

Principal's Report – Reflection on the Year 2016

As I reflect back on the year that was 2016 - all the teaching and learning, successes and challenges, fun and laughter, tears and sadness - I realise that I am exactly where I am meant to be and doing the work that God has called me to do. I believe God has blessed me with a wonderful community of which I feel extremely privileged and honoured to be a part.

At Xavier Catholic School we believe that all children are precious and unique individuals, made in the image and likeness of God. This belief drives our philosophy that a child's opportunity to learn must be respected and valued at all times. The staff at Xavier use teaching and learning strategies that align with a developmental approach. In other words, we respect and value that children learn in different ways and that learning expectations and opportunities may need to be modified at different stages of development. We spend time getting to know our students well and identify their particular strengths and challenges so that we may best meet their spiritual, physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs.

We must never lose sight of our purpose as a Catholic School as we continue to assist parents, in their most important role as the first educators in faith of their children. Christian faith is born and grows inside a community. Xavier Catholic School is such a community that enables our young people, while developing their own personality, to grow in that new life which has been given to them in Baptism. We continually strive to encourage our students and their families to live in the faith.

We have continued to grow in 2016 with *over 370 students* from pre-kindergarten to Year 6. In 2017 we expect to have all double stream classes with closer to 390 students from Kindergarten to Year 6 although smaller cohorts in Years 5 & 6. This will mean a total of 17 classes with close to 50 staff members. We have recently seen the completion of our Stage 4 Capital Development Plan (ahead of time!) with the new Year 5 & 6 teaching block of four classrooms, toilets, additional hard court (as well as upgrade of our existing court) and fencing to accommodate this growth to complete our full double stream school.

Even as we continue to grow, Xavier Catholic School is truly a place where students come first! Our school exists for them and decisions about the day to day running of our school are taken with the best interests of the students at heart. This is evident in the many initiatives and programmes that staff members work hard to provide. At Xavier we endeavour to ensure that our students are given every opportunity to reach their potential through a variety of programmes. Teachers continue to support students in their learning by providing stimulating and challenging learning opportunities in all areas of the curriculum.

The importance of the Early Years has been highlighted in *our very successful 3 Year old pre-kindergarten programme* that has been operating every Thursday and has been full for most of this year. This program is aimed at ensuring the best possible start in terms of the children's readiness for school in all of the educational domains - social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual. Pre-kindergarten programmes do not attract any government funding assistance and therefore can only be provided on a user pays full fee system which we have endeavoured to keep as affordable as possible whilst covering costs.

The importance of good quality Early Childhood Education is also the basis for our **4 Year old Kindergarten programme** that runs 5 days per fortnight for the equivalent of 15 hours a week. Lorna Saunders and Susan Russell worked closely together to motivate and engage the children in their early learning. It is through the play-based experiences in kindergarten that the children learn so many new skills socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually. The focus has been on implementing the Early Learning Years Framework and the National Quality Standards to provide a good quality start to formal schooling. I would like to acknowledge the hard work that Susan Russell has put into coordinating the Early Years team from Pre-Kindergarten to Pre-primary as well as the **Nature Play outdoor playground committee**. We look forward to her continuation of this team that will extend from PK to Year 2 from 2017. Special thanks to all the members of the Nature Playground committee and we acknowledge the time and effort of Ashley and Carlie Ritchins in building the first two stages of our current facility.

Outside School Hours Care continues to grow and for this I thank Lyn Baxter as the Supervising Officer supported by Amie Torres and the wonderful band of Educators that provide a convenient, value for money, on-site service that is home-away-from-home for many of our families!

We continued to maintain our focus on literacy through the Literacy Support Program this year. The focus continues to be on the many students at risk in their learning who have been given individual and small group support with Helen Moir and Lisa Brooks where the emphasis is on engaging our students in active participation to specifically increase motivation and cooperation in their own learning that aids in their success. Whilst Lisa has departed on Maternity Leave, Helen Moir will continue as the Reading Recovery and support teacher next year along with her role as Students With Disabilities coordinator. Literacy groups have been temporarily supported by Janine Gumina utilizing the new LLI kits purchased by our P&F fundraising. Our plan is to continue to support all year levels using the kits and further staff.

In numeracy we also continued the **Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) program** - a second wave intervention program that looks at the children's mathematical development so as to identify those at greatest risk in Years 2 and 1 who join in the EMU intervention group. Casey Finlay coordinated and implemented this program as the EMU specialist again this year along with David Hamersley who has now also been trained as an EMU teacher to support more students in the junior years and to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for our students. Casey will be full time EMU and Numeracy Support from 2017 with the view to supporting more students in other year levels requiring further development in the mathematics learning area.

