



**Santa Clara School ACM 2023
Principal Report**

Preface – impossible to cover every aspect or achievement of our wonderful school or mention every person that impacts who we are and what we do in this special place.

I wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Whadjuk (Perth region) people. I wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.

Welcome to the Santa Clara School, St James Annual Community Report for 2023.

Throughout 2023, our school community continues to grow in building strong foundations in faith, wisdom, and peace. These three things enable us to find our connection and grounding in this special community. There is no doubt that the words of Saint Clare, our patroness, continue to set the foundation for who we are as a community. It is in this spirit of acting with love that shapes who we will become, and the love that exists in this community is abundant. We achieve what we achieve through the many blessings we have received throughout the school year.

In writing my report for this year, I decided to focus on listening and the difference it can make in our lives and the lives of others. This year for me, I believe I have experienced my most growth not only as a principal but also as a person. What I have discovered this year, is that listening is all about being in communion with the other person. Being given the opportunity this year to be involved in the Principal Wellbeing Program has brought me a sense of peace in everything. One of our speakers this year had an ability to make us be still. You think about it, how often do we get to be still? I know for me it is not very often. Our brains are always thinking, what next? However, the opportunity to stop and be still has opened my awareness to listening to others with a willingness to understand the other, their story, and being open to being in communion with them. Just to listen is quite a unique thing. As this proverb states, "Those who are wise, listens".



One of things I have realised through all my learnings this year, is that when we are in conversations, or preparing for a meeting about school or a child's learning, or whether it be a family situation, we can tend to over prepare for it. We think we are being diligent, getting everything organised, thinking of what may be asked, having all the answers, predicting what the other person may say. But this only adds pressure to the conversations and does not allow for true listening. I am guilty of this in all aspects of my life. I can prepare for a staff meeting, even family stuff, and think about it way too much rather than go with the flow and simply listen.

Through listening, we 100% discover story, and once we are aware of another's story, we can listen with true understanding. I have failed at this a number of times, trying to have all the answers, but this year I have taken time to reflect and think about how I could have handled situations differently. However, God speaks to us in the everyday events of life. When I was flat and tired one day out on duty, I was reminded by Hayden in Year One, that it's OK. This wise Year One student reminded me that when I mess up or feel flat, that in fact it is OK. It means I get another chance in my next conversation.

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When we overthink, or do all the talking and dominate a conversation, feel the need to give advice, continually thinking of our next response, then it is hard to listen with empathy and understanding. It is a wonderful challenge to place on us to not always have an answer. We are far more engaged with each other if we keep high respect for the other and come with a willingness to listen. This creates an openness and safety in dialogue leading to the response or next step. I think what I have loved most about my learnings this year and what stands out the most is a quote that I constantly reflect on, 'No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care'. This is something that is truly lived out in our community.



The ability to truly listen and not already having the answers is something that will be a focus for next year. We are reminded that when we listen, we will also find God's voice. This quote is so true. Listening to His voice in all our conversations will also bring a sense of calmness to our days. I think with all the noise, and all the pressure that comes with being in a school in today's world, maybe this is the way to bring a sense of peace to the chaos we all experience. In the end, this is all about being in the present with others, something I feel we all try to do our best we can when we have the capacity and energy.

Inspiring Christ-Centred Leaders (Catholic Identity)

Religious Education and faith formation are the primary purpose of Catholic schools. In partnership with all parents, the school and parish work together to assist the children to develop knowledge of their Catholic faith. The explicit teaching of Catholic practices and knowledge, through the Religious Education Units of Work, is an integral part of our mission as a school. It is mandated by the Bishops of Western Australia and the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia from which our lessons are planned.

Throughout the year, our Santa Clara students have supported a number of charities including Project Compassion and Catholic Missions. During our St Clare Feast Day celebrations, we were able to raise \$1300 for the Archbishop's Lifelink Appeal. We will also be soon having our annual Christmas Appeal for our St Vincent De Paul Chapter here in St James. We would like to thank our staff and students for their engagement in these initiatives. Our calling to serve has ensured we have once again improved the lives of those vulnerable in our community. I thank the students, staff and parent body for impacting the lives of others.

