

Staff Reports for Board Meeting Term 1 Week 8 ~ 16th March 2021

Rec PH and SS:

Both classes have settled into school routines well for Term 1. We continue to go over expectations and class routines; both have been well received by all students. The students are very excited for their first sports day, which is sure to be a fun day. Both classes are continuing Mindfulness within the classroom. This occurs after every Recess and Lunch. This is a great opportunity to refer back to our social and emotional learning through the use of the 5-point scale. This helps students to settle in from playtime and be ready for learning. We are beginning to see students use strategies taught during mindfulness both in the classroom and outside, when needing to self-regulate their emotions.

Within Mathematics, we have been focused on the topic of Number and the topic of Pattern using objects and colours. We are continuing to use collected data to inform our teaching and learning processes, in order to differentiate to meet individual student needs. During lessons we use hands-on activities as a strategy to engage students while developing student understanding.

Through our English block, we continue to have a strong focus on our THRASS knowledge. We have been completing an array of activities within our literacy block to work on this. Students are continuing their learning of the alphabet and the 44 phonemes on the THRASS chart. Students have demonstrated engagement towards our literacy teaching and learning strategies. We have been able to see growth within their literacy skills as data taken from the beginning of the term compared to recent data has demonstrated this.

For our HASS unit we continue to focus on families and how families might differ from our friends. We recently completed a family tree activity from photos sent in from parents. The students have very much enjoyed participating in this learning.

We are very proud of our students and the growth we have seen both during learning and through social/emotional learning. We look forward to the rest of the term with many exciting activities still ahead!

1/2 GE, KC and TH:

We can't believe how quickly the term is flying by! The new staff, Georgia Eckermann and Tamara Hayes have settled in beautifully and along with Kassie Charnstrom the Year 1/2 Teaching Team are working collaboratively to plan and construct the engaging curriculum. We have continued to collect and review assessment data, striving to meet our students where they are at and support students to meet individual and whole class goals. Class structures and routines are in place and students are following them well. Our students are very excited about the upcoming Sports Days and have been practising enthusiastically!

Religion

Each class has a dedicated prayer table/space that is mindfully and respectfully organised. We include prayer and grace daily, and have been focussing on the Our Father prayer for students to learn. Our classes thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the pancakes that the Parents and Friends Committee organised for them on Shrove Tuesday. This also made it fun for the students to learn the Catholic history of this particular day. We have been teaching explicitly about Lent and Project Compassion. During Lent our school is focussing on going without something/sacrificing something eg. Lollies, random acts of kindness and giving to Project Compassion. We have had a lot of discussions and activities based around these topics, demonstrating to students just how important our giving is to those less fortunate than us.

English

Tamara and Georgia have participated in PD sessions on the THRASS program which they have found very helpful and supportive in teaching this Word Study program. Our writing focus over the past weeks has been on correct sentence construction and punctuation, leading into recount writing. Teachers have been assessing work samples to support students in making writing goals. Last week Writing books were sent home so parents could also look through their child's learning tasks, offer positive feedback and have discussions about their learning goals. Reading assessment is well and truly underway which then guides us in classroom instruction. Families are showing their support with reading homework which also makes such a big difference to a student's reading skill development.

Maths

Number has continued to be a big focus. Assessment data has supported us to see where each individual student is at, and then continuing to enhance and challenge their mathematical skills. This year we have been encouraged to use The Natural Maths program and students are becoming comfortable with the structure of a mental warm up routine, a problematised situation and a whole class reflection at the end of the lesson. The whole class sharing has been very interesting and important as students can see other ways their classmates solve problems and learn from this as well. We have also observed students creating a deeper understanding when they teach their classmates and explain their own thinking during a task.

3/4 BP and SW:

Our 3/4 classes have continued to settle in well to our academic year. We are still having a major focus on promoting responsibility and independence within the classroom and school grounds. Our students are learning to take ownership of their Reading and Learning Journals and completing and handing in their Home Learning activities for marking.

English

- Detailed word study of 5 words each week, as well as revision of HOT words
- Continuing Narrative work using Seven Steps
- Daily Reading
- Some students doing Reading Eggs

Maths

- Consolidating understanding of Place Value
- Times tables
- Addition using number splitting techniques
- Problematised situations

Science

- Finished our unit on Chemical Sciences – solids, liquids, gases
- Starting Biological Sciences – Life cycles

HASS

- First Fleet
- Life in Australia before arrival
- Captain Cook

Religion

- Project Compassion work – BE MORE
- Lent activities

4/5 AH and GM:

To say this term has flown is an understatement! We have participated in so many school events and activities and are learning a lot more about our students. The structures and routines set back in the first two weeks have been working well within our classes allowing students to move seamlessly through their learning and wellbeing activities. The support provided by Linda Lawton and Jami-Lee McKelvie has been second to none, with students thriving from the extra assistance provided by the pair.

