storyteller Glenn Swift who kept children and staff entertained and engaged with his banter and jokes. The children all looked amazing in their creative and colourful costumes and the staff banded together as crayons from the book 'The Day the Crayons Quit' by Drew Davwalt. Thanks go to Mrs Margetic who keeps us all inspired with her wonderful stories and treasury of books.

Our GECKOS (GROWING ENRICHED CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE in OUR SCHOOLS) Team has been active in their commitment to increasing an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal people, their histories, culture and spirituality. I will share with you just a few of the activities that the team have been instrumental in coordinating. We have continued planting in our Bush Tucker garden throughout the year and we are working in partnership with the Tucker Bush Schools Program to

plant and connect with edible native bush tucker plants. Our slide shows some of our latest additions to the area to enhance the natural landscape.

Our students once again took part in the Wadjuk Gift event, an amazing reconciliation initiative encouraging Year 5 students from a number of Catholic Schools in our surrounding suburbs, to learn about and celebrate Aboriginal histories and cultures. The project is run by the Mater Dei College staff and students who organised and coordinated the day.

While usually held in July, NAIDOC Week was pushed back this year due to COVID-19 and ran from November 8 – 15. The theme 2020 was Always Was, Always Will Be – recognising Australia's First People who have occupied the continent and its adjacent islands for over 65,000 years. Our GECKOS Team made preparations to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our day began with a Welcome to Country conducted by Samuel Pilot-Kickett. Samuel also raised the Torres Strait Islander flag on our newly installed flagpole. Students enjoyed listening to guest speaker, Mikayla Morrison from the Fremantle Dockers AFLW team who spoke of her early interest in playing football and her determination to improve her skills.

Throughout the day the children took part in Waabiny Time games on the school oval, Waabiny Time video with dance and song and a Walkabout using QR codes to learn more about the bush tucker plants in our Bush Tucker Garden. The afternoon activity was a buddy activity. Each child was given a small circle to decorate and this circle has been used to create the mural on display at the front of the Ahern Centre.

The quality of the staff at Liwara have the potential to make a profound difference in the lives and the learning of the children in our care and this has always been and continues to be of paramount importance to me.

Our school relies on staff who are not only very good at what they do, but understand that students learn best, when they are working in a safe, respectful, supportive and creative learning environment.

I feel very blessed indeed to work with the calibre of staff at Liwara and as each year goes by, we are seeing the incredible fruits of all our planning, hard work and collaboration.

Some of the processes we have employed in regard to continuing to build teacher capacity in 2020 includes:

- Providing opportunities for sharing teacher practice – as part of our weekly Professional Learning Meetings and encouraging a model of greater shared leadership and up-skilling of staff in key learning areas
- Examining the Professional Development opportunities we offer staff – aiming to better align Professional Learning with their professional goals as well as our whole school key focus areas.
- Staff Self Review and Growth Plan Appraisal process and utilising creative and mindful timetabling so that teachers have plenty of opportunity to plan together Identifying strengths and gifts of staff – individually and collectively for the benefit of students and our whole community

On behalf of the whole school community I sincerely thank the Liwara teaching staff for the incredible job you all do. You are a cohesive group of educators who have worked hard all year to achieve both our shared goals and your own personal and professional goals. Our students are indeed in very caring, capable and talented hands.

Every child at Liwara is entitled to the opportunity to receive the best education by being given opportunities to gain proficient literacy and numeracy skills. This year we have continued to offer Reading Recovery introduced the MEG (Maths Enrichment Groups) program and continue with the Literacy Levelled Intervention (LLI) program for our students.

It is important to deliver programs that are effective, implemented with commitment, and positively received by staff, students and parents. These programs have proven to be successful because of the explicit teaching, strong pedagogy and sound research.

This year our highly dedicated SSN team have worked to gather resources provide a sensory program before school most morning for our students. the best possible intervention programs. We look forward to another successful year working with our students in 2021. The aim of this program is to provide students with sensory experiences that include proprioceptor, vestibular and tactile activities. It has proven to be highly successful and beneficial in meeting the needs of our students. We look forward to another successful year of building up our resources to meet the needs of our students in 2021. I'm not sure who has more fun at these sessions the students or the staff?

Our Liwara Out of School Hours Care program plays an integral role in supporting working families within our school community. OSHC provides a safe environment that is designed to cater to children's ages, skills, interests and abilities.

Our OSHC staff members provide a rich program that caters effectively for the care and wellbeing of the students who attend either before school, after school or vacation care programs. Children who attend are offered a range of play and leisure experiences that allow them to feel happy and safe and to interact with friends, practise social skills, solve problems, try new experiences, and learn life skills. The OSHC team is very proud of the service in supporting families to provide the best possible care for children outside school hours.

Thank you to all members of the 2020 School Board. The Catholic Education Commission of WA Ltd has made a change to the title of the advisory group formerly known as the School Board and who will now be referred to as the Advisory Council. You are a great team to work with and I thank each of you for the time you have given to the school and the interest you have shown in making certain that the school continues to flourish. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Board Chair- Basil Manganaro, Vice Chair – Mrs Nicola McVay, Treasurer – Mrs Clare Combe, Secretary – Mr Paul O'Brien, Mr Michael Nemere, Mr Simon Stevenson, P&F Rep – Mrs Amy Style & Parish Rep – Mr John Fernandez.

