



# MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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## **‘Do small things with great love’**

The Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School (MTCPS) Annual report provides information to the school and broader community about the progress of Mother Teresa Catholic School throughout the year. It is drawn from school data, surveys, staff and student feedback and the review of the School Annual Improvement Plan.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School is a Christ-Centred, inclusive learning community that embraces the gospel values of **Faith, Love, Community, Compassion, Hope and Joy**, exemplified through the life and work of Mother Teresa, we strive to make a difference in our world and to all humanity.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our Mission as a Catholic School is to:

- Foster a safe and friendly environment where everyone is valued and accepted;
- Nurture the whole person, emphasizing Faith, Love, Community, Compassion, Hope and Joy
- Promote excellence in all areas of education and a life-long love of learning
- Through our rich learning experiences to make a difference in our world and to all humanity.

## SCHOOL PROFILE

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School is located in Zuccoli, Palmerston. As one of the newest schools in the Northern Territory Catholic Diocese, we are committed to providing an authentic, quality Catholic Education by promoting a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment.

Our educational program embraces gospel values whilst catering for the academic, spiritual, physical, social and emotional needs of each student. We look to our patroness Mother Teresa, as an example of ways in which we can give life meaning, direction and purpose, just as Jesus showed us.

We provide an inclusive curriculum that supports, encourages and challenges individual student development. Our school has been built with 21<sup>st</sup> Century contemporary learning spaces that allow students to learn in innovative, flexible and engaging ways as a community of learners. The integration of modern technology into the curriculum is used to support the learning process.

Our school consists of a culturally rich and diverse cohort of students and families from across the world. We believe that together we can, "*Do small things with great love*" to ensure the education, development and formation of our students. Our aim is to teach our students to reach out to the wider community and to make a difference to the lives of others. At Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School, we provide educational programs for students from the ages of three through to twelve years. The Early Learning Centre (three to six years), Transition through to Year 6 and Outside of School Hours Care including vacation care.

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School provides specialist teaching in Science, Technologies and Mathematics (STEM), Indonesian, Music, Dance, Visual Art, Health and Physical Education (P.E). Our Aboriginal and Indigenous Education worker supports our Aboriginal and Indigenous students. Mother Teresa has implemented many programs to support children's development of social and emotional skills including the Mind Up program. A range of extracurricular activities is offered to students including inter school and school-based sporting events, academic competitions, instrumental program and community activities.

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

After another fantastic year I am excited to present Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School's 2023 Annual Report. This school is in its sixth year of operation from Transition through to Year 6 students. The student enrolment numbers increased from 44 students in 2018 to 316 to end 2023. Our students have all come together from a wide variety of schools in the Darwin region and have connected and created amazing friendships in such a short time. Our class numbers have grown to 14, with a staff increase proportionate to that change.

We are a Catholic school that is inspired by the gospel teachings of Jesus Christ. We provide students with an excellent education that has a strong value focus on; Faith, Love, Community, Compassion, Hope and Joy. Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School continues to pride itself on building strong community partnerships. We are proud of the connections we are building with Parish, families, parents as partners, Catholic Education Office and other community networks. We are committed to strong school and home partnerships and encourage parents to be active partners in their child's education. Our Early Learning Centre and Outside School Hours Care provides excellent care and service to our students.

This year our students participated in liturgies and masses throughout the year. We are grateful to have our Chaplain Father Rodrigo and our Parish Priest Father Tom English in our school. We thank them for their contribution to our school faith life. All of our students continue to develop their understanding of our Mother Teresa Way which helps guide both our work and play.

This year we have continued to build on our pedagogical framework underpinned by our Catholic Identity and Mission goals by sharing a day together focusing on *Laudato si'*. Our Teaching and Learning focus on literacy, continues to be developed and we embed the Science of Reading across the school in 2023. Our staff have all participated in professional development that clearly aligns with our Annual School Plan including; Read Write Inc in Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Technologies with a focus on developing our curriculum implementation plans. Our primary staff have been dedicated to delivering quality Teaching and Learning across all year levels in the pursuit of excellence. As a staff we have focused heavily on understanding the role data analysis plays in this pursuit.