Assessment Data: We have commenced running record and Probe testing, completed PAT-M and PAT-R tests along with numerous other tests to provide us with data to support students finding areas of study challenging along with guiding our curriculum planning to support and extend all students in their learning.

English: In English, we are working at establishing Guided Reading routines to support students with developing their reading strategies, comprehension, and vocabulary. We are using a word study approach to break down the origin of the words and using the THRASS chart exploring the phonemes and spelling choices of our theme words. Our writing program will begin with the genre of Narrative. We will be using the Seven Steps to Writing program where students will participate in learning the purpose of this text type, structural features and develop skills and techniques in planning and constructing creative Narrative texts.

Maths: In Maths, we are focussing on Number, developing student's awareness of the range of efficient strategies to count collections of values and be able to represent these visually, symbolically and with concrete materials. We will then extend their understanding through place value to develop foundational knowledge and the basic principles of number.

Religion: We have been learning about the season of Lent with the theme of 'Be More'. We are focussing on showing almsgiving to those in need which is connected to Caritas Australia Project Compassion.

Home Learning: Home Learning will focus mainly on establishing and maintaining a regular reading routine. In addition, the children will complete a Maths task each week. Home Learning commenced in Week 3 along with the expectation that all students complete reading each night.

Camp

We have booked our camp for Wednesday and Thursday of week 10 this term at Illawonga (just outside Swan Reach). The camp places a strong emphasis on the Team work and outdoor activities. The activities at Illawonga Camp are varied and are based on a study of river ecology, animals & the Murray Mallee. Information about wombats, Kangaroos and aquaculture are included. The learning takes place in a fun environment and may include the activities of yabby fishing, ride on a tour boat and go to Sunnysdale farm. The camp also has a gymnasium with a huge foam filled pit. Other activities include team rowing in a large boat, campfires, archery, 8 ball and table tennis.

We are looking forward to a wonderful end of term with learning and excitement with our enthusiastic team of students!

6/7 EN, SH and TL:

The year 6/7 classes have had an incredibly busy start to the year. All students and teachers should be proud of the way they have handled and managed a very challenging workload with such enthusiasm and minimum of fuss.

Week 3 saw the classes elect school leaders. The election of leaders took place after an extensive leadership program. All elected leaders were deserving of their positions. We would also like to acknowledge the students who unfortunately missed out on official roles, all of these students are encouraged to continue demonstrating leadership throughout the school and playing their part to make our school a welcoming and vibrant community.

During Week 5, Year 7s attending Tacker Attack (mud obstacle course) with all of the other Year 7 classes from Renmark, while the Year 6s students went bushwalking and minigolfing. The aim of this was to build on teamwork, cohesiveness and as a reward for their participation in the leadership program.

During Week 6, we attended our two night excursion to Douglas Scrub, where we participated in teamwork, high rope and challenge activities. The teachers were proud of the courage, resilience and determination shown by students in putting themselves out of their comfort zone. The students all represented St Joseph's well.

The last few weeks we have been busy preparing for our stalls at Harmony/St Joseph's day. This is one of our biggest fundraisers for the year. All students have been busy creating stalls to make money for Project Compassion. This has included a lot of rich, real life learning in terms of creating financial plans, organising stalls and equipment, going shopping and advertising their stalls. Students are eagerly anticipating the day, and would like to invite you all to attend this coming Friday.

On top of all of these wonderful experiences and rich learning activities, we have also been busy fitting in our normal work from the Australian curriculum. Despite the numerous interruptions, we have been flexible with our time tabling and are starting to see some great benefits from the middle schooling approach we have adopted. The specialist Mathematics, English and Integrated lessons, are providing all students with great learning opportunities.

Religious Identity:

We have a busy few weeks coming up in Religious Education and experiences.

Classes have begun attending Friday Masses and leading the service, inviting families to joint them.

We celebrate St Joseph's Day next Friday. This year we have our STEAM building opening happening and Bishop Karol and Director Nichii Mardon are special guests for this important ceremony. We will also have our afternoon fundraising activities for Project Compassion led by the Year 7s.