I thank you for your strength of purpose, your astuteness in the financial management of the school and especially for your wisdom in making shared decisions that have been beneficial to the Liwara School Community. I will take this opportunity to farewell Mr Paul O'Brien for his unwavering support and dedication to the school and who will be standing down from the Board at the end of this year. Paul has spent a total of four years on the Board. Please accept our token of gratitude and appreciation. (one of the APs to present Paul his card & gift). Paul, I thank you for your passion, support and enthusiasm during your time as a member of the newly named Advisory Council.

My sincere thanks on behalf of the school community to all members of the P&F for the enormous job you do each year. You are an amazing group who work tirelessly to draw the community together. As some of you already know Sam is stepping down from his role as president at the end of this year but will still be around amongst the P&F and I would like take this opportunity to extend my deep gratitude for his strong and focused leadership, especially in this year of uncertainty. I would also like to thank Mrs Amy Style who has served for the last two years in the role of the P&F Rep. Amy has kept the Board enthused and informed about all the wonderful events this year, albeit in a slightly different time frame and format than what was agreed upon at the first P&F meeting of the year! Sam & Amy could you both please come forward to accept your gifts. A perfect example of this was with our 2020 Fair! No one was going to stand in the way of the P&F and this annual community event..... a true testament to your capacity to plan and think outside the box but always keeping the spirit of community alive and well!

While parents have increasingly busy lives, at Liwara we continue to benefit from a strong ongoing contribution from a large number of people who share their gifts for the common good of our community. This year has really challenged us all but in our strong Liwara way, we kept open minds and creative problem solving at the centre of all our decision making. We have appreciated your

support during our remote and online learning period and as a staff we have spent time reflecting and re-imagining in our planning and preparations for the 2021 school year.

To the front of office staff Karen Rosser and Julie Basso, who has been filling in whilst Anthea Pickering was seconded to Broome to work with the principal to start up the new care school St Martin de Porres – many, many thanks for all you do for our school. To Lee for the outstanding work she has done on our financial operations again this year. It has been a busy year and Lee has attended to all tasks with great skill and efficiency. Thank you, Karen, Lee & Julie for attending to the countless tasks that you address on a daily basis. A principal could not ask to work with a more efficient, friendly, supportive, talented, professional and hard working team.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to all members of the school education staff, our classroom teachers, our education assistants, our specialist area teachers and our library education officer. One of the greatest strengths of Liwara is the commitment the staff have to offering the students engaging and challenging learning opportunities. They are always optimistic about what is possible and look to build the success of each one of our Liwara children. It has been a challenging but productive year where each of you has responded with great generosity and dedication in providing the highest quality Catholic education for each individual student.

You are a group marked by great professionalism and willingness to pitch in and do whatever needs to be done. This commitment needs to be treasured, affirmed and nurtured. I feel an enormous sense of pride, working with such outstanding people.

To the staff who care for our students, before, after school and during vacation care. We are so fortunate to have such a fantastic team to continue the culture of care and support outside of school hours.

A special thank you to our curator Mr Chris Ridout who has an amazingly diverse and never ending list of things to attend to at Liwara and who approaches all things with a calm and patient demeanor and to Mr Adam Graffin who works alongside Chris to assist with the myriad of jobs that need attention.... Nothing is ever too much for either of these gentlemen. I thank you both for your generosity of time and spirit and thank you for everything.... you are both highly valued members of our staff. I would like to thank Mrs Deb Fraser and Mrs Kathy Fitzgerald for looking after our students by providing all our healthy meals and snacks and who have kept their spirits up during this year of uncertainty.

I would like to celebrate my fabulous and hard working Leadership Team – the Assistant Principals Mr John Dols & Ms Angela Leddin and Mrs Jacqui Chivell our Early Childhood Coordinator– together we have certainly achieved much that we can be very proud of this year – much of it behind the scenes, but nonetheless so important to the richness, progress and culture of our school. I continue to highly value your friendship, wise counsel, loyalty and dedication as we continue to move forward into the promise of an exciting educational landscape in the years ahead.

At the end of this year we say goodbye and good luck to Mrs Kel Biggar & Mrs Beth Keegan who are starting the exciting road to parenthood by each welcoming their first baby into their households. We wish them and their husbands a wonderful new adventure of raising a precious little one. We also farewell Mrs Suzan Nash who has been working with the SSN team at Liwara for the last couple of years. We wish her all the best and hope to see her back in the future. We will be presenting the staff with their farewell gifts next week.

To all of you present this evening, thank you for making Liwara the very special place that it is. Together we can achieve so much.

Together we can make an incredible difference in the lives of the students we teach, the children we care for. Thank you for your ongoing support and may you have a wonderful time of rest and recreation during these coming holidays. It is an absolute honour and privilege to be the principal of Liwara Catholic Primary School. May you have a safe, happy and blessed Christmas focusing with your family on the birth of the Christ child. I look forward to a successful and productive 2021. Good night and God bless!