Principal Report AGM 2014

2014 has been a very successful year on many fronts. In Learning and Teaching, we have been involved in the EMU (Extending Mathematical Understandings) program with an intervention group in Year 1 and staff professional learning in Mathematics that has encouraged educational dialogue, reflection and adjustment. We have bought resources and families have been encouraged to buy Maths Kits for home where they can practise skills and strategies. We have had parent sessions where we have explained stages of development.

As we come to the end of term we are in the process of setting up a password protected Weebly with some of the students playing some of the games to illustrate the Maths skills being taught. We continue to develop our understanding around differentiation and use of the Literacy Continuum to plot students and their needs.

In Pastoral Care we have refined our PBL with online data slips and we have embraced the KidsMatter over-arching theme promoting staff and student wellbeing. We had a very successful launch of KidsMatter back in Term 1, the staff have completed Module 2 with its emphasis on self-awareness and keeping ourselves well, staff have been involved in a SDD around Wellbeing and we have continued to develop the notion of being Bucketfillers. Our Performing Arts Evening this year even picks up elements of KidsMatter ideals.

In Catholic Life and Mission classes have been involved in unpacking the scripture with an introduction to the concept of Godly Play. We have focused on developing an understanding of the Mass.

With the announcement of our new Bishop on Thursday night we are well placed to be part of a new time of enlightenment in Broken Bay Diocese.

I wish to thank our P&F Executive for their support of the school throughout 2014. Each one of these committee members has worked tirelessly for the good of the school in so many areas and I thank them most sincerely. To our Class Parents who help to develop and build community through their interactions with grade parents I thank you greatly. The cards that all the staff received last week and the delicious luncheon were a wonderful example of the combined efforts of many of you. A number of our committee are stepping down this year and I wish to acknowledge their generosity. Andrea Manfe stepped forward three years ago when Mark O’Connell stepped away from 6 years of involvement and Andrea has been a wonderful advocate and support of the school over these last few years. Lisa Manton has been our Social Co-ordinator for the last couple of years and she drawn people to many functions through her warmth and enthusiasm. Thanks too to Angela Thomas who has co-ordinated our Class Parent Contacts and overseen that organisation efficiently and calmly.

I also thank our other executive members who took on new roles for the first time in 2014 - Linda Tysoe, Alison Costelloe, Courtney Hollinger and Katherine Co- Elliott.
We have many associated branches of the P and F and Men in the Morning is one of them that goes from strength to strength and I thank Genesis Co-Elliott for his coordination. We are so fortunate to have such a supportive group of parents who volunteer for the Cuppa Crew, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Grandparents’ Day the Welcome Events, the Trivia Team, the Support Pantry, all building community and helping our school to be the special place it is.

P and F funds are very much appreciated and used to resource many areas of our school. Through P and F support every class now has 5 to 6 iPads that are used throughout the week by all students. We were able to give out Maths kits to every one of our new Kinder families at our orientation sessions. We have bought many new readers for our intensive guided reading sessions and also bead strings and other concrete materials to help our Maths learnings.

Of course our biggest school/P&F project in the pipeline is the refurbishment of our Infants Playground. Our progress in this area was slowed somewhat with us needing to remove the enormous gum trees in the middle of the whole area and then with St Leo’s College Year 12 DET students building the terrific decking we decided to wait for it to be completed. Watching the children play on this decking has given us added insight into how little ones like to play and we are now working on finalising plans for this area to be developed across Easter holidays next year.

Finally I would like to thank the staff of OGOR for the wonderful job they do each day. We have several of them moving on next year in new directions and we wish them well.

I very much appreciate the support of Cathy as AP. She works tirelessly behind the scene in so many areas and is a very vital link in the fabric of our school. She isn’t at this meeting today because she is on class in Year 2 giving them a wonderful term of learning and I thank her for being open to that possibility. Thanks too to Lily who has been Acting AP this year - she is efficiency plus, is always a step ahead of everyone and always smiling. Both these ladies are exceptional leaders of learning and we are so lucky to have them here. My thanks too to Sr Katherine for the wonderful work she does in supporting the staff, students and families of our school. We are very blessed to have her and her choir work is an added bonus. We are blessed with the strong relationship we have with the Parish and I think this was truly on show at our last Parish/School Mass last week. Thank you to Fr Robert and all the priests of the parish for your ongoing support and spiritual guidance.

Thank you everyone for a wonderful year. Each person has a part to play in the life of our school and whether your contribution this year has been big or small my sincere thanks to you all.

Jacinta Crowe
Principal