We also will be celebrating Harmony Day and Say No To Bullying day on the Monday.

The second to last week of term is Holy Week, where we remember the last week of Jesus' life. On Tuesday night is the First Reconciliation celebration. We have 9 students celebrating this Sacrament this year.

Michael is taking 4 students to Port Pirie for the Chrism Mass in a few weeks. This is where the oil of Chrism, used in Confirmation, is blessed.

On Easter Thursday we are looking at alternatives for our Easter Play as classes are on camp or have other commitments this year.

All classes have a big focus on Project Compassion and Lent for the rest of this term. Project Compassion is our largest supported charity each year, and a lot of work is put into helping the students understand the importance of supporting the poor in our Catholic Tradition.

Fr Hau has settled well into the Parish and is visiting the school and classes regularly.

Special Education:

Teachers have been organising PPLs (Personal Plans for Learning) for students who receive an adjusted curriculum and are organising meetings with families, either as part of our upcoming Parent/Teacher interviews, or separate from it.

We have also been looking at identifying any new students who might need new adjustments, or students who have needed less adjustments than previously as they might come off of our NCCD reporting. All staff have been completing online learning modules on the NCCD portal, which teaches them about the Disabilities Act and the things that we need to do to support students who may need extra help.

Michael has been working with Julie, Amy, Chrissie and Jami-Lee on our intervention program and the things we are putting in place to support students with extra learning needs.

Deb James is continuing as our Wellbeing Co-ordinator, and Kirsty Johnson has been appointed as a counsellor two days a week. This will be an ongoing focus in our school as again, there are more and more students and families needing this support and help from our staff.

We have started working with our new CEO Special Ed support person Frankie Roberts, who will be working closely with us to support students with needs.

HPE and School Sport:

In Health, R-2 classes have been demonstrating their new learning about a range of safety topics using diagrams and pictures. The 3-5 classes have also had a large focus on safety topics, however, have been creating informative videos using iPads and the green screen. The 6-7 classes have been using Health lessons to analyse the techniques of a range of Athletics events such as High Jump, Sprinting and Discus, they will be presenting their progress through videos as well.

In PE, all classes have been busy practicing for Sports Day events. The R-2 classes with Mrs Thompson have been practising a range of games, as well as learning how to run for longer distances. While in 3-7 PE with Mr Sampson, a large focus has been on practicing the relays, field events and running events, working on both effort and technique.

In SAPSASA news, Archie Preusker has been selected for the Riverland Softball team, while Hugh Riedel performed very strongly at the State Swimming Championships in Adelaide. The next SAPSASA event is the Athletics carnival in Waikerie in Week 9.

Arts:

Visual Arts Report T1 W7: Visual Arts, the students have been drawing, making, and painting Kookaburras, Peppa Pig, Sunflowers, the Hungry Caterpillar, Bluey, Ducks, Lifesavers, the Rainbow Fish, the Simpsons, and St Valentine cards. Using special coloured pencils they have drawn and coloured a chameleon, a great white shark. They have their own monster trucks. They have drawn Elsa from Disney's Frozen. They have drawn butterflies and Tyrannosaurus Rex. In IT, the Receptions and Years 1-2s have created amazing work using Kid Pix.

Languages and Technologies:

R-2 classes have been writing sentences in Italian about themselves and learning simple greetings. They also made flags to hang up on Harmony day.

3-5 classes have designed their own country, which are fantastic. We will focus on writing about sentences in Italian for the rest of the term.

6/7 classes have been cooking in groups. They have worked well in groups to make a variety of dishes. It has been fantastic.

ESOs:

Our ESO's have been working extremely well together, collaborating and supporting each other in many ways. We continue to share ideas, adapt to changes and are flexible within our roles. A lot of intervention is taking place both in and out of class, with each of us supporting many students and teachers.

We have enjoyed assisting with Shrove Tuesday, school photos, Year6,7 camp and a fantastic Ash Wednesday Liturgy under our shelter where all the children responded well to. Other events have included assemblies and Sports Day events at St. Josephs school.

With many more events coming up in week 9 and thereafter, we look forward to supporting each other and all students and staff.

The Fabulous ESO Team

Student Wellbeing:

The Action Team have had two meetings this term. The first Wellbeing committee meeting (consisting of parents) was held on Tuesday 9th March – the minutes are attached with the other reports.

The Wellbeing Team are working closely with the P&F this year and we will be reporting to each other to that we can support each other with a common goal.

We will also be launching the online Wellbeing hub at the movie night on Saturday 27th March.