

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AGM - JUNE 2021

2020 School Year

2020 is a year that we will never forget with the 3 to 6 Learning Block completed and ready to use for our Primary students. It provides a flexible learning space for collaboration, creativity and curation of learning. It was also the year that shut down the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools were impacted in significant ways and yet we were able to see God's provision and peace throughout what was a very challenging year.

Bethany Christian School's vision is to excel in Christian education and character, inspiring greatness, while serving communities and impacting nations. This building is another step towards us reaching our vision. Our Mission is to partner with families in providing a Biblical Worldview. 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. Throughout 2020 we have been reminded of the importance of leadership, Godly values and personal excellence. We have been challenged to be flexible and adapt to the many changes that were required of us. Our Core Values direct our decisions and demonstrate how we are to relate to one another. Each week we focus on a particular value and use a memory verse to explore what the Bible says about each of these values. These became even more real to us as we sought to lead our community through a global pandemic. The values are explored over the year with a focus for each term.

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

We facilitate a School Tour each term which is an essential step in our enrolment process. In 2020 this began as usual but was not possible while the health advice was to reduce gatherings. We used our experiences in developing an online curriculum to produce an online School Tour that would enable us to invite families to attend virtually. This has continued regardless of shutdowns and restrictions.

In 2020 the tours were held;

Term 1- 2 nd March (Onsite Tour)	31 Families
Term 2- 25 th May (Online School Tour)	19 Families
Term 3- 12 th August (Online School Tour)	23 Families
Term 4- 9 th November (Online School)	46 Families

Attendance at one of these tours is a requirement of our enrolment process, ensuring that families understand our Christian emphasis, along with our vision and mission. Our future enrolments continue to be strong for Reception intakes and are growing for our Early Learning Centre. In 2017 38% of our Reception students accessed the ELC while in 2020, this grew to 51 students which is 65% of our Reception intake.

Our student attendance rates have increased slightly to 94% with our Indigenous students increasing from 83% in 2018 to 92% attendance in 2020. Indigenous students make up less than 2% of our families.



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In 2020 our community had 54% English as first-language families which decreased slightly from 55% in 2019.

Our primary catchment areas are Paralowie, Burton & Parafield Gardens. Many of our families choose Bethany as they live locally and want to educate their children in an ELC to Year 12 campus. When interviewing families, there is a recurring view expressed that Bethany is *"the best school in the area"*. Our reputation is our greatest advertisement and we appreciate the support of our school community.

Our professional learning continues to be a large part of our improvement plan. The Student Agency project has shaped much of our professional learning and our focus as teams as we collaborate. The shut downs imposed on us could have been a reason to stop pushing forward however, we decided to use it to shape our work. Our Curriculum report outlines the positive impact we were able to make and we are grateful for our staff who embraced a large amount of change in a very uncertain time. We have excellent staff who grow and challenge themselves for the benefit of our students. I have included some student quotes that were given after their experience with the Brilliance Exhibition. They give a wonderful insight to the importance of developing real experiences for students that allow them to exercise agency.

Quotes from Students about Brilliance:

It will evoke our thought and challenge us and make us truly realise what our greatest passion is. J

It will encourage me to think more outside the box and have more of a creative mind in everything I do. M

No restrictions, just what you want to do. It's a way of being able to enjoy what you're doing and do it with the people you love. E

It will encourage me to take risks. A

When doing Brilliance students can get rid of their worries and trust in God and let him do His work. N

There is an open door there waiting for you, you just have to open it. R

This year our staff had some welcome additions to their families and we also thank some staff who finished their time with us. Mrs Ashleigh Squire welcomed Ara Grace Squire 14-03-20, Mrs Emily Bondarenko welcomed Olivia Karen Bondarenko Born 24-01-20 and Mr Alex Peterson welcomed Noah David Peterson, on the 29-09-20.

Mrs Leanne Alderman finished her time in the Uniform Shop after being a member of the Bethany community since her daughter, Hannah, started Reception in 2007. We are grateful for Leanne's generous contributions and wish her well in her future endeavours. Mrs Alison McLoud retired from our finance team in October. She has been working with us for many years and has been a valued member of our community. We are also grateful for her generous contributions to our community and wish her well as she enjoys a new pace of life. Mrs Rebecca Thomson finishes 2020 to go on maternity leave and she welcomed Zachariah James Thomson on 31-12-20. Rebecca has shared the ELC Director role this year and we have appreciated her flexibility and expertise. Mrs Joy Villanueva our Library manager, began her maternity leave at the end of 2020 and welcomed Mia Averie Villanueva on 1-2-2021.