Again, in 2023, our Sacramental Program of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation were celebrated with our Parish family. The workshops and celebrations were meaningful and connected our children to Jesus and

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the broader community. We thank all staff and parents for their engagement in creating Liturgies that were celebrations of joy.

Our staff continue to work towards completion of Accreditation requirements as part of working in a Catholic school and their individual faith journey. Their efforts and commitment is very much appreciated.

Bishop's Religious Literacy Assessment

This year our Year 3 and 5 students participated in the Bishop's Literacy Assessment. Our results were as follows:

Year Level	SC Mean	CEWA Mean	Perth Mean
Year 3	422	402	408
Year 5	431	466	473

Review of 2023 Priorities

- For staff to develop a deeper understanding of our Dominican Charisms in line with their calling to serve as a way of living out their personal faith **(achieved/continue)**
- To improve the standard of Masses at the school to help staff deepen their personal connection to their faith **(achieved)**

2024 Priorities

- For students and staff to develop a deeper awareness of their personal character strengths and use them to live out our Dominican Charism of Blessing.
- To provide students with meaningful opportunities of prayer and worship to deepen their personal connection to their faith.

Catholic Schools of Excellence (Education)

We have very experienced and passionate staff members at Santa Clara School, who go about ensuring high standards of teaching and learning for our students. This, along with coaching from Renae Armstrong, our Pedagogical Practice Coach, has positively impacted our confidence as teachers and the standards of our students across all year levels. This ensures our Vision for Learning and agreed upon teaching pedagogy is consistent across all year levels. The real impact of the improved use of data in our school is reflected in the growth of our students and the magnified impact that a teacher has in class. I am so proud of the efforts of all our staff and the high caliber of teaching and learning programs they implement for their students.

2023 NAPLAN assessments took place in Term One this year. Our Year 3 and 5 students once again tackled the week of assessments with confidence. At Santa Clara, we continue to teach our students concepts as part of our learning programs, preparing them for the testing style they will experience during NAPLAN. Reducing any anxiety attached to the testing experience only goes to improving the opportunity for our students to showcase their full potential, which is all we ask of them. Our school once again performed well, and we celebrated the fact that our students, many of whom come from non-English speaking backgrounds, are not only mastering Australian Standard English, they ensured our school average Proficiency Band aligned with the National and State average. These results are the product of our staff and students and drive us forward in 2024.

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	Year 3			Year 5		
	School Av	State Av	National Av	School Av	State Av	National Av
Reading	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Writing	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Spelling	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Grammar	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong
Numeracy	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong

As well as these positive NAPLAN results, I would like to acknowledge the achievements of our school in the STEM Learning Area. In 2023, a group of Year 6 students were crowned state champions at this year's Kids in Space Program with their 'Condiment Dispenser' allowing them to participate in the National finals in Adelaide. Not bad at all for a little school in St James! We acknowledge Mrs Claire Daniels for her commitment and drive to providing our students with such rich Science and Technology learning experiences.

Review of 2023 Priorities

- To investigate an effective functional language support program across Kindy to Year 2 that caters for the needs of our EAL/D students **(achieved)**
- For teachers to develop their own professional judgement in discerning how and when to apply the five teacher practices **(achieved/continue)**

2024 Priorities

- To effectively implement our functional language support program across Kindy to Year 2 that caters for the needs of our EAL/D students
- For all teachers to use their professional judgement to meet the needs of all their students through learning design and instructional range

Catholic Pastoral Communities (Community)

Santa Clara School continues to build strong relationships within and outside of its community. Enrolment applications continue to be strong throughout the year levels, especially in our Early Years. Our Kindy class has been at capacity for the past three years and once again will be next year. This is a very visible sign of the quality and care offered at our school to both students and their families. Santa Clara is not about being a perfect school, but rather a place of learning, growth, and acceptance of all. Decisions are always made with our main priority, the kids that come through our gates each day.

I would like to acknowledge the work of our P&F who work quietly in the background to continue to build community spirit within the school. As a group they have been quite remarkable in how smoothly they have worked with our families in continuing many of the past traditions and establishing new ones. The team of parents have done this with one focus, and that has been on the wanting to do it for our children. We thank you all sincerely for the time and commitment to the people within our school and the fundraising events throughout the year that have resulted in the upgrading of many resources across the school, all of which benefit our students. All you need to do is visit our Library! A fabulous year of working tirelessly for our school and its people.

