

**MATTHEW GIBNEY
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**



UNDER GOD'S PROTECTION

ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING

PRINCIPAL REPORT

23rd NOVEMBER 2022



Good evening and thank you for making the time to come along to tonight's Annual Community Meeting.

We had another unpredictable start of the year with the Omicron strain of COVID rapidly moving through Western Australia, influencing us in Term One and Term Two. On 16th May we had a record of 67 students away with COVID related absences. It was a tricky period to navigate. I am pleased we got through to Term Three, relatively unscathed.

Amongst the challenges, we have however, had a successful year of education for the students of Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School.

The school has once again been fortunate to enjoy a close relationship with our Parish Priest, Fr Joseph. Fr Joseph is always generous with his time in joining with classes to say Mass or to lead Prayer Services. This year we had students receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation. We were blessed that Archbishop Costelloe could celebrate Confirmation with the Year 6 students. All ceremonies were beautifully prepared and were reverent occasions in the lives of our children and their families.

Our connection with the parish community has been enriched this year with the continuation of the St Francis of Assisi Parish Bursary. The Parish Bursary, supported financially by parishioners and Fr Joseph, provides funds for the school to pass on to families who have been need at various times throughout the year. I am most grateful to the parish, in particular Fr Joseph and Parish Council Representative, Clare Arnold, for their support of the school through the Parish Bursary program.

Wellness and resiliency have continued to be a focus for our students during this year. Mental health has been front of mind as we have navigated the COVID landscape and its aftermath. I am grateful to all our staff for their commitment to the mental health of our students. Special thanks to Chloe Grant for her work with students and families. Chloe has offered workshops to assist parents with the care of the mental health of their children. The workshops have been well-attended, and we look forward to further opportunities in 2023.

Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School has continued to provide an environment where our students can thrive. During this year the school has provided opportunities for students to be involved in the creative, visual, and musical arts, various sport activities, extension, enrichment, and leadership opportunities. Participation in The Arts has been successful once again in 2022. The school musical, Little Red riding Hood, performed by the Year 4, 5 and 6 students was an excellent display of the talents of our students. Sincerest thanks to Mrs Aldred for her tireless preparation of the students. This year we trialled a Challenge Group for students in Years 4, 5 and 6. The Challenge Group, under the direction of Ms Bettridge, has provided students with opportunities to develop their talents and skills during the year. Support programs at Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School are exceptional. We are fortunate to have dedicated and skilled Education Assistants who provide a range of supports for students across all year levels. The team approach is of great benefit to our students.

Service to our community has continued to be a focus area during 2022. The students have continued to participate in the Mini-Vinnies Association, under the direction of Mrs Keddie. The Milo Mornings, and other initiatives have been successful.

The involvement of our parents in assisting the school with functions and events and supporting our staff in their work for the students has continued to be very positive. Thank you to the Parents and Friends Association, under the direction of Steph Kaciuba, for all their hard work during the year. The achievement of the P&F this year, with fund raising and friend raising events has been very positive indeed. Thank you to all on the executive and our parent representatives for this year. Your contributions to our school are highly valued.

I take this opportunity to thank the School Advisory Council for their dedication to the school in 2022. I acknowledge and thank retiring chairperson, Mike Feltham, who has given 6 years of dedicated service to the School Board and School Advisory Council. Prior to this Mike was an active member of the Parents and Friends. Mike leaves us as the youngest of his three daughters graduates this year. Thank you, Mike, for your

wisdom, mentorship, guidance and for having the very interests of the school at the forefront of all communications and decision making. Best wishes to you, Natalie and family for the years ahead. We also farewell Katie Pillera from the School Advisory Council at the end of this year. Katie has been an active and dedicated member of the council for the past 4 years. Katie has worked on the uniform and canteen sub committees and has been secretary of the Advisory Council in 2022. Thank you Katie for your contributions and we look forward to seeing you around the school helping out in various capacities, in the years ahead.

The success of this school year is testament to the quality of the staff at Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School. Our staff work with great diligence, commitment and an obvious personal care for every student they teach. The quality of the teaching here at Matthew Gibney is high. On your behalf, I thank all our staff for their work during 2022. In particular I acknowledge Assistant Principals Karen Keddie and Di Scriven, for their support and significant contributions to the smooth running of the school. I would also like to thank our admin staff, with whom I work closely, Julie, Flavia, Trishna, and Tania and Louell, who have left earlier this year, thank you for your care of me and for the work you do in ensuring the day to day running of the school.

With a heavy heart, we farewell a few staff at the end of this year. We farewell Saroya Powell and wish her well as she commences a new teaching position at St Peter's School in Beford. Saroya has been a valued educator at our school for over 20 years. She has been influential in the lives of countless students and families. Saroya's professionalism and dedication to her teaching has been most admirable and we wish Saroya and her family well as she commences her new role in 2023. We farewell Diane Scriven at the end of this year. Di has made the decision to retire. Retirement is a difficult decision to make, and I know for Di this decision has been significant. Di has worked at the school for over 20 years. She has been classroom teacher, Reading Recovery Teacher, Assistant Principal and acting Principal. Diane's presence is everywhere here- she has been an integral part of the success of the school across all domains. Diane's love of teaching, her dedication to the students and her professionalism will be difficult to replicate. Diane's legacy will be the impact she has had on the lives of the children. Diane cares deeply for their welfare. She is patient, kind, compassionate and has great empathy for students, staff, parents, and all in our community. We wish Diane all the very best as she spends quality time with her family and friends and wish her, Derrick, Ryan and Jane all the best for the years ahead.

Finally, the school has its students at the centre and, here at Matthew Gibney, we are always proud of our students. We are proud of them for ensuring the Matthew Gibney values and spirit is thriving across all aspects of our school community. We are proudly a Catholic School – Catholic first and foremost. Our values are those of the Gospel. Our witness is the witness of Jesus. We strive to be faith filled, to make our decisions based on the values that we try to live. We strive to make Jesus real every day. Our faith is enriched by the Eucharist and, as we approach the Season of Advent in the lead up to the great feast of Christmas, I encourage you all to connect with your faith and take some time, as a family, to attend the eucharistic celebration of our faith, the Mass, whenever you can.

Therese Hussey

23/11/2022