

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AGM – JUNE 2024

The 2023 year has been our first year to not feel the effects of COVID-19. It has been wonderful to move forward and to be able to open the doors to families and visitors over the year.

Our vision is to excel in Christian education and character, inspiring greatness, while serving communities and impacting nations. This has been my 13th year as Principal, and it has continued to bring challenges and opportunities to learn together. The school values underpin all that we do and help us to focus on developing a Kingdom culture in the way we lead and learn. We seek to train and equip our students with leadership and godly values to achieve personal excellence. We desire to model grace, justice, and generosity.

Term 1 - Love, Grace Forgiveness, Truth, Learning

Term 2 - Vision, Faith, Leadership, Accountability, Service

Term 3 - Respect, Obedience, Responsibility, Integrity, Excellence, Righteousness

Term 4 - Discipleship, Compassion, Humility, Perseverance, Generosity, Justice

These values are explored using verses of Scripture, weekly chapel services, our assembly time (Monday Morning Praise), as well as daily devotions for staff and students. Each week our students meet to celebrate and learn in our Monday Morning Praise and Chapel times. We praise and worship God, share Bethany news with a message from the Principal, celebrate success, and our students lead and take on a variety of roles in presenting and preparing, helping with sound and lighting, photography and filming.

Students also volunteer and serve in other ways like in the ELC garden, running lunchtime clubs for younger students, and participating in Student Representative Council (SRC). There are numbers of special interest groups who contribute to our school community including our library leaders, IQ club, dance, choir, sports, lunchtime peer support and many other groups throughout the year. A small group of students from our IQ club were able to participate in a Robotics competition and qualified for the national competition in which one of our team's placed 4th. This was only our second year of joining this competition and our students did an awesome job at solving problems and working together.

Our school tours returned in small groups following the previous year of being online. These tours were conducted on the following dates;

Term 1	9 School Tours (week 5/7/9) - 45 Families
Term 2	9 School Tours (week 5/7/9) - 45 Families
Term 3	21st August 2023 (new Funnel format) - 26 Families 4th September 2023 (new Funnel format) - 4 Families 18th September 2023 (new Funnel format) - 15 Families
Term 4	13th November 2023 (new Funnel format) - 11 Families 27th November 2023 (new Funnel format) - 8 Families

These tours enable us to maintain strong future enrolments.



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Educating for Eternity

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Our Early Learning Centre (ELC) has seen a steady uptake in enrolments which are offered to those enrolled in Reception at Bethany.

ELC enrolments:

2017 - 30 38%
2018 - 36 46%
2019 - 49 62%
2020 - 51 65%
2021 - 61 78%
2022 - 64 82%
2023 - 66 84%

Student attendance has risen from 91% to 91.7% in 2023. Our Indigenous student attendance rose from 89% to 89.6%. Our Indigenous students make up approximately 2.23% of our school population.

53.17% of our students come to school from English speaking backgrounds. Majority of our enrolments continue to come from our local suburbs of Paralowie, Parafield Gardens and Burton.

In 2023 we received a State Capital grant of \$65,000, which enabled us to replace some classroom furniture and install carpark lighting in our rear carpark. The classroom furniture in our 3 to 6 building was brought from our old classrooms and so we have gradually been updating furniture that has been with us for many years. The carpark becomes very dark in winter months, and so this improvement provides safety for staff as well as for the community for all evening events.

Staffing is a critical aspect of our school with the employment of Christian staff who support and live out our values. We have maintained steady staffing ratios with teachers and support staff.

The sports program at Bethany continues to grow and strengthen. We have many students participating weekly in team sports, two PE lessons for all students, as well as the opportunity to be a part of representative sports. Each class also participated in a week of swimming lessons to help build confidence and safety in the water. Our school Athletics days, Cross Country, and Jump Rope for Heart were also great successes.

We continue to support Hope Village and Hope School in Sumatra Indonesia. This school looks very different to Bethany surrounded by rice fields but at its heart, shares a love for children and a desire to see students reach their potential. We continue to develop generosity in our community as we consider what it is like to grow up in a place where many children have not accessed education because they cannot afford it. We are glad to be given this opportunity to show our care for others through this close connection. A group of teachers volunteered this July to provide some training and support to this growing school. Hope School now has almost 800 students from ELC through to Year 12. What a testimony of God's grace. Our classes continue to have a sponsor child from Hope Village and our SRC have raised funds through their initiatives as another way to develop our understanding and experience of generosity.