Parent Satisfaction Survey (2023)

The table below outlines the results in a score out of 5 from the 2023 parent/caregiver survey. This is an externally conducted survey and is independent of the school. The ratings are based on 37 families responding during the survey period. These results are reviewed by our Leadership Team, staff and our CEWA

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School Improvement Advisor to identify areas for further improvement and future planning. Overall, the survey represents growth in our school which we are extremely proud of.

Area	SC Rating
Staff Support	4.18
Dealing With Student Behaviour	4.17
Engaging Environment	4.08
Satisfaction With Child's Progress	4.28
Welcoming School	4.65
Affirming Diversity	4.22
Communication	4.47
Assessment & Feedback	4.14
Satisfaction With the School	4.17

Review of 2023 Priorities

- To raise the profile of Aboriginal perspectives within the curriculum and the local and wider community **(continue)**
- For staff and students to recognise the 24-character strengths in themselves and others **(achieved)**

2024 Priorities

- To raise the profile of Aboriginal perspectives within the curriculum and the local and wider community by celebrating significant events such as NAIDOC Week
- To provide our community with the language and strategies to support and inclusive environment based on healthy friendships and resilience

Accessible, Affordable and Sustainable System of Schools (Stewardship)

Enrolments at our school have continued to increase this year. In fact, this year we reached 224 students, the highest number we have seen in over ten years at our school, meaning our school is currently sitting at 90% capacity. Strong enrolment trends are associated with our reputation in the local and surrounding areas. This connection with our community is ever present and is a result of the work of our staff, students and their families. This positive feel in the community is driven by the stories of our families and the quality of our teaching and learning programs embedded at the school. To ensure this trend continues, we must ensure we provide the best for our students and remain open to opportunities of growth. This is the heart of our Bishop's Mandate; A Catholic school must be a good school.

There are many elements within a Catholic school and administration process that are undertaken to ensure the school runs effectively. At Santa Clara, we have a very dedicated team that work together in the administration to allow operational matters to be implemented on a daily basis. Flexibility and adaptability to the myriad of matters that may come their way during the school day is a credit to their commitment to our school. I would like to thank Suzanne Walker, Jac Wilson, Denise Grech and Andrew Gaudoin for their continued support and willingness to put in the extra hours for the school and community.

We are fortunate at Santa Clara School to have committed staff members who enjoy working together to ensure students' educational needs are met. When I think about our staff, there are two words that come to mind. The first is gratitude. I am grateful that I have this group of people walking the journey with me. Their support for each other is something that creates strong bonds and unity. Thank you for your high standards and professionalism. It is about a 'one-in, all-in attitude' to what we are establishing in our support for each other as a professional organisation, but also one strongly focused on positive relationships. I wish to thank all our staff for their contributions to making the students the number one focus and for the unwavering commitment to providing the very best education for the students in your care. To all our staff, thank you for

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what you bring to the life of our school community. The second word is blessing, that each and every day we get the privilege to impact 224 students and play a massive part in who they become.

This year we have some movement within our staff. Jessica Delmadoros and Georgia Copeland will be embarking on new journeys as educators. They will be farewelled at our end of year celebration. We wish them all the very best for 2024 and thank them for their service to our students and the community. Your new schools are blessed to have you as are the students you will teach throughout your career. Always remember you are an important puzzle piece to all the people you encounter throughout your journey. I would also like to acknowledge Mr Adrian Tulett for his many years of service to our school and wish him the very best in his future endeavors.

Fiona Messer will also conclude her service to our community as an Assistant Principal at the end of 2024. I would like to acknowledge Fiona for her commitment to our school and the level of care she has for our students and staff. We wish you all the best for the future Fiona and know that you will be blessed abundantly in your life. I invite you forward to accept a small token of appreciation from our staff, Advisory Council and P&F in recognition of your dedication to our school.