Community and Culture are core areas of school life at Mother Teresa. We embrace cultural diversity and celebrate our differences. Our Aboriginal Islander Education Worker (AIEW) has organised many events throughout the year including after school weaving classes, incursions from members of the stolen generation and Naidoc cultural activities for staff.

Our ELC is fully booked and has a large waiting list for 2024. This keen interest in the ELC is attributed to the professionalism and dedication of all staff led by the Assistant Director. During all school breaks including December/January, we continued to offer Vacation Care to our families.

We are proud of the foundations laid down by the school since opening in 2018. Together we are building a strong, faith community and educational foundation for our students to succeed today and in the future. We strive to *"Do small things with great love"* in every aspect of school life. We continue to look forward to future growth and to ensuring excellence in Catholic Education at Mother Teresa.

May God bless you,  
Reuben Johnson



## STUDENT PROFILE

### Student Population for 2023 (August Census Data)

Year	T	1	2	3	4	5	6
Boys	22	27	23	28	20	17	19
Girls	36	29	20	25	18	27	15
<b>Total</b>	58	56	43	53	38	44	24
Students identify as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander - 42							
Students who are SWB (Student with a disability) - 58							
Average Attendance : 91%							

### **Managing Non-Attendance:**

Attendance-related notifications from parents are recorded by school administration staff who in turn notify class teachers. Attendance registers are monitored in the front office daily and parents were contacted in the event of unexplained or regular student absence.

	Head Count	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
Principal	1	1
Deputy Principal	1	1
Specialist Support	15	8.8
Religious Education Coordinator	1	0.3
Teaching Staff (including Librarians	21	20.5
Administrative and Clerical (including aides and assistants)	7	6.4
Building Operations Maintenance and other Staff		
Work Health and Safety	1	0.4
Aboriginal Indigenous Education Worker	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>40.4</b>

## STAFFING INFORMATION TEACHER STANDARDS

All teachers are registered with the Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board and hold current Ochre Cards.

Postgraduate qualifications		Bachelor degree or equivalent	23
Master's Degree	1	Other Qualifications	23

## NAPLAN

In March 2023, NAPLAN testing was conducted online, and the results were reported against proficiency standards. The student achievement was shown against four levels of proficiency, with each assessment area having a standard for each year level. This replaced the previous numerical NAPLAN bands and national minimum standards.

We have received great results and, with the help of the Principal, Curriculum Coordinator, Team Leaders, and teachers, we have analysed our data both in cohorts and as a whole staff. This has allowed us to identify our strengths and areas that need improvement. We have shared this data with the School Board.

		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>Year 3, 2023</b>	<b>MTCPS</b>	<b>368.5</b>	<b>406.5</b>	<b>383.3</b>	<b>374.5</b>	<b>368.1</b>
	Diocese	365.4	386	377.7	359.9	379.5
	State	329.6	335.3	315.2	327.6	337.1
	National	404.6	416.3	403.7	410.8	407.3
<b>Year 5, 2023</b>	<b>MTCPS</b>	<b>477.9</b>	<b>466.8</b>	<b>476.2</b>	<b>477.5</b>	<b>456.4</b>
	Diocese	462.7	442.3	461.2	448.7	451.8
	State	427.2	402.6	415.6	424.2	416.1
	National	495.9	482.9	488.7	496.7	487.6

## REPORTING

The academic report follows the A-E style of reporting where students are graded against the year level Australian Curriculum achievement standard. In Term 1 and 3, teachers conducted oral interviews with parents on the educational progress of their children. In Term 2 and Term 4 written reports were prepared and delivered. At the start of the year, a parent information session was conducted to enable teachers to meet families and outline the expectations for the class.

## **CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND MISSION**

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School has a Christ-Centred learning community that is committed to providing faith formation where we develop students who strive to make a difference in the world based on Catholic Social Teaching.

Throughout 2023 our Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School community has had opportunities for spiritual development and faith formation. Our whole school masses have been joyous occasions and we have been blessed to have Bishop Charles, Bishop Eugene, Fr Tom, Fr Rodrigo and Fr Miguel celebrate these for us throughout the year. Fr Rodrigo and Fr Miguel have also been leading us with Class Masses for students in Years 3-6 and it has been lovely to see families beginning to join us during these times. Additionally, Fr Rodrigo visits our T-2 classes each term to talk with students and answer questions. These visits follow topics currently covered from the Journey in Faith unit of work that classes are studying and they also support in building upon the knowledge of classroom teachers.