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We held the Light in Christmas event to finish our year with students from ELC to Year 2 leading a parade, followed with a group song and dance. Our Year 3, 4, 5, and 6 students were able to shine through the unique talents and gifts that they were able to share. There were performances, games, decorations, experiences, and artwork that all pointed to Jesus, the light in Christmas. The food vans and time to catch up with one another was another highlight for families after the restrictions on gatherings that we have had in the past.

We have wonderful staff at Bethany, and we appreciate their creativity and effort in continuing to learn together. In April we farewelled Cherie Boxall who has been a parent and then worked for many years supporting in various roles over 20 years. At the end of the year, we farewelled Verona McDonald who has taught Reception this year, along with Catherine Thackeray who retired and has worked as an ESO for the past 15 years. We wish them well as they move to new opportunities.

2023 has been another wonderful year of learning together to excel in Christian education and character inspiring greatness, while serving communities and impacting nations.



Wendy Matear
Principal
Bethany Christian School

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Deputy Principal - Debbie Clifford

Student & Staff Wellbeing

2023 was the first year that the school had not been impacted significantly by COVID and COVID restrictions. We were able to welcome parents back to school events, which included our weekly Chapel services and Monday Morning Praise Assemblies.

The Wellbeing Team consisted of Joy Starling (school counsellor), Elise Ottens (social worker) Priya Wilson (school nurse) and Deb Clifford (Deputy Principal). Our meetings resumed once more in person meetings, and the Wellbeing Team were able to deliver several community-based programmes, which included a variety of parenting workshops and Foodbank initiatives such as the Sandwich Bar.

School attendance was significantly better than the previous year, but the Wellbeing Team worked diligently with a few students to improve their attendance. There was a serious school refusal case who despite a tepid intervention with the Department of Child Protection (DCP), the child moved to an alternative school.

School Community



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Traffic congestion around the school continued to be an issue in 2023, with many complaints made about unsafe driving practices and selfish behaviour while using our school car parks. SAPOL and the Salisbury Council were contacted.

The Northern District Police Liaison Model was implemented, with the aim that the model will provide an opportunity for positive engagement opportunities with students, and our Northern District Liaison officers will try to engage in regular 'drop ins' at school to build positive relationships with our students.

The school's unwavering stance on our uniform resulted in a family leaving the school to attend an alternative option.

The school was able to hold an Easter event and an end of year community event. The school community have been very happy to be able to attend school events.

Student Leadership

In term 1, the student leadership groups in years 6 and 5 commenced. The year 6 programme consists of Lumin8 (prefects, house captains and school captains), Activ8 (targeted lunchtime activities, run by year 6 student leaders), BCS Creations (multimedia presentations, visual, sound and lighting productions), SRC (Student Representative Council), and ACTS (a diverse range of student led teams including Uniform monitors, Flag Team, Tidy School Team, small lunchtime groups etc). The student leadership programme was modified to be age appropriate for 5 year olds, and was launched for the Reception students. The aim is that the student leadership programme will follow the students throughout the primary school years to link leadership skills to the school's values and weekly scriptures.

The SRC initiated four fundraisers and were able to raise money for Hope Village to establish a garden for the Indonesian students, complete with garden bench, and money for library books.

The year 5 Student Leadership programme covers the 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, written by John Maxwell which are linked to the school's values and weekly scriptures.

Significant Events

This year saw a return to our 'normal' school events.

The year 5s had their camp at Woodhouse Adventure Park in Picadilly and the year 6s had their camp at Mylor Adventure Camp in Mylor. Both were highly successful camps and the students were given access to a range of new experiences. The Year 4s had a school 'sleep over' and pitched tents on the oval. This was a fantastic opportunity for some of our students to have a night away from home.

The Parent/Teacher Interviews were held in the Function Room and Performing Arts Centre as the general consensus from staff was that it was a good location and they felt supported in these locations.



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Preservice Teachers & Work Placement Students

This year preservice and work experience placements were back in full swing. We had:

- 4 Tabor preservice teaching placements;
- 5 UniSA preservice teacher placements;
- 1 University of Tasmania preservice student;
- 2 Torrens University preservice teaching placements;
- 2 TAFE students and;
- 8 secondary student work experience placements.