Our **Enrichment Program** continued this year run by Dave Hamersley. The aim of which is to challenge selected students, who are generally working above the class level, with specific projects that can expand their creativity and build upon their academic knowledge base. We plan to continue and broaden this program next year. With the assistance of purchase through P&F fundraising, David Hamersley and Jonathan Cox have begun a Robotics Club and classes from Kindy to Year 6 have benefited from increased engagement with Robotics. We are also broadening our digital learning base with increased wireless connectivity to support additional Apple TVs, laptops and ipads as we purchase more mobile devices for student use.

From 2017 schools across Australia are mandated to begin implementing the Digital Technologies learning area of the Australian Curriculum. Programming, systems, design, computational and algorithmic thinking will be key components of learning for the future. Students need to grasp problem solving and computational thinking which means they need to look at a problem in way that a computer can help them solve it. Therefore, Digital Technologies will be our specialist area from 2017 and will be taught by our new Assistant Principal, Giselle Konle who will take each class from Pre-primary to Year 6 as well as assisting the teachers to begin embedding computational thinking into teaching and learning across the curriculum.

All children at Xavier Catholic School have the right to feel safe and secure and to be valued and respected at all times by those with whom they work and play. Equally all staff members at Xavier have the right to feel safe and secure and to be valued and respected. At our school we have an expected code of behaviour for in and out of the classroom. Each class has a set of rules with the focus on intrinsic motivation for positive behaviours in various ways. We follow a Restorative Justice approach when dealing with inappropriate behaviours. As adults we need to allow our children to be responsible for their own actions and show respect for themselves, others and the environment. Xavier school promotes a Positive Behaviour Support Program with a whole school focus on promoting self-control and self-regulation through our SUPER Program. This program is a positive behaviour management program where students are taught expected behaviours. Students are able to collect SUPER tickets for demonstrating the key indicators on our school matrix.

As a school community, *we are truly grateful* for the wonderful help received by ALL helpers and volunteers who have contributed in any way to the functioning of Xavier School in 2016. Thank you especially to the team of dedicated parents who help with changing the reading books in the classrooms, with a special thanks to Kate Grljusich for her brilliant organisation of this important part of our Literacy program. We also thank those who assist at sporting events, those who go on excursions, and everyone who shows their support for the many other activities and functions in the school year. We truly appreciate the *Volunteers in the Classroom* from both school and parish who have regularly and faithfully committed themselves to supporting the students in the classrooms and the *Numeracy support parents* who have been working with students to hone their maths skills on a Wednesday afternoon. Your contributions have been outstanding and the children and staff have been very blessed to have had your time and energy every week.

I would also like to acknowledge the volunteer assistance of our School Banking Coordinator, Sherelee McGregor who can be seen every week with her "mobile banking" table in front of the kindergarten or on the lawn in front of the covered area handling the banking service for our school families. This is a great service that assists with teaching children financial literacy and to be responsible for their own saving. My special thanks must go to Cher Spurrier for her excellent coordination of the Breakfast Club that began in Term 3 and runs two mornings a week on sponsorship through the Make A Difference Foundation in partnership with IGA and the Good Guys. This service could not operate however without volunteers from our parent community as well as our school staff who are getting efficient on the toaster and giving of their own time. The numbers of students benefitting has increased this term with over 40 children most days and sometimes close to 60 students.

The Xavier P&F play a pivotal role in the building of a positive school community. The quality of our community says a lot about who we are as a school. This is so true of our marvellous families who continually give so much. I would like to recognise especially the Executive of the P&F - Karen McCagh, Tracy Furk and Emma Briggs and until recently, Jacquie Upton, for their leadership and organisation. They are supported and helped in the great work that they do by some of the Class reps. We are really grateful to YOU all.

Thank you to each and every one of the members of the *School Board* who assisted with the financial decision-making and management of the school this year. Members of the Board work to support all children at Xavier school and their commitment and support is indicative of the family atmosphere and Catholic ethos that we engender. All current school board members are continuing their terms in 2017.

This year the collaboration and collegiality between the three Catholic schools and the Chi Rho programme of our parish has set a great tone for the growing Sacramental programme. The new evening format of the Sacrament of Reconciliation was a well-received family event. A very large group of students from Xavier and Chi Rho made First Holy Communion and our final single cohort of Year 6 students received the Sacrament of Confirmation with many from Chi Rho in a spiritual weekend Mass. As a school community, *we are truly grateful* to Father Kaz, for your ongoing pastoral support and the parishioners of the St Francis Xavier Parish for welcoming our families at the special Masses throughout the year. I think we can safely say that Xavier Catholic School is truly the Parish School of Saint Francis Xavier, Armadale as none are as close as we are to the heart of our parish community.

I would like to take this opportunity to especially thank our Assistant Principals, David and Lisa (until her leave last term) as well as Casey recently for their professionalism, guidance and the knowledge that they all bring to the running of the school. Their hard work and dedication are truly appreciated as well as their support of the pastoral needs of our school community. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of Helen Moir and Aoife Johnson as key leaders of the Literacy learning area and members of our Curriculum Team.