Links with our local Parish and Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC), has been strengthened by our Year 5-6 students joining with students from Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians. Students enjoyed a shared lunch, some games of sport and then attended mass together. We had many students in Year 3-6 take part in the Sacramental Program at the Parish and many staff attended to support students when they received the Sacraments of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. The Pastoral Care and needs of the MTCPS community has also seen Fr Tom present at assemblies to read and reflect on the Sunday Gospel.

There have been many opportunities for the development of faith formation amongst students. Our Year 3-4 students presented a Remembrance Play of key events from Holy Week. Our Liturgical Dance Group performed at different times such as masses and our Resurrection Liturgy. Students have formed a Social Justice Group called Mini Vinnies. Our Mini Vinnies have been responsible for organising and communicating different events throughout the year such as fundraising for Caritas through Lent, Catholic Missions in October and the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. The Mini Vinnies have led us in many liturgies such as Saint Mary of the Cross, Mission Liturgy and All Saints Day just to name a few. Our T-2 students have been welcomed to a weekly Gospel Group. The weekly Gospel Group provides a time for students to hear the Sunday Gospel, discuss the meaning behind it and create some craft to remember the message.

Staff attended a commissioning mass together at OLHC as a way to promise to diligently fulfil our roles by witnessing to the teachings of the Gospel, to commit to serving the needs of the students in our care and seek to contribute to the wellbeing of all who belong to the school community. Professional Development of staff was a focus for Term 3. All teaching staff participated and completed a Cornerstone unit through the Broken Bay Institute (BBI). This unit on Catholic Moral Decisions aligned with the Journey in Faith (JIF) unit that was being taught in classrooms. Furthermore, all MTCPS staff attended our CENT Catholic Identity Day in September with a focus on "Finding our Heart". We had six members of staff present during this day.



## **LEADERSHIP**

The leadership group in 2023, consisted of the Principal, Deputy Principal (DP), Religious Education Coordinator, Inclusion Support Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator and Director of the Early Learning Centre. A shared leadership approach has been implemented where staff were encouraged to take on leadership roles. Other shared leadership roles included Information and Technology Coordinator, Health and Safety Coordinator, Junior School Coordinator and four Year Level Leaders. The Executive Leadership team met weekly and the year level leaders met with the Principal, Curriculum Coordinator and DP three times per term to discuss administration matters, staffing, strategic planning, school improvement and action plans.

Leadership team members also attended network days with other colleagues from the Catholic Education Office, Northern Territory Diocese across groupings such as: Administration, Finance, Work Health and Safety, Pastoral Care and Wellbeing, Principals, Deputy Principals, Assistant Principal Religious Education, Inclusion Support, Early Years, Data Informed Practitioners and Curriculum Coordinators.

Professional Development for leaders has included; Data Literacy with Selena Fisk where the focus was on the creation of a whole school data plan, building staff capacity around data Literacy, the visualisation of the schools data and interpreting the data. The primary focus of all this was improved student outcomes through knowing the students at MTCPS and differentiating the learning for each student.

The Mother Teresa School Board continued to meet in 2023. Representatives were made up of parents, school staff members, the Principal and our school chaplain. The Board met seven times and discussed issues such as the development of new school buildings and Infrastructure, Teaching and Learning practices, assessment data, school survey feedback and Annual Improvement Plan (AIP) directions and finance. The Board conducted an Annual General Meeting and formally appointed Board members in 2022 following the prescribed election process as outlined in the Advisory Board manual.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Curriculum:**

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School delivers the Australian curriculum, which includes the eight key learning areas, general capabilities, and cross-curriculum perspectives. In 2023, the school began transitioning from the 8.4 Australian Curriculum to the new Version 9. Teaching staff planned, assessed and reported on the Australian curriculum V9. Consistent planning templates were used across all learning areas, with the school beginning to update these to reflect the new Australian Curriculum.

During Semester One, the Teaching staff and the Literacy team worked together to improve and redesign the MTCPS Literacy planner. The aim was to ensure that the structured Literacy block included all of the essential components of the 'Science of Reading.' The Reading Leader and Curriculum coordinator provided support to teachers in implementing this new planner. They collaborated with team leaders and teachers during planning time, organised Professional Development through GO1 and from CEO staff.