We were to hold the Official Opening our 3 to 6 Learning Block but due to a snap lockdown needed to postpone this event to early in 2021. The Senator Alexander Antic was able to send a video message to be part of the ceremony. We have also started the process of design for the outdoor play space which is to be developed. Ideas from staff

and students were put together and we look forward to seeing this come together in 2021.

We continue to support Hope Village with a particular focus on our sister school, Hope School, in Sumatra, Indonesia. The support had to change as we were unable to visit in person for training. We continue to provide online training as well as supporting our teachers through a staff fundraiser to support our sister school teachers at Christmas time. The school has struggled with a full year of closure which has put a great deal of pressure on staff, local families and students. We continue to pray for health for our brothers and sisters in Sumatra.

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL- Debbie Clifford

Student and Staff Wellbeing

In 2020 we have continued to support families to build a positive future with support from our wellbeing team through education, connection and finding effective future strategies which aim to build a way forward.

COVID-19 was a significant event for our staff and students in 2020. The effect of the pandemic was felt in every area of the school, physically, emotionally, socially and mentally. The Wellbeing Team offered support to the whole school community. The Wellbeing Team, consisting of Leeony Pfeiffer (school counsellor), Elise Ottens (social worker), Priya Wilson (school nurse) and I have met weekly to network and report back about what each person has been working on throughout the week. Four families have received letters in regards to chronic poor school attendance. This has improved the overall attendance rate for two of the students. I am still working with the other two student's families.

School Counsellor- Leeony Pfeiffer

The Counselling room has seen a variety of issues with children have presented with including grief and loss, high anxiety, anger, trauma, self-esteem, the need for social skills, and issues related to family breakdown. This year has seen an increase in bereavement counselling as some children have experienced the loss of beloved parents and grandparents, which has required a sensitive and professional response to help these children navigate their way forward. There has also been an increase in referrals of children who have a loved one with cancer and journeying through chemotherapy.

The COVID19 crisis saw a shift of utilising technology and setting up and preparing for Telehealth, however this was in the end not used with children returning to school after the mid-year break earlier than expected. This was a season of focused networking and upskilling, and we now have policies and procedures in place if it is needed again in the future.

Ongoing counselling focused professional development has been occurring in line with professional registration requirements, well as continued regular counselling supervision by an accredited supervisor. This supervision ensures accountability and helps to inform counselling responses for those children experiencing trauma and the effects of domestic violence or abuse. Professional development and supervision are required so that registration is maintained with the professional body PACFA (Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia), which is renewed annually. Counselling for Bethany students has supported them in their health and wellbeing, which ultimately underpins their overall development and learning in the classroom. Staff have been supported with informal one on one counselling, and support with an information session on relational aggression and bullying presented at



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staff meeting. During the initial COVID19 crisis, all staff were equipped with information, resources and strategies pertaining to managing anxiety, self-care and wellbeing, and basic Cognitive Behaviour Therapy in a week of daily presentations after morning devotion.

Thank you again for this opportunity to input in the mental health and wellbeing of our community, for the glory of our wonderful Lord.

Social Worker- Elise Ottens

- 40 families were referred for social work support around a range of issues – domestic violence, child abuse, family breakdown, custody issues, financial difficulty, parenting support, attendance issues, mental health issues for both parents and children, terminal illness.
- The DRUMBEAT program commenced initially in term 4 2020 with 4 year 2 boys, now with 6 year 4 boys.
- 6 parents enrolled in our Circle of Security Parent program over the last year. COVID interrupted our ability to meet for a period of time but we were able to explore Zoom sessions for some of our parents.
- Over 200 hampers were provided to families in need over the last year.

School Community

The Northern SAPOL Neighbourhood Policing Team has been dismantled and replaced with a new model, the 'District Policing Model'. Parents were asked to stay off site due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. Some have found it really challenging to stay off site, whereas others have found it to be an excellent opportunity for their children to develop more independence.

The parent teacher interviews, which looked and felt very different with the COVID19 measures incorporated, went extremely well.

