Principal’s 2014 School Board Report

2014 was again a very busy year for All Saints. Despite the very hot weather we had a great beginning to the new school year. This year our focus was driven by the increasing number of children, families and staff members and the challenges these pose for us. Throughout the year we have committed to ensure we do not lose the community feel of the school.

We welcomed Gary Herdegen to serve another term on the School Board and Sherrie Close and Chris Hanna were welcomed as new Board members. Our Board meetings focussed on reviewing a number of school policies including the Out of Hours Sport Policy, Sun Smart Policy and Critical Incident Policy. Early in the year we also welcomed Cath Kennedy as Chair of the School Board for 2014. I sincerely thank Tanya Galbraith for her work as Chair in 2013. Tanya remained a respected Board member for 2014.

During 2014 we continued our work on Catholic Identity which involved our Staff Retreat Day with Fr Richard Leonard. Richard reminded us of the purpose of our work in Catholic Education is not to just teach children, but to enrich their spiritually. We also joined with other Catholic schools in the Southern area and engaged in the work of Professor Paul Clarke who spoke about ‘listening to the voice of Creation: A Call to Ecological Conversation’. Paul Clarke is Co-Director of Pop –Up Farm Foundation and he connects people’s ideas, and challenges to make their own pattern of sustainable living. It was very valuable and informative for All Saints as we place great importance on sustainability education with our children. We celebrated many beautiful Eucharistic celebrations and liturgies. These included the Welcome Mass, the Easter Mass, Feast of the Assumption and All Saints Day. Liturgies included the R/1 Grandparents and Special Friend liturgy, the 2/3 Special Person’s Day liturgy and Year 4/5 Stewards of the Earth liturgy. The Year 6 and 7 children were involved in a school retreat and work with children from St John the Apostle School. We also celebrated the Hall Garden Sculptures Liturgy. These sculptures were created by Anna Small and Warren Pickering, current parents of our school and very talented artists. We are certainly gifted by their presence in our school. Anna and Warren worked with myself, Helen Thompson, other families and children in the design process. This group known as ‘The Afternoon Tea’ Group met regularly for some months to finalise the designs. These sculptures represent bread/wheat, fire/ light and water. Each sculpture is represented by a meaningful piece of Scripture. ‘I am the bread of life’. John 6.55, ‘I am the light of the world.’ John8.12, ‘Out of this heart will flow water.’ John 7.38. The group was formed as part of the Enhancing Catholic Identity project. We were also excited about the launching of another project. This was a new sculpture for the school’s courtyard which was completed in time
for our End of Year Liturgy. Fr Charles blessed this new sculpture and it looks beautiful in our courtyard as it reflects the importance of our Catholic Identity.

It was with great sadness we farewelled Father Fred in August who was appointed as parish priest of the Adelaide Hills. Fr Fred had been a wonderful role model for our children, staff, parents/carers and members of the community and he had led us in many memorable masses and liturgies. We have missed him greatly. We thank Fr Charles for continuing to celebrate our masses and liturgies since Fr Fred’s departure.

During the year the staff attended a number of seminars lead by Professor Carla Rinaldi. There were many opportunities for staff to listen to Carla in our effort to learn more about the Reggio Emilia philosophy and its connection to the All Saints context. We spent time sharing our understandings and considering what was heard and what our next challenges will be. As we celebrated the Assumption of Mary, the children explored Mary in the Reggio context of the ‘Hundred Languages’. This resulted in the showcasing of their work in the Hall mezzanine. It was wonderful to view the quality of work that the children produced.

I thank Parents/Friends for the great work that they do for our children. In particular, I thank them for the purchase of the Play Pod. This Play Pod has been an exciting new way of exploring play at All Saints. We will continue to work on ways of increasing creative play for our children in 2015.

We thank all teachers for their work in 2014 and we especially congratulate Marianne Pope and Heidi Hill who both recently had baby sons, Max and Finn. We wish them well. There were of course many newborns amongst our school families during 2014, and we delight in all these occasions.

This is only a snapshot of all that went on in 2014 and I acknowledge that there were many other activities that enriched the children’s lives. I thank all families for their presence at the school. I especially thank those who volunteer in any capacity, no matter how big or small, it is always sincerely appreciated. To the ESOs in the classrooms and the office, I thank you for all that you do to support teachers in the classrooms and in the administration of the school. Finally, I would like to conclude with Helen’s words about her farewell. ‘My Farewell Liturgy celebration reminded me of all that was special about being part of the All Saints community. I will truly miss working with such a committed staff and the strong partnership I have with families. Most of all I will miss the children. I wish you all every happiness for the future and sincerely thank everyone for being part of my life here at All Saints’.

Justin Cavuoto was appointed the new Principal of All Saints. Justin had a tour of the school and he was suitably impressed and excited about coming to All Saints in 2015.

Helen Thompson

On behalf of Helen Ward

Principal All Saints