Also in Semester One, MTCPS conducted a review of its Numeracy pedagogy and scope and sequences. As a result, the school adopted a whole-school approach through the 'Learning Through Doing Mathematical' program. This program focuses on structured, hands-on learning and effective use of visual Mathematical models to support learning. To facilitate this program, the school purchased new Numeracy resources, with each class given a Numeracy resource tub and each cohort provided with another tub of resources. In addition, the school organised a whole-school closure day to deepen staff understanding of the program. The event included a webinar with LTD, a CEO presentation and an opportunity for staff to explore the new resources.

Throughout 2023, students had the opportunity to explore four different specialist subjects. These were Indonesian, The Arts (including Visual Art, Music, Dance, and Drama), Health & Physical Education, and STEM. With the reintroduction of STEM, students were able to access the Technologies curriculum, utilising robots and coding while also rebuilding and maintaining the vegetable garden through design technology.

The school has continued the Instrumental Music program provided by the nearby secondary school, MacKillop Catholic College and an outside provider Songbird Music.

As per our AIP, teachers continued to develop their instruction and knowledge of best practice in particular on teaching Reading and now branching into Numeracy. To ensure fidelity with the Read Write Inc. program, the Literacy Consultant has been visiting the school every term to provide coaching, observations and support to teachers. The teachers and ISA's have shown significant growth in their understanding and implementation of the program. Due to our growing numbers, the school has also purchased new Read Write Inc. (RWI) resources this year.

## **INCLUSION SUPPORT COORDINATOR**

The Inclusion Support Coordinator (ISC) coordinates the vast inclusion support needs of students at Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School across Transition to Year 6. This year the Inclusion team commenced the 2023 school year with 50 funded students, and Term 4 saw this number grow to 67 students. Our 2023 NCCD student cohort included 7 extensive, 65 substantial, 31 supplementary and 8 QDTP students with needs ranging across sensory, physical, cognitive and social profiles.

The 2023 Inclusion support team included the following staff: Inclusion Support Coordinator (1.0), Inclusion Support Practitioner (1.0), RWI Learning Support Teacher (1.0) and 20 Inclusion Support Assistants. The addition of a Learning Support Teacher has allowed for the seamless roll out of our Read Write Inc literacy program from Transition to Year 4. It also allowed for Fresh Start Intervention to be implemented with our Year 5 and 6 students requiring targeted, evidence based literacy intervention.

In addition the MTCPS Inclusion team also worked closely with outside stakeholders in order to facilitate ongoing working connections between school and families. MTCPS established relationships with external support including the Children's Development Team, Department of Education Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Programs and Services (SWIPS) team, Vision Australia and varied allied health therapists including Speech Therapists, Play Therapists, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists. MTCPS frequently communicates with Pediatricians and Psychologists in order to best establish a proactive wrap-around support system focusing on student needs. There are currently a number of NDIS providers utilising our school space to provide therapy for students with NDIS plans.

This year the ISC ensured staff accessed meaningful and proactive Professional Development. Staff engaged in mandatory reporting Professional Development and completed NCCD online training modules. The inclusion team participated in Zones of Regulation and Mind Up upskilling, as well as diving into Neuro Affirming practices and how to practically apply ideas in the classroom. INSPIRE training was provided to all learning teams and on the go support given as required throughout the school year.

During 2023 MTCPS students had access to a variety of growth opportunities designed to target specific academic and social and emotional needs. In class teachers were supported to make a variety of adjustments and accommodations in order to best support student challenges. These included but were not limited to differentiated learning tasks, heavy work routines, sensory breaks, visual supports including timetables, and calm corners/engine rooms. We also saw the introduction of our weekly Therapy Dogs program targeting emotional regulation and language skills, as well as providing an opportunity for the development of social skills and connections amongst peers. We continued with the use of Zones of Regulation across the school as a holistic self-regulation program, equipping students with the skills needed to not only identify emotions, but also utilise targeted regulation strategies to support engagement with learning and peers. Students also participated in a weekly Technology Club where they were able to access learning needed to utilise assistive technology in the classrooms when completing learning tasks. Social skills groups including ChatterMatters were established in our middle and upper years to foster the development of conversational skills and connections between peers.