In term 3, a group of willing parent volunteers gave their time to facilitate a parent spectator arena for the Mini Olympics. The group of parents all completed their online COVID19 Marshalling course. Mini Olympics went extremely well and was enjoyed by all.

Pre-service Placements

In 2020 due to the significant changes taking place, we are limited our student teachers to Tabor to reduce pressure on those teaching staff who would be available to act as mentors.

Significant Events

NAPLAN, Year 6 camp, Autumn Fair, swimming lessons and SAPSASA/SACSA sporting events from week 6 in Term 1 onwards were cancelled due to COVID-19. We were fortunate to be able to get our Senior and Junior Athletics Day and Year 5 Camp in before the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions were implemented. SAPSASA/SACSA school sporting events resumed in Term 3. The regular weekly Monday Morning Praise assembly and Chapel services were made available through online content. Book Week was a great success. The student thoroughly enjoyed the Friday dress up day, and the book sale was very popular.

Student Leadership

The student leadership programme was modified this year. The Year 6 teachers wished to run the programme, and looked at a model of Servant Leadership, whereby, students would work in a younger year level for 40 minutes, serving the teacher. Activ8, Lumin8

and SRC were organised and had started running until COVID-19. The SRC have also identified a desire to purchase a giant chess set for the students to play with at recess and lunch, and successfully held a pyjama day as a fundraiser.

CURRICULUM AND COACHING- Melissa Taylor

Beginning Week 8 Term 1, teachers were thrown into an uncertain state of emergency as they had to deal with their own anxiety about COVID-19 whilst producing and maintaining a new way of teaching and learning.

Term 1

Week 8:

- High communication with the parents
- Website development - trial phase
- Training for all teaching staff in how to build the website
- Learning from Home Parent Pack, Learning from Home - Wellbeing Pack

Week 9:

- Website live as a trial. Survey to parents, students for feedback.
- Phone calls to all parents to check that they had access to the App, the website, support button, wellbeing, pastoral care, employment

Week 10:

- Preparation of resources for take home packs

Week 1/ T2:

- New website live, with improved features such as roll, upload and student check ins
- NIT Lessons, Brilliance, Chapels, Monday Morning Praise added
- The day was chunked into Literacy, Numeracy, Our World and Brilliance
- New ways of using ESO support, Counselling, speech, psych etc.
- Discovering new ways of doing things at school, looking at what are the benefits

Week 2:

- Getting large amounts of staff feedback, conversations
- Increase in staff creativity and collaboration

Week 3:

- Development of Brilliance website
- Teachers identified for themselves the benefits and arranged things in ways that they could continue collaboration and sharing of teaching roles

Week 4:

- Zoom enrolment meetings including the Principal, Enrolment Officer, Bursar
- New ways of thinking about teaching and learning

Week 5:

- Flexible time tabling still in place. Teams organizing break times.
- Creation of Virtual School Tour including video messages from Principal, Enrolment Officer, Curriculum and Chaplain

Week 6 & 7

- Introduction of Literacy Stream - Multi Lit programs

Throughout this challenging time we were very aware of the wellbeing of our community. We included toilet paper giveaways, greeting at the gate and carpark gifts for mums for Mother's Day. We also ensured that teachers had a holiday break. For wellbeing and mental health all staff we advised to not be on site and to not spend their holidays working. Overall our staff have handled a very difficult time in our school's history well. Whilst individuals have grappled with their own issues, corporately we have had a sense of collaboration, professionalism and consideration as we have



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supported each other as staff, cared for the parent community and helped students flourish through this time of uncertainty. I was constantly reminded of our first learning principle "Learning is a Journey that illuminates God's Big Story" as I read the very clear messages from the staff to our community through our Curriculum websites. It certainly was a message of courage, hope and light as we demonstrate our trust in our Lord in this time.

Learning/ Teaching

Teachers continue to grapple with further developing student agency and began to experiment with this in classroom-based activities beyond an 'exhibition' space. Many teachers appreciated the graphic from Michael Bunce explaining four quadrants of learning. Collaboration is definitely one significant advantage of the complexities of the year with COVID-19 conditions. Many teams have continued to use the website shared space as a way of developing their curriculum so that it is more consistent across the classes of the same year level. For the most part this has provoked a necessity to have deeper discussions around what we are doing, is it still relevant and how can our new learning impact our current curriculum?