Everyone knows that a school does not run efficiently without a good office administration and as the school has grown so has the office demands. I therefore acknowledge the dedication of Gretal for maintaining the school office and being always smiling at the front line of service to our school. I thank Tommy for his attention to detail and the exceptional way he has made our school finances a more streamlined and visual process for all involved. We say thanks to Mr D and John Hatha for their work in our gardens and grounds this year; and also to Sue Richter for maintaining our school canteen; as well as Maureen Moore in our Uniform Shop and the volunteer assistance of Carol Cresswell. We also appreciate the expertise of Sister Sandra who has continued to support staff, students and families with their social wellbeing. To ALL of you I say a BIG THANKS.

Whilst I am thanking people it would be remiss of me not to thank staff members who also give of their time to support our extra curricula activities: Ryan Italiano and Olivia Fitzgerald for Sporting Schools; Casey Finlay, Cody Paterniti, Serena and Dylenne Cresswell for Dance Troupe; Bonnie Perie for Netball along with support from Trish Ricupero (parent and relief teacher) and Bonnie's mum! To ALL of you I say a BIG THANKS also!

The only staff member moving on at the end of this year is Lara Millar who has been with us this year as our Geometry & Measurement Specialist and is returning to St Munchin's in Gosnells from her Maternity Leave. We wish Lara every success in their future endeavours.

Before I announce the staff for 2017 I would like to remind our families that EVERY staff member is here for your children. **WE understand that everything doesn't always go as planned - it is our human nature - but WE ARE HERE for YOUR children - we care about each one - their safety, happiness and well-being and we want the best for them too just as you do.** Class composition will be based on academic, social, emotional and behavioural indicators of each student to support where they will work best with which other students and teacher. *It is important that parents/guardians allow the Principal and teachers who have the experience, knowledge and expertise to decide what class grouping and teacher is best for your child.* Every teacher brings their own uniqueness to the classroom and it is this diversity that assists your children to be the best people they can be. All teachers are hard-working and dedicated so please let your children grow, develop and build resilience for the many times in their life when they will have to adjust to change.

Staffing 2017

Pre-kindy	<i>Monica Musulin & Ruth Malcman</i>	
Kindergarten Gold	<i>Susan Russell & Penny McIntyre & Dolores Connolly</i>	
Kindergarten Blue	<i>Lorna Saunders & Ruth Malcman & TBC</i>	
Pre-primary Gold	<i>Janine Gumina & Julie Townsend</i>	
Pre-primary Blue	<i>Serena Cresswell & Lorraine Twinn</i>	
Year 1 Gold	<i>Kirsty Davies & Bronwyn Shires</i>	
Year 1 Blue	<i>Alyce Budz & Leanne Nelson</i>	
Year 2 Gold	<i>Julia Grant }</i>	
Year 2 Blue	<i>Laura Bilotta } Karen McGrath</i>	
Year 3 Gold	<i>Aoife Johnson }</i>	
Year 3 Blue	<i>Cody Paterniti } Dylenne Cresswell</i>	
Year 4 Gold	<i>Ann-Marie Rosman</i>	}
Year 4 Blue	<i>Olivia Fitzgerald & Bonnie Perie (Special Needs)</i>	}
Year 5 Gold	<i>Jacob Papp</i>	}
Year 5 Blue	<i>Ryan Italiano</i>	} Valerie Chambers
Year 6 Gold	<i>Jonathan Cox</i>	}
Year 6 Blue	<i>Clare Bennett</i>	}
Aboriginal TA	<i>Leah Middleton } across K – year 6</i>	
DOTT/ECE relief	<i>Trish Leeder</i>	
DOTT relief	<i>Lauren Hind – until Maternity Leave end Term 1</i>	
Library Team	<i>Jo Wells & Bev Kelly</i>	
LOTE – Japanese	<i>Nori Kumagai</i>	
PE	<i>Joseph Sarsero</i>	
Music	<i>Paul Leeder</i>	
Digital Technologies }	<i>Giselle Konle</i>	
APRE & IT support }		
AP Admin/Support	<i>David Hamersley – includes Enrichment, Maths & IT</i>	
RR/SWD support	<i>Helen Moir</i>	
EMU/Maths Support	<i>Casey Finlay</i>	
Admin Secretary	<i>Gretal Cardoz</i>	
Finance Officer	<i>Tommy Ting</i>	
Social Worker	<i>Sr Sandra</i>	
Groundsman	<i>Richard D'Rozario</i>	
Canteen Manager	<i>Sue Richter</i>	
Uniform Shop Manager	<i>Maureen Moore</i>	

Thank you, God bless and all the very best for the festive season that is soon to be upon us.

Catherine Bauer Principal, 23 November 2016