Transition from ELC to school commenced in July with observations from the ISC and ELC Director identifying and referring students as necessary to ensure early intervention was in place for students. This included vision and hearing tests being completed and Early Childhood Australia referrals being submitted. ELC students were entered on GradeXpert and Inspire and this provided a platform for students to have their needs met prior to entering the Primary school setting.

The school has continued to be supported by the Catholic Education Office Inclusion Support Advisor and the specialist team within the Catholic Education Office. The Leader of Inclusion Service, Catholic Education Office, has once again provided MTCPS with valuable ongoing support and guidance in 2023.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

This year we provided Professional Development (PD) opportunities to staff. We did make use of CEO initiatives, such as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Science of Reading (SoR) & RWI training & support and Grade Xpert Training. Executive Leadership members also attended workshops with Selena Fisk to enhance our understanding of data and the role it plays in explicit teaching at a child's point of need. We utilised this professional development to build staff capacity around data analysis practices. Staff received PD in Religious Education through our whole school closure Catholic Identity Day and our Pupil Free Day which focused on whole school Mathematics through the Learning Through Doing program.

In 2023, our main curriculum focus was continuing to improve reading outcomes, particularly in lower primary. Our school continued to professionally develop existing and new staff in the Science of Reading pedagogical approach. MTCPS outsourced for a critical friend and employed a professional development provider around Read Write Inc. They were able to observe and review our implementations each term and gave critical feedback to executive leadership around Read Write Inc. The school continued to provide Professional Development online and professional learning through team meetings and staff meetings. Having adopted the Read Write Inc program we continued to send new teachers and ISAs to RWI and Fresh Start intervention training.

CEO Education Officers supported us in Literacy, Mathematics, Data Analysis and Age Appropriate Pedagogies. Expertise was provided by the Early Years Literacy Education Officer from CEO. She worked with our transition team over the course of two terms to deepen understanding and adapt current practices to better reflect an approach of age appropriate pedagogy. The Education Officer Numeracy/ Mathematics has also continued to assist staff with mathematics planning, resources and professional learning. The Education Officer School Data Analysis worked closely with our Curriculum Coordinator around whole school data, Grade Xpert and provided DIBELS for all teachers.

## **PASTORAL CARE AND WELLBEING (PCWB)**

In 2023, Wellbeing was supported by the Inclusion Coordinator, PCWB officer, AIEW, Defence Force Mentor and CatholicCare counsellor. This provided a wide net to ensure that staff and students within the school community had their needs met where possible.

Throughout the 2023 school year the counsellor supported 32 students and their families in a range of ways including one on one, small group sessions and support for families. Some of these services were transferred to out of school sessions. Catholic Care supported three staff members in 2023.

The MindUp program (Social and Emotional) continued to be taught and has been integrated with the new Keeping Safe Child Protection curriculum.

Zones of Regulation has been embedded in all classrooms, including OSHC & ELC and has continued to be explicitly taught individually to students with identified self regulation needs.

Staff health and wellbeing was also a focus and staff had opportunities to attend staff functions, wellbeing & celebratory morning teas to continue to build a positive and supportive culture to ensure staff well being.

A range of lunchtime clubs (Passive play, library, lego, defence, gardening) were implemented throughout the week. This creates a safe, quiet, teacher guided play space for students.

Parent information nights and parent/teacher goal setting meetings were held throughout the year. School newsletters, Audiri posts, See Saw posts and the school Facebook page were used to continue to keep parents informed.

Colour fun run, sports days, MT Feast day and end of year fun days were all well attended by parents and enjoyed by students.

## **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RENEWAL FRAMEWORK (SIRF)**

SIRF meetings with teachers occurred each term, with additional SIRF updates & discussions between Leadership members. SIRF goals & strategies were discussed and reviewed regularly and formed our AIP & Strategic Plan; goals and processes.