Professional Development

- Developmental Trauma Training
- PESA Wellbeing Conference
- CSA National Leadership Summit in Tasmania

Early Learning Centre - Wendy Carlesso

- We had staff changes over the year: a new teacher and two educators joined our team, while one teacher and one educator left.
- As a team, we participated in professional training on Zones of Regulation and Circle of Security training to better support our children's behaviour and emotional regulation.
- We had a UniSA placement student who ran a leadership project. She helped us set up a bush tucker garden during Reconciliation Week.
- We partnered with the school community to share the importance of play and how it connects to intentional teaching.
- We have grown in our project approach, empowering teachers and educators to plan and facilitate various projects for our children to participate in throughout the year.
- We accessed a grant for Hana Goltz, an OT, to come and conduct observations in the ELC and provide us with expert advice on how we can best support the children in our care. We also worked closely with the Diverse Learning team to build our children's oral language through targeted group learning.
- Throughout the year, we hosted various events to build relationships with our families and communities: Come and Play, excursions, Temple students visiting, and an excursion to Temple. We also engaged with the reception team to collaborate on the Week 8 Light event.
- Through our critical reflection, we realised that even though our centre is licensed for 44 children, we would like to limit the number to 39 per day to better cater to the diverse needs of the children in our care.



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Social Work - Elise Ottens

- 72 referrals for social work support in 2023 covering a range of issues - domestic violence, child abuse, family breakdown, custody issues, financial difficulty, parenting support, attendance issues, homelessness, mental health issues for both parents and children, disability support and terminal illness
- Bringing Up Great Kids parenting program ran with 3 parents attending
- Circle of Security parenting program ran with 3 parents attending
- DRUMBEAT program ran with Year 3 boys
- Continued to provide bread to the school community on Tuesdays and Thursdays and formed a new partnership with Parafield Salvation Army to provide food hampers to families in need
- Provided 50 care packs to the year 6 girls through Foodbank for their Puberty Chat
- Provided 612 lunches for students

School Counsellor - Joy Starling

I have had the continued honour of conducting numerous individual counselling sessions throughout the year. Some of the issues I am seeing on a regular basis are generalised anxiety, family issues (such as alcohol abuse, domestic violence, parental separation), student friendship issues, social skills, friendship/interpersonal skills, separation anxiety, and school refusal. Where appropriate I have offered parental support and advice.

I have also been able to offer counselling and support for teachers and staff members when needed.

Deputy Principal and Curriculum Coordinator- Melissa Taylor

The year began with a strong focus on wellbeing and rebuilding teacher capacity based on feedback from the 2022 meetings with the school counsellor.

Staff Coaching

Regular Coaching, Support or pastoral with staff including – 4 middle leadership, 15 teachers, 4 ELC educators, 3 library staff with Melissa Supporting wellbeing, building capacity, new role development, training, leadership development – 5 Ways of Being

Staff Training

Our Focus for whole staff training were:

Missional Drift – Biblical Worldview, Implications on curriculum and why it is important

Zones of Regulation as a more intentional classroom practice

ACARA – *Implementation of v9 Australian Curriculum*

Professional learning teams re-launch

Other Key training were:

CSA National Leadership Summit – Wendy, Deb, Melissa CSA and AISSA –

Deputy Principal Hub – Melissa

Managing Challenging Conversations – Emily B
CSA and AISSA – Deputy Principal Hub – Melissa
Wellbeing Tool PD - Deb
AISNSW ICT Management and Leadership Conference – Jeremy, Brendan
Instructional coaching – Ash, Nathan, Rebecca W, Kirsty, Jeremy, Juliet
Transforming Classroom Practice – Ash

Curriculum

A new team was formed in curriculum Melissa, Ashleigh, Rebecca and Nathan. Our main focus was on developing a plan for curriculum development using the new Australian Curriculum v9 with a particular focus on Health and PE and Preparation for Mathematics in 2024. As part of the move forward we decided to rebuild our learning shaper document to reflect our new learning and also refresh the things that are important when designing learning experiences. This includes looking at biblical worldview in our curriculum, a closer look at the achievement standards and assessment and an intentional look at agency in our curriculum.

