2011 Community Engagement Report
CONTENTS

Introduction ............................................................................................................................................ 3

Social Action & Justice and Equity & Stewardship ................................................................. 4
Justice in the school community .......................................................................................... 4
Action and reflection for justice ...................................................................................... 4
Deploying staff to meet the needs of students ................................................................. 4
Ecological sustainability and environmental processes ................................................. 5
Providing for the needy and marginalised ...................................................................... 5
Stewardship over facilities and resources to meet current and future needs ................... 5
Feedback on suggested areas for improvement ............................................................. 5

Professional Learning Community .................................................................................. 6
A culture that enables a professional learning community .............................................. 6
Communicating relevant professional learning to the broader school community ........ 6
Engagement with professional standards ........................................................................... 6
Feedback on suggested areas for improvement ............................................................. 6

Staff Engagement/Participation ....................................................................................... 7
Staff promote a positive & effective school environment by being involved in the school community ................................................................................ 7
Staff are involved in and have an understanding of resource management processes ........................................................................ 7
A culture of mutual respect, support and collegial profession relationships ............... 7
Feedback on suggested areas for improvement ............................................................. 7

Learning and Teaching ........................................................................................................ 8
Learning and teaching are responsive to the needs and interests of students ................ 8
Teaching practices are informed by and are consistent with contemporary practices & current research .......................................................... 8
Student learning data is used to inform learning and teaching ....................................... 8
Teaching programs are reflective of a whole school approach to curriculum implementation ........................................................................ 9
A range of resources are utilised to support teaching & learning .................................. 9
Feedback on suggested areas for improvement ............................................................. 9

Cultural Identity .................................................................................................................. 10
Appreciating other cultures (particularly Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) is integrated into the curriculum ........................................ 10
Practices & programs are responsive to spiritual traditions, customs and beliefs of students from other cultures ........................................... 10
Students from other cultural backgrounds & students who have English as a 2nd language can achieve learning success ........................................ 10
Feedback on suggested areas for improvement ............................................................. 10
Introduction

Each year St Stephen’s conducts an internal review to identify strengths and weaknesses so that changes can be implemented to improve performance. The review is called the School Validation process and it occurs in all Brisbane Catholic Education schools. Over a five year time span all areas of school life are reviewed. Below is the current five year School Validation plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Identity &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Teaching of Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer &amp; Worship</td>
<td>Vision for Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Support</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>IC&amp;LT Resourcing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance &amp; Development</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships with parents, care givers &amp; local community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Student Learning</td>
<td>Social Action &amp; Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>Learning and Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting &amp; Finance</td>
<td>Cultural Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Reporting</td>
<td>Professional Learning Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Staff Engagement and Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Self Review</td>
<td>Equity and Stewardship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evangelisation and Faith Formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Management (IC&amp;LT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation and Forward Planning (Student Learning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted and Talented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Teaching (IC&amp;LT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Small committees made up of staff and other members of the school community work together to collect performance related data, make a self-assessment, and report to Brisbane Catholic Education.

In the past, the committees have struggled to obtain feedback on performance from the school community. Traditional methods of questionnaires and surveys were time consuming to manage and responses were not always useful.

In 2011, the School Board decided to hold a Community Engagement Evening to improve the collection of performance data but also to provide an opportunity for the school community to come together and discuss various aspects of school life in an informal setting.

On the 9th of August, 2011 St Stephen’s held it’s inaugural Community Engagement Evening. Staff provided information on the activities undertaken by the school that related to the areas under review. The community was invited to review the activities, have a discussion and provide feedback. Feedback was used by the committees to complete the School Validation process.

This document is a report on the areas reviewed during the 2011 Community Engagement Evening. The report describes the school activities related to the areas under review and the feedback from the school community that identifies potential areas for improvement.

This report is published on the school website to ensure the whole school community has an opportunity to be informed about the results of the Community Engagement Evening. The Principal and staff may use the findings of the report to implement new strategies or modify existing ones. The key objective is to continuously review and improve performance.
Social Action & Justice and Equity & Stewardship

Justice in the school community

- All students are given the opportunity to receive a Catholic Education, with concessions available for families in financial need
- Our school offers just and inclusive processes for enrolment support for children with special needs
- The Behaviour Management Policy and Practice and the “You Can Do It” Program encourages and values human rights, with clear guidelines, positive reinforcement and just consequences
- Children with special needs are well catered for in classroom situations and outdoor activities, such as PE lessons, sports day and excursions
- Regular meetings are conducted with our Guidance Counsellor, Learning Support Teacher, parents and class teachers of students with special needs

Action and reflection for justice

- Contemporary issues of justice, peace and ecological sustainability are included in units of work for Religious Education and other key learning areas
- Curriculum content is based on real-life experiences and contexts e.g. SOSE studies on the Brisbane Floods
- Charitable activities include: Project Compassion during Lent, the annual School Mission Project, and the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal
- Year 7 students engage in Community & Pastoral Care Groups
- There is interaction with Parkinson RSL Retirement Village e.g. visits by our school choir
- Students participate in the ANZAC DAY parade and ceremonies at the Sunnybank RSL and the Parkinson RSL Retirement Village. The school conducts its own ANZAC and Remembrance Day liturgies and invites local veterans to these events
- Students celebrate Harmony Day, with the focus on peace and justice for all in our world
- Peace and justice is promoted in the behavioural and social practices of all members of the school community