## **Tell Them From Me (TTFM)**

In Term 3, we conducted the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) Surveys with Parents, Staff, Teachers and students from year 4-6. The survey response was very high and we had over 60% of our families complete the survey. This gave us a very clear picture of people's wellbeing, perceptions of our school and structures and specific feedback on areas for improvement. The Leadership team analysed the data and created a Powerpoint presentation which was presented to teachers at a staff meeting. Teachers then were given the opportunity to work with the TTFM survey data and complete future wellbeing goals and strategies which then informed the Annual Improvements Plan (AIP) for 2024. With the help of our IT coordinator and Year 6 leaders, we created a one page flyer of the parents' feedback and future improvements we will put in place in relation to their feedback. This was presented as a video of the year 6 leaders reading the flyer aloud and sent to all families.

## **SEESAW**

At Mother Teresa Catholic Primary, we seek to provide effective communication to our parents and families. Teachers provide ongoing evidence of student progress through an App called 'SEESAW'. Parents are able to see regular evidence of what their child is learning and how they are progressing. The app is used as a student reflection tool, allowing students the opportunity to become reflective learners.

Through *SEESAW* classroom/specialist teachers are able to:

- Acknowledge and encourage positive behaviour of students in their learning
- Keep parents/carers informed and updated about student learning throughout the day
- Provide a way for students to feel recognised and engaged in their learning
- Communicate positive learning stories to parents/carers
- Support students in their learning
- Develop positive relationships between parents/carers, students and classroom teachers
- Share school notices, events and important information with parents.

## **CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

At Mother Teresa Catholic Primary, our values are embedded across all learning areas. Inspired by our patroness Mother Teresa, students and parents/ guardians are encouraged to show compassion to those in our community who are in need. Students, staff and parents collected non-perishable food items and gifts to give to St Vincent De Paul Society and Missionaries of Charities to give out to families in need in our community. Additionally, we held special events to recognise and thank key members of our community, examples; Mother's Day & Father's Day breakfasts and liturgies.

## **EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

Our Early Learning Centre has a capacity of 75 children. We have three rooms that cater for children from three to five years old.

All our educators have a Master's, Bachelor's Degree, Diploma or Certificate III qualification in Early Childhood Education and Care, or are studying towards a qualification. We provide ongoing training for our educators to upskill and develop future leaders. Our training for the year: Programming, Critical Reflection, Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Developing Leaders in the Early Years, writing observations and learning stories, Understanding challenging behaviour in early years, Language development in early years, Supporting children with Vision impaired and cerebral palsy, WHS, Mandatory Reporting, Understanding Autism and ADHD, Zones of regulations, Phoenix Cups Framework. Our educators reflect daily on their strengths and weaknesses, and then critically reflect during staff meetings for continuous improvement.

We embrace play-based learning approach and Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences to design our daily learning program based on Early Year Learning Framework and NT Preschool Curriculum. We strongly believe that play-based and holistic methodologies will build a strong foundation in children's first five years for their future learning that can last a lifetime because early experiences have an impact on the nature of the brain's developing architecture. In light of this, we work collaboratively and cooperatively with parents and carers, allied health professionals to build a strong, faith community and educational foundation for our children to succeed today and in the future.

In 2023, we succeeded in the application of the Innovative Solution Fund not just for our service but for all Early Learning Centres in the Catholic System here in the NT. This fund is an innovative solution project called Phoenix cups. The Phoenix Cups Framework will help you understand how to meet your most important life needs, and the needs of those around you, by discovering what Cups you need to keep full, how they influence behaviours, and how you can use them to build relationships in all aspects of life. This is intensive training for our educators and great support for our children. Parents and caregivers play a valuable and vital role. Hence, Goal Setting meeting and Learning Journey Night were the two significant opportunities that involved parents for their child's learning. During the Goal Setting meeting, educators and parents were in the meeting together to explore the learning potential in everyday events, routines and play. We discussed and set the learning goals for the year to help their child reach developmental milestones. The Learning Journey Night provided meaningful chances and moments for parents to celebrate with the child about their achievements.