Our focus was as follows:

Reconciliation Action Plan: Ash, Emily, Juliet, Kat
Focus on building connections Jack and Pat, and Dusty feet mob visited during NADOC week, Australian's Together (Christian Connection)
Gathering the children together, sharing their stories and getting to know one another
Learning Impact Project: Student Agency: Wendy, Melissa, Aaron, Jeremy, Ash, Simon
Continuing to share and build understanding of how to develop agency in our children
Keeping Safe Curriculum -Elyse, Amelia, Jeremy, Verona, Rach L , Rebecca T, Sarah, Paige
Friendology – Introduced to the year 3 cohort with the intention of that growing over time to the whole school
Leading Change in Mathematics – Rebecca, Nathan (Maths team establishment – Steve, Michael, Jasmine, Rebecca
Brightpath – Writing: Trial year 2/3 Cohort

Diverse Learning

Establishment of processes for students with high needs with Diverse Learning (creation of Tier 1,2,3 categories ELC)
Roles and responsibilities, timetabling, placement tests for language lift support
Introduction of Language Lift – Oral language intervention based on needs – 4 staff trained
AISSA grant submissions supporting year1,3 in sensory support and the development of oral language in the ELC
Rolling release for teachers for Autism training and support
Review of new platform for ILP

ESO

As a result of the time ESO's spent with Joy, Melissa was asked to support the ESO's. A sanctioned weekly time to support the development of our ESO staff



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both in wellbeing and training for their role. This began with an establishment of a live roster to help everyone be autonomous in the daily changes that may occur from absences or school events. ESO clarified their roles had long standing enquiries worked through. ESO were given opportunities to establish learning goals and training in the following areas was a focus. Reading, Retell, Oral Language, First Nations Training, Inclusion introductions, multi-tier system of support, differentiation. Children with Trauma, Behaviour Management, Zones of Regulation, Language Lift (some), Multi Lit. As a result, feedback suggest people are feeling more settled, confident and heard. They are enjoying the training focus Ash and Bec were trained in rostering in Melissa's LS absence. Ash co rostered in T4.

Information Communication Technology - Mr Jeremy Graetz

The Year 2023-2024 has been a great year for our IT Department. We were able to get some additional helpdesk support which has helped with moving forward with projects and innovation. Technology keeps evolving and our staff have been working hard to keep us moving forward in an everchanging world.

Here are some of the significant projects and highlights

- Windows 11 and Desktop Computer upgrade project. All computers are updated to Windows 11 machines across the school.
- Completed our first teacher laptop upgrades in O-week 2024 - The project went smoothly.
- Upgraded PAC lighting Desk and various fixtures, making programming more accessible to students.
- Upgraded multipurpose room AV equipment and library Smartboards.
- Moved our Jamf iPad management server to the cloud.
- Prepared and configured inTune management, decommissioning SCCM.
- Our amazing IT Team was involved in supporting our students in the 2023 Light in Christmas Event and our 2024 Easter Event.
- Replaced Firewall with new 3 year Cyber Edge Appliance.
- Phone system transferred over to TPG on our new fibre connection with considerable cost savings.
- Added additional .2 FTE of level 1 helpdesk support to the IT team - Allowing for more time to be allocated to projects and level 2-3 support issues.
- IQ club Robotics Team competed in a VEX Robotics Competition and qualified to the National Competition in Adelaide. The Team had an amazing experience at Adelaide Convention centre competing against 30 other teams across Australia.
- Attended AIS NSW Convergence IT conference with Brendan
 - Great opportunity for networking with other schools across the country
 - Topics of value to us: Cyber security, AI in education. IT strategic planning.



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Sports Department - Ben Hannaford

Physical Education

The Physical Education team have continued to develop the program, and now that the flow has been streamlined the quality of content.

The team is currently developing their curriculum based around the Version 9 standard.

Representative Sports

This year the school had a strong sporting Year 6 cohort, that ended up placing well, if not winning most available school championships.

Even though Bethany tends to perform well, this is not a regular occurrence.

Weekly Sports

This have now returned to normal, and many parents have expressed interest in their child playing sport of some kind. The drawback has been the ability for people to volunteer their time to grassroots sports. This year we had approximately on average 100 participations in the weekly sports program.



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