Professional Learning Teams are working on individual growth projects which include:

Reception - Collaboration and development of ICT unit (with Tristan) using newly created website to teach from. Further development in science and literacy. They are also planning more opportunities for all 3 classes to meet together.

Year 1 - Development of an online platform to house the curriculum, development of Biblical Studies units to be more reflective of quality teaching practice. Development of science rotations and updating curriculum.

Year 2 - Developing common assessment rubrics for literacy. Development of a more detailed Art curriculum. Putting curriculum into a shared website space and adding more accessible visual resources.

Year 3 - Creating more relevant meaningful units of Hass, ICT and English. Created literacy stream learning opportunities.

Year 4 - Working on improvement to Mathematics and Science units in collaboration with each other to develop units that are taught more effectively.

Year 5 - Redefining the "Impact project" civics and citizenship/ economics and business unit to incorporate more student agency. This year students must also develop a COVID safe plan and be approved to ensure safety. Created a new poetry curriculum.

Year 6 - Developing Mathematics, Science and literacy curriculum and assessment criteria. Developed literacy rotations for literacy streams.

Other projects

- All classes have been working collaboratively on a literacy stream time where Multi lit, Macqlit and Minilit students are doing intentional literacy intervention.
- Developing a document that supports induction of new staff
- Teachers are working on developing an experience for the whole school to enjoy in week 8 and developing a website that captures this year for parents to view. Design thinking, giving students agency and choice as well as empathy for particular audiences are important aspects of this event.
- The Agency team are exploring language that supports students to identify where they have agency in their learning. We have developed a prototype map of learning.
- We are working on ways to capture student voice and ideas on agency.
- Supporting the school mission, we want to bless Indonesian teachers by initiating a fund a teacher Christmas initiative.

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE DIRECTOR- Rachael Chesson and Rebecca Thomson



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New leadership/staff

Developing further connections within the ELC and

We began 2020 with new ELC leadership as our ELC Director, Emily Bondarenko had gone on maternity leave. Rachael Chesson and Rebecca Thomson were employed to share the role of ELC Coordinators. We also employed two new ELC Co-educators, Ariela Beilin and Fiona Thuraisingham. Rachael and Rebecca started off the year preparing for anticipated Assessment and Rating by the Educational Standards Board as we received our notification of A&R in December 2019, but this still has not occurred yet at present time.

Online learning

By the end of Term 1, we had a strong focus on how we could prepare our children for online learning due to COVID-19. The school was incredibly gracious in allowing us to jump on and collaborate on their online learning platform. ELC Teachers made many instructional videos, acknowledging that our children were not ready to work independently with written instructions at home. While we did not use the online platform for very long, it served as a great opportunity for us to connect with the school and work closely with the school staff.

COVID-19 also led us to change our drop-off/pick-up procedure, which to our surprise led to great growth in children's independence. Children were dropped off in the foyer and they were able to independently unpack/pack their bags and place bags into lockers.

Parent Engagement

Throughout the year, we constantly reflected on how we could build parent engagement and connections with the school as we navigated through the global pandemic. We sent out surveys to parents, encouraged them through their struggles, and invited them to watch church online. We scheduled weekly meetings with school leadership to ensure we were involved in school events, and were able to join in weekly chapels in Term 3 & 4.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY- Jeremy Graetz

- Purchased and setup a fleet of Mac and Lenovo laptops for the teaching staff and distributed in O week. This was our first laptop program for teachers and we found it went very smoothly. In hindsight this was a very important move as we experienced COVID-19 late Term 1 and without the laptops it would have been much more difficult to achieve the same results with online learning.
- Moved to Microsoft Office 365 to leverage the cloud storage and encourage more staff collaboration through the MS Teams app.
- Expanded the phone system to have a handset in every classroom and increased the incoming lines to help with phone congestion in busy periods.
- Replaced sets of iPads which were over 6 years old according to our upgrade and renew schedule. Reception and Year 1s received extra iPads.
- Setup infrastructure and devices for the New G/H Block building including: New switches, relocated and upgraded WIFI, setup new teacher office hotspot work stations, setup shared learning spaces with Interactive smart-boards and integrated audio systems, and classrooms installed with Interactive smart-boards and sound field systems for students that have auditory processing needs.
- Year 1 and ELC were fast tracked to have their sound field systems installed for students that have auditory processing needs. Only Year 2 and NIT classes left to install.

