



## SCHOOL ANNUAL COMMUNITY REPORT 2024

### PRINCIPAL'S REPORT 2024

#### ALLEN MCMAHON

During 2024, St Columba's has continued to work closely with the Parish. We farewelled Monsignor O'Loughlin and we thank him for his untiring support and help throughout his tenure. We welcome Fr Nino and look forward to a productive and fruitful relationship with him. This year our Parish celebrated the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Many thanks to Monsignor O'Loughlin, Fr Nino, Mr Yock, Mrs Manfredi and the classroom teachers and the Parish Liturgy representative for organising and participating in such these celebrations. Classes have also prepared many moving and reverent Liturgies and Masses in the Church and school.

Once again St Columba's can be proud of the efforts of the staff, from classroom teachers and educational assistants through to the specialist teachers, who have been involved in educating our students. Staff can never be thanked enough for the time and the quality of work they prepare for students. St Columba's is losing staff this year. I wish them well with their future careers and thank them for their support, professionalism and dedication they have shown to the school during their time employed here.

The School's priorities for 2024 followed a whole school approach to curriculum, work from the Annual School Improvement Plan and implementation of The Australian Curriculum. There has also been a strong focus on implementing the Ruler programme centred around School Wellbeing. Staff have continued to focus on implementing the Science of Reading and introducing the new Maths text, Oxford Maths into classes. Our School Counsellor has continued to provide students, with advice on resiliency and developing their relationship skills with peers.

I would like to say goodbye and all the best to our Year Six students, who are leaving us for the new challenges of secondary education. I would like to thank these families for their support of the school and staff throughout the years and wish them every blessing for the years to come.

The School Board has once again continued to closely monitor the School Finances and several projects undertaken such as the replacement of the PP fence, painting some of the external and internal areas of the school, and the painting of our Mary MacKillop mural and erection of the surrounding grotto. Our school finances are sound. All Board members are to be thanked for their time and dedication they give to school activities.

The P&F have had a very busy year with their fundraising efforts, and I thank the Executive for their work this year. There have been a number of celebrations such as the Easter Egg Drive, Mothers/Fathers and Grandparents Day celebrations that required a significant amount of planning and these have been extremely well supported and attended. There have been many parents who have provided unflinching support for St. Columba's in their fundraising efforts and general help around the school. My thanks go out to all who give so generously of their time.

Many thanks to Mr Timmermans, and Greenworx who have maintained the school grounds to a high standard. The office staff, Mrs Venturini, Mrs Creek, Mrs Foster and Mrs Griffin have continued to work under many constraints in making sure that the administration and marketing side of the school runs very smoothly. Well done to you all! Our Education Assistants, Library staff, Canteen workers and helpers have also worked hard

throughout the year and many thanks go to them for their untiring efforts in contributing to the day to day running of the school.

Finally, many thanks must go to the volunteer parents, carers and supporters of St Columba's who have made possible the various activities and ventures held throughout the year. Your help throughout the year has been invaluable.

I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and a fulfilling New Year.

God Bless

**Allen McMahon**

**Principal**

## SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIR'S REPORT 2024

### PHIL HORNER

As we approach the end of another year, it's the perfect opportunity to reflect on our school's accomplishments and recognize the dedication of everyone who contributed to these successes.

In relation to the Catholic School Improvement Plan for 2024, I'm excited to share the progress made in strengthening our pillars of Catholic Identity, Education, Community, and Stewardship. This year has brought meaningful advancements in these areas, reinforcing the strong foundation of St Columba's.

The school's relationship with the Sisters of St. Joseph was a key focus this year. They have worked to deepen the connection with the Sisters, nurturing the spiritual life of our school. This bond enriches our community and provides a tangible link to our Catholic heritage.

To support student well-being, the school implemented new Social and Emotional Learning tools, including the **RULER Wellbeing Program** and the **Kimochi tools**. These programs are helping students better understand and manage their emotions, fostering a positive and supportive school environment.

The school also introduced **Elastik**, a platform enabling teachers to track student performance in real-time. This tool allows teachers to tailor learning experiences based on individual student needs, ensuring that every student receives the support they need to succeed.

Furthermore, we began the journey of developing the **Principles of Fostering a Calm School Environment**, which aim to create a peaceful, nurturing atmosphere for learning. This ongoing initiative is already making a noticeable impact on our school's climate.

This year, the school successfully completed the **Quality Catholic Education School Review (QCESR)** process. Engaging with various community groups, including teachers, students, the P&F, and the School Advisory Council (SAC), the review highlighted our commitment to improvement. It focused on leadership effectiveness, community engagement, and future directions for enhancing student outcomes. This process provided an invaluable opportunity for reflection and affirmed why St Columba's is such a special and supportive

community. I'll just quickly say, the panel were incredibly impressed ..... but I will save the final results for Allen to reveal in his report.

2024 also marked a significant transition for our parish. We had the opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to **Monsignor** for his years of support and wish him well as he embarks on a well-deserved retirement. In the same spirit, we warmly welcomed **Father Nino**. Though he has only been with us a short time, his positive influence is already being felt, and we look forward to his ongoing leadership in rejuvenating the parish as we head into 2025.

This year, we made several key improvements to our school facilities, a huge thank you for the support from the P&F to enable these to happen.

- The **installation of air conditioning** in the Kalyara Space will provide welcome relief during the hot summer months, particularly in the upcoming term.
- The **new Mary MacKillop mural and additional murals** in the Pre-Primary and Kindergarten restrooms have brought color and life to these spaces, delighting both students and staff.
- Additionally, **fencing for the lower oval** was completed earlier in the year, enhancing safety on our grounds. Fencing for the Pre-Primary area is planned for the upcoming school break.

Once again, the P&F delivered a full and vibrant calendar of events, enriching our community life. Highlights of the year include:

- **Mothers' and Fathers' Day breakfasts**, which continue to bring families together in a spirit of celebration,
- The **Grandparents' Morning Tea**, a cherished event for our extended families,
- The **Dads' Campout**, always a highlight of the year.

Our students also enjoyed a wide range of before-and-after-school activities, from sports like hockey, basketball, netball, and soccer, to engaging clubs such as theatre sports, tech club, and **Kids 'n Sport**.

A special mention goes to this year's **Colour Carnival**, which was a huge success! Organized internally by the P&F, the event received rave reviews. The **foam pit** was a standout attraction, with students—and even a few parents—enjoying it immensely. It was a joyous celebration of our school community and a day to remember.

As we close out 2024, on behalf of the School Advisory Council, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this year's achievements. The dedication and spirit of our community continue to make St Columba's a remarkable place for faith, learning, and growth. I look forward to the journey ahead in 2025 and all that we will accomplish together.

Warm regards,  
Phil Horner  
Chair