We created a range of educational and supportive learning environments where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Program consisted of child-led activities and intentional teaching activities. We implemented Physical Education (AFL and Rugby Tots), library visit program, Godly play, Early Learning STEM Australia (ELSA) and Early Learning Language Program (ELLA). ELSA program comes with apps which are play-based, encourage active learning, and inspire children to explore and interact with their natural world. Instead of focusing on discrete STEM disciplines, ELSA apps promote STEM Practices: the ideas, methods and values that underpin STEM. Meanwhile, ELLA is an exciting bilingual language learning program for preschoolers. It opens up a world of cultural possibilities for children early in life. This year we also started the Preschool Heggarty Program. Heggarty Phonemic Awareness is a research-based 35-week curriculum of daily phonemic and phonological awareness lesson plans. We partnered with Top End Health Service to provide a 12 week program in the Safe for kids program in early years. This program teaches children to learn about their bodies and how to protect them. Teaching children to respect our environment and be grateful for the food we are provided. STEM collaboration with St Francis School where children create their own lego cars and learn about speed and velocity. Another partnership we started this year is celebrating our unsung heroes. We invited families/parents that serve our community like the army, dentist, doctores, nurses, paramedics and police officers to come in and talk to the children about what they do for our community. We have continued our Japanese Cross Cultural program through Think-A-Lot. This program gave an opportunity to our preschool to see and meet preschoolers from different countries like Japan. They learned about each other's culture, food, songs and language. Our service also went through Assessment and Rating where we received Meeting the National Regulation with some exceeding themes. Our strengths show in Quality Area 1 Program and Practice, Quality Area 5 Relationship with children, Quality Area 6 Collaboration with family and community, and Quality Area 7 Governance and Leadership.

For 2024 we will continue with all our exciting programs including Phoenix cups training for our educators at the start of the year which will include our Outside Hours School Care. We will also be adding a Mind Up and Music Therapy in our program.

## **FINANCE, FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

The school and new facilities continued to be maintained to a high standard throughout 2023. An external audit was conducted by KPMG in February this year on the school's financial activities.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Our Community and Culture highlights included:

- Masses and liturgies to celebrate feast days and special occasions, including Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Remembrance Day, Mother Teresa Feast Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, End of School Year and Graduation
- Information Nights (each cohort, OSHC, ELC, RWI)
- NAIDOC Liturgy and Activities including BBQ, Basket weaving, Didgeridoo workshops
- Book Week
- Gala Days (interschool sports)
- Sport's Days
- Colour Fun Run
- Harmony Day events
- Crazy Hair & Crazy Sock day
- Talk like a Pirate Day
- Mothers Day Liturgy and breakfast
- Fathers Day breakfast
- Silly Scientist incursion
- 5-6 School Camp
- Andrew Chinn Concert
- St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal
- Christmas Carols
- End of year Graduation
- End of year Fun day.

## **DEFENCE SCHOOL MENTOR**

In 2023 the Defence School Mentor (DSM) assisted and supported many of our defence families. She has mentored many Australian Defence Force parents and children to become familiar with the school and to integrate into the school community. They worked closely with teachers to monitor Defence Force students and provided support for any personal challenges they faced, such as friendships, peer groups, classroom difficulties, educational support and anxiety due to new postings. Defence Force Club was run each Wednesday at lunchtime and proved a place for defence students to socialise and connect with each other. The DSM was involved in the planning and presentation of significant Defence force events such as ANZAC Day Awards (1<sup>st</sup> Place for the Northern Territory,) ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, visits from ADF Members and US Marines (Operation Pitch Black) and the US Marines to support the school in Sports Day and Colour Fun Run.

## **ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER EDUCATION WORKER**

We have had an amazing 2023 with all our students. In May we celebrated Sorry Day, we held a ceremony and liturgy for our assembly. We invited a special guest who is a part of the Stolen Generation and our school community to talk to the 3/4 and 5/6 students about the past and some of the injustices but also about the progress that has been made over a number of years for the stolen generation.

Reconciliation was a fun packed week with Bunnings coming in and helping our transitions do painting on pots and planting beautiful flowers to create our reconciliation garden. A well-known local Larrakia Elder joined our 5/6 students in native jewelry and bead making workshop while our AIEW taught cultural traditional weaving of baskets and earrings with raffia and pandanus.

ELC has enjoyed play based learning and participating in Aboriginal activities along with learning new songs in language. Over July holidays they had a fun petting zoo visit with interesting Australian animals. OSHC students had the opportunity to create clap sticks and learn traditional weaving and painting through their vacation care program and after school care activities.