Deploying staff to meet the needs of students

- Specialist support positions include:
  - Curriculum Support Teacher who coordinates the implementation of the Australian curriculum across the school
  - Literacy Support teacher
  - Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support Teacher for Inclusive Education (STIE)
- School officers help teachers implement fair and just programs for students and their individual needs
Ecological sustainability and environmental processes

- A Vision for Teaching and Learning is being developed by teaching staff, with an overarching goal of sustainability
- School buildings have been designed with a strong environmental focus, for example:
  - Air conditioning is not required
  - Water tanks have been installed
  - Sheepstation Gully Environmental Education Centre is purpose-built for science and sustainability
  - A 125,000 litre underground water storage tank has been installed under the oval to collect rainwater from the hall and classrooms to provide water for toilets
- A Sustainability Committee made up of staff members is working to implement whole school sustainability practices
- Staff Professional Development has included two full days with EarthCare to develop sustainability awareness and practices in the school
- Vegetable gardens are planted in the Prep and common areas
- School practices include recycling, wrapper-free lunches, class compost bins, clean-up days and student education on the sustainable use of electricity, water and other natural resources

Providing for the needy and marginalised

- The school offers support and fee concessions for needy families
- School buildings have been designed with a strong social focus, for example:
  - Five classroom sound systems aid students with auditory discrimination problems and/or a hearing disability
  - Single-story buildings, handrails on sloping pathways and ramps, disabled toilets and showers and a disabled lift in the new multi-purpose hall cater for physically disabled children
- A Speech Pathologist is engaged to assess the speaking and language skills of Prep students

Stewardship over facilities and resources to meet current and future needs

- School facilities and resources are reviewed regularly by our School Board and Principal to consider future planning needs for the school’s increasing enrolments each year
- Fees are set according to BCE guidelines and are reviewed annually by the School Board. The aim is to keep school fees as low as possible for our families, but also to meet the increasing demand for school resources.

Feedback on suggested areas for improvement

- Policy integration - the school’s Positive Behaviour Committee to review the Behaviour Management Policy to better integrate the school-wide Positive Behaviour Program with current practices such as the “You Can Do It” program.
- Gardens - the school’s Sustainability Committee to revive and improve the school gardening project with the cooperation of the P&F’s Working Bee Committee.
- Recycling - the school’s Sustainability Committee to identify and measure new statistics that will help develop more effective recycling practices.
Professional Learning Community

A culture that enables a professional learning community

- Professional learning and planning days – topics include: Australian Curriculum for Science, English and Mathematics; developing a school Vision for Teaching and Learning; Sustainability; First Steps - Writing and Reading Development; Spelling - Words their Way; Whole School Positive Behaviour Management Program; Pastoral Care/Social skills; shared professional development days with other BCE schools; and attendance at the Southern Religious Education Conference

- School Committees – Staff are members of designated committees aimed at developing various school initiatives, directives and policies (English, Spirituality, Sustainability, ICLT, Behaviour Management, Social and Early Years)

- Engaging with QSA professional standards and ACARA to create innovative, comprehensive and relevant teaching learning experiences for students that align with government requirements

- Qualifications and memberships – staff meet required academic and professional qualifications and may belong to professional associations, e.g. the Early Years Network Community, BCE

Communicating relevant professional learning to the broader school community

- Parent information sessions on topics such as the Australian Curriculum and school reporting systems

- Weekly newsletter articles on the Australian Curriculum

- Regular team meetings between staff to exchange knowledge

Engagement with professional standards

- The school recognises and develops strong relationships with the wider learning community

- Staff regularly attend network meetings outside of school hours to engage in professional learning and dialogue

- Moderation with St Matthew’s Primary School for Consistency of Teacher Judgement (CTJ)

Feedback on suggested areas for improvement

- Provide more information to the school community on new approaches to teaching and learning

- Provide more information to the school community on staff professional development

- Increase opportunities for staff collaboration when implementing the Australian Curriculum

- Allocate more planning time to staff to review annual goals and to develop the necessary strategies to meet those goals.
Staff Engagement/Participation

Staff promote a positive & effective school environment by being involved in the school community