- Setup Flexible Online Learning platform for COVID-19. Trained teaching staff and supported the platform for the trial and 4 week Online learning in Term 2. The teachers did an amazing job at learning and implementing the platform in a very short timeframe.
- Setup additional iPads for students to access Online Learning and have started a review to ascertain what number of iPads would best serve JP classes.
- Upgrade of our Firewall (3 yearly upgrade), more capacity for internet devices as our classroom online use increases.
- Completed our Digital Technologies in Focus Project final report with ACARA
- Replaced all Smart-board Computers across the school
- Updating current computers to Solid State Hard drives
- Set up Online School Tour for Prospective families
- Upgraded core switches in A Block and C Block
- Upgraded Projectors in function room and Mezzanine to provide better class experiences
- Upgraded PAC presentation system to allow for possible end of year streaming
- We have been working on end of year events and how technology will help delivering end of year events in the most effective way.
- We have moved the Sports Department to laptops and set up a portable audio PA for their outdoor events.
- iPads and storage facilities have been ordered and preparations have begun for Reception to Year 2 1-to-1 iPad program. This project will be completed ready for Term 1 2021.
- We have started a project to upgrade existing desktop computers to Solid State Hard drives. The current desktop computers we are using are still good condition and the SSD upgrade will give them a decent upgrade without replacing the whole machine.

SPORTS DEPARTMENT- Ben Hannaford

Due to COVID-19 Sport has been kept to a minimum.

We still managed to hold BCS Junior and Senior Athletics, but then all other events were postponed or rescheduled. Many sporting teams recommenced, with social distancing, and COVID-19 plans being put into place. All members of the community have worked well with the changes put into place. These included

Weekly Basketball

- Weekly Netball
- Make up session for Weekly Tennis
- Grasshopper Soccer [external provider] have recommenced on Saturday mornings.
- SACS AFL, being held spectator free. There were four teams representing Bethany at this event, with the Year 5|6 Boys Gold Team being undefeated champions on the day.
- SACS Soccer, Netball and Basketball are to follow to see out the year.
- All programs, except swimming, have recommenced at Bethany.

We held two BCS Events with Jump Rope for Heart [JRFH] being spectator free, and then Mini Olympics allowing parents to view the day from zoned areas. A parent group also oversaw the COVID Marshalling for the Mini Olympics. Both events went well, and continue to go from strength to strength, credit must go to Cherie and Nathan who spent great care preparing the events. There was no House winner for JRFH, yet it was

the highest fundraising year for quite a few years, the Bethany community managed to raise over \$8,000 to go towards Heart Research.

Shadrach won the Mini Olympics shield in 2020. We have started to review the house team number upon enrolment into ELC | Reception which now helps level the playing field for each house.

Bethany has been awarded a \$10,000 grant to help promote Physical Literacy. After researching various program, we have settled on utilising the KIDDO program for the ELC through to Year 2.

Over 2021, we will also look to upskill class teachers by providing some Professional Develop in the KIDDO program and working alongside the PE team. We hope to continue this roll out to Year 3 and above from 2022, should all go well.

We have currently used half the grant to subscribe to KIDDO and also source equipment which will help outwork the program.

Bethany Christian School is a wonderful community within which to belong. We have still been active in supporting our community even though restrictions have required us to adapt and change how we do this. Throughout the year Parents & Friends, staff and students were able to show their creativity and enjoy a number of events in 2020 including; A Mother's Day Stall, Mother's Day Chocolate Handout– Turning Circle, Father's Day Stall, Mini Olympics – Parent COVID19 Marshalls, SRC Casual Clothes Day, the Circle of Security parenting course, Walk a Mile in my boots fundraiser, Foodbank Breakfast Club, Foodbank Food Parcels for families, Emergency Food Hampers, bread donations from Woolworths, and perhaps most memorable, a toilet paper Handout in the turning circle.

Our desire to *educate for eternity* brings helps us to remain true to the vision and mission we are called to live out. Our care for children and our strong belief that we are all important members of the community, help us to look forward to the journey as we learn together. We continue to work towards excelling in Christian education and character, inspiring greatness, while serving communities and impacting nations.



Wendy Matear
Principal
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