With excitement we also welcome Ms Maria Nieto Agudo to our staff and community as our Pre Primary teacher. We hope that Maria enjoys her time at Santa Clara, and we look forward to getting to know her as a person and educator. We also welcome back to our community Miss Tanya Pavlovic who will once again join our staff in 2024. In the six months that Tanya was with us, I personally got to witness her drive to improve student outcomes not just in her classroom but across the school. This same drive and commitment continued at Queen of Apostles in the second half of this year, and we look forward to this continuing here at Santa Clara in 2024.

I wish to thank Father Chris, our Parish, our Catholic School Advisory Council and our Santa Clara P&F for their continued support throughout 2023. Father Chris continues to bring a gentleness and kindness to our community. With the support of Ruth Noonan, our chairperson, all our CSAC members, we have once again worked together for the wellbeing of all in our community here at Santa Clara. This group of people are outstanding in their commitment to the operations of our school and the people who walk through the gates each day. Under CEWA's Governance structure, they provide valuable insight into the community. Their support and collaboration, along with their generosity of time is very much appreciated as is their willingness to be involved on behalf of the community. On behalf of the school community, we extend our gratitude to each of you for the spirit you bring to our meetings.

At the end of 2023, Ruth will end her tenure as our chairperson. I would like to acknowledge Ruth for her commitment and time to fulfill her duties as our chairperson. Ruth will continue on our Advisory Council in 2024 as our new Secretary and I once again look forward to working with her in making this place the best it can be for our students. In 2024, Renae King will take on the chairperson role. Renae brings to our school a wealth of knowledge around education and school improvement. On behalf of our community, I would like to thank Renae for her commitment to the role of chairperson and I am very much looking forward to working with her and all Advisory Council members.

Our current School Advisory Members have played a massive part in my development as a leader and have ensured our school is in a sound position, both financially and with our academic results. This year sees many of these people stepping down as their children move to secondary school. These people bring a sense of joy to our meetings with a clear focus on improvement and what is most important for our students, staff and their families. On behalf of the community, I would sincerely like to thank Naomi Pitt, Bevan Castle and Alisha Crook.

I would also like to thank Michelle Kinsman for the time she has spent as our P&F President and her drive to make this school the best it can be for the kids. Michelle's energy and drive is exceptional and she simply 'gets on with it' to ensure our students and community have fun while raising funds. The discos, colour runs, Bogan Bingos are all ways of building community, and as you end your time on our P&F, know that you have done exactly that. In working with you, the P&F under your leadership has supported the school in purchasing

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new classroom furniture, building new playgrounds, purchasing new play equipment, purchasing educational resources for our kids, and revamping our school Library, just to name a few. And, under your leadership, raising over \$87,000, funds that directly impact our students. While I am saddened to see you end your time as our P&F President, I am so grateful to have that drive on our staff as an Education Assistant. On behalf of us all, including the kids, well done Michelle, you have done an exceptional job!

Review of 2023 Priorities

- Embed our Santa Clara Professional Growth model for all staff **(achieved/continue)**
- Review all relevant school documentation to ensure we are meeting all legislative requirements and are compliant **(achieved)**

2024 Priorities

- To upskill all staff in strategies using the Berry Street Education Model to increase the engagement of all students, including those with complex, unmet learning needs
- To increase our social media presence in the local and wider community so as to increase student enrolments at the school

Conclusion

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude for all that we have at Santa Clara School. For the strength of our community to be united in what we do for our students. Our philosophy is pretty simple, that every decision we make is in the best interest of the child. We strive to be Christ-centred in our outlook and that we support our community in good times and times that challenge us. The one thing that binds all of us is the care for each other that exists here and that gratitude is lived out each and every day.

To our staff and families who leave us this, I wish you all the very best at your new schools and know that you will always be a part of this community. For those new to joining our school you will be truly blessed having these students and staff impact you and your children.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to thank staff, parents and Parish community for the support given to the on-going development of our children at Santa Clara School. I sincerely wish all members of our school and Parish a peaceful and joyous Christmas. May we all appreciate the significance of this time of rest and renewal as we gear up for a bright and exciting 2024. As your Principal, I thank you for your support and kindness. It is an absolute privilege to be here and serve these students who leave a mark on me as a person. On behalf of our school, I wish you an abundance of joy this Christmas and a year ahead that is filled with goodness and hope. May you be blessed.

In appreciation for what you all bring.

Clinton Payne
Principal
21 November 2023

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