Our AIEW helped design a staff cultural immersion on country by attending and joining in the festivities at the Barunga festival. This involved camping on country for four days, enjoying the rich community culture and some staff joined the local football team and brought the premiership home. At Barunga, staff enjoyed didgeridoo making, spear throwing, aboriginal medicine workshops, amazing music and Red flag dancers. They had the opportunity to visit elders and discuss the referendum for 2023. This experience was then shared at our Catholic Identity day with all staff from Catholic Education to share our love for education and passion for Reconciliation towards the future.

Term 3 we had a father and son didgeridoo workshop run over the weekend. We had an amazing turn out of fathers and sons including our male staff members and they were taught by Daniel Blitner who we connected with at Barunga festival to create their very own didgeridoos and story lines for their creation.

NAIDOC week was packed full of learning and fun with the year 3/4 students having fun with Trish and Michelle from Bunnings Palmerston with art and craft, dot painting and sand art. Transitions had a wild animal encounter with all different reptiles that we share our country with from blue tongue lizards to large snakes, and a sneaky crocodile named Snappy. Year 5/6 students had an exciting visit from Thomas with his crocodile that is 1.6 meters long for a chat on the importance of these significant creatures and being careful in the wet season in our waterways.

The Year 5/6 students learnt the traditional way to use bamboo spears with a local Larrakia man who also did an after school workshop with all staff. He talked about the country, where to resource material to make spears and what the spears are mainly used for hunting.

A cultural feast was the way we ended NAIDOC week by sharing a meal and trying traditional food from kangaroo to mud crabs. The staff thought this was an amazing way to celebrate together and wanted to make it a yearly tradition.



## **FUTURE PRIORITIES**

In line with our Strategic plan and our annual school improvement goals, the following areas have been identified as priority areas for 2024:

### **1. CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

- Continue to strengthen the teaching of Religious Education across the school.
- Provide faith formation opportunities to staff to assist in understanding the faith and delivering the curriculum
- Develop staff's understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and how to embed these into our curriculum
- Implement practical understandings of Laudato Si teachings into our school community
- Support Catholic Social Justice Organisations through fundraising and donation drives.

### **2. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- Review & refine our whole school scope and sequence aligned with our inquiry scope and sequence and Version 9 of the Australian Curriculum
- Literacy practice in line with Science of Reading pedagogy, consolidation of Read Write Inc program and Fresh Start intervention across school
- Embed the use of Grade Xpert, CeD3 and refine data analysis approach
- Use existing data to inform annual and strategic plans.

### **3. LEADERSHIP**

- A continued focus on building the capacity of leaders
- Shared / Distributed leadership roles through our Middle Leaders (Team Leaders and Junior School Coordinator)
- Building Capacity of the executive leadership team and providing regular Professional Development to all staff, which targets learning priorities in line with our Literacy goals.

### **4. PASTORAL CARE AND WELL-BEING**

- Increased completion of the parent survey to inform successes and areas of growth.
- Provide incentive for families completing survey and provide access to technology to complete survey during Parent Teacher Interview wait times
- Using Mind-Up and Zones of Regulation as SEL learning tools for 2023
- Review Pastoral Care and Wellbeing policy and program with staff
- Continue the implementation of the school wide program 'Mind Up' and 'Be You' framework and processes
- Develop student voice.

## **5. COMMUNITY AND CULTURE**

- Employment of Defence Schools Mentor to engage with and support defence students and families
- Connections with Larrakia - Visual Images / Artefacts
- Connect with MacKillop College
- Use a range of strategies for collaborating with staff, students and parents to engage all in the “community and culture” of the school
- Review and recommit to our Reconciliation Action Plan for the school community

## **6. FINANCE, RESOURCES AND FACILITIES**

- Create a cyclical plan for school policies / procedures review in the area of finance
- Review budget termly
- Continue to implement school Master Plan with a focus on external shade facilities that are comprehensive and reviewed annually to ensure projects are planned, funded and implemented
- Implement an MOU around shared facilities
- Implement our cyclic maintenance schedule around maintaining the painted surfaces at Mother Teresa
- Review all delegation and procurement procedures and policies in line with CENT documentation.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Reuben Johnson".

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Reuben Johnson  
Principal

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Natalie Milic  
School Advisory Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Greaves".

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Mr. Paul Greaves  
Director Catholic Education Office