- Staff attend community events (Spring Fair, Prep BBQ, Sacramental programs, School Engagement Evening)
- Staff take responsibility for the organisation and planning for whole school events (School Musical, St Stephen’s Day, Under Eights’ Day and Christmas Concert)
- Staff welcome parental participation (attendance at special events - liturgies, assemblies, classroom parent helpers, excursions, Under Eights’ Celebrations, St Stephen’s Day)
- Parent Partnerships – teachers inform parents about student learning (Parent Information Evenings, teacher/parent conferences, Showcase Evening)
- Opportunities exist for students to engage in academic/special interest activities which are in addition to classroom activities (Choir, Tournament of the Minds, Futsal, Netball, Rugby, Swimming, Athletics, Oz-Tag, Soccer, and Algester Idol)
- Recognition of positive student achievement – awards at assembly, playground awards, Sportsmanship and Community Awards. Individual student achievements are recognised through regular verbal feedback and classroom incentive programs (Smilies, Star Charts)
- Parent/staff communication is available - informal conversations, message boards posted outside classrooms and school office, school newsletter, text message reminders from administration, e-mails, KIT (Keep In Touch) books
- An End of Year Breakfast is held to thank the school community for its support throughout the year

Staff are involved in and have an understanding of resource management processes

- Staff members are informed about new resource purchases
- Resources are obtained to support planning by teachers and enhance student learning
- Class budgets are provided for teachers to purchase items, as required
- Staff work collaboratively and share school and personal resources
- Teachers consult with the Teacher Librarian about curriculum resourcing
- A curriculum box is provided for each classroom teacher (this box contains all relevant policies and curriculum documents for teacher use when planning)

A culture of mutual respect, support and collegial profession relationships

- A culture of mutual respect, support and collegial professional relationships is evident amongst staff - morning prayer, social club activities

Feedback on suggested areas for improvement

- Ways of communicating - some parents would like to increase the use of Email as a means of communicating with teachers. Explore other communication options such as Facebook and twitter.
- While still supporting staff and parent involvement in school-based activities and programs, current expectations to be involved may be too high. Today’s generation is “time poor” and time available to be engaged in the school community is limited. Need to: provide more flexibility and incentives to increase people’s involvement; use time more efficiently; and determine alternatives e.g. less activity and/or higher costs.
Learning and Teaching

Learning and teaching are responsive to the needs and interests of students

- Units, in all year levels, are developed from and respond to the interests and needs of class
- Students are given opportunities to select the mode in which to demonstrate their learning - PowerPoint, Word, collage, clay design, 3D models, pencil drawing, Photostory, video, story boards, “soundscapes” - music/sound, painting, mobiles.
- Units of work are written using “Blooms Taxonomy,” which develops students’ thinking from Lower Order thinking skills through to Higher Order thinking skills
- Students, in each year level, are grouped according to the need for specific instruction. Changes in grouping arrangements are responsive to the needs of students
- Positive relationships are developed through programs such as “You Can Do It” so that children are confident and comfortable in order to be actively engaged and take pride in their work
- A variety of opportunities is offered outside of the classroom context for students to develop their own talents and interests, e.g. band, choir, Tournament of the Minds, sporting teams, Algester Idol, school musical, writing competitions, public speaking competitions, “Gateways” program, ICAS competitions, and gardening club.

Teaching practices are informed by and are consistent with contemporary practices & current research

- Prep learning is play-based
- Major units of work are developed through an inquiry or problem solving approach
- Yrs 6 & 7 classes work together as a whole group with students visiting different teachers for study periods similar to middle schooling practices. This prepares students for high school timetabling routines
- Absence of set text for year levels allows for more ‘hands-on’ – concrete based work where students progress at their own rate
- Individual teachers are provided with a planning day per semester and weekly non-contact time.
- Staff meetings are regularly devoted to the professional development of teachers according to school curriculum goals
- Teacher’s Individual Goals for professional development, which are outlined in each teacher’s Professional Development Plan, are supported by school administration allowing for teachers to be released from class to attend professional development

Student learning data is used to inform learning and teaching

- Student learning data is used to inform learning and teaching - data is collected from school-wide assessments, class teachers, class tests, band scales, report cards, ESL reports, TORCH (reading comprehension), PAT Maths tests and NAPLAN to ensure students meet success in their learning
- Pre-testing is used to determine needs of individual students and influences the planning and programming that follows. Post-testing is used to monitor students’ achievements and the effectiveness of curriculum plans.
Teaching programs are reflective of a whole school approach to curriculum implementation

- All teachers in year levels meet to design major units of work
- Teachers meet weekly to discuss current curriculum and unit progress

A range of resources are utilised to support teaching & learning

- Teacher / Teacher Librarian and library support staff coordinate and distribute resources for classroom units of work, home reader borrowing, teacher resources and student library loans
- ICLT resources are coordinated to optimise resources for use in classrooms
- Whole school “incursions” for events such as “Raw Art” and “Book Week” presentations are coordinated across the year levels
- Sergeant Kylie (Adopt-a-Cop) speaks to class groups about personal safety and cyber safety.

Feedback on suggested areas for improvement

- Communicating to parents – a more structured approach for communication utilising the website, newsletter and parent information sessions.
- Information reported – more frequent student progress reports and more information on curriculum implementation, standards and criteria for achievement.
- Increase home readers – conduct a review of home reading borrowing processes to improve access to books.
- More help for early year classes – conduct research to find ways to attract more community members to support the school’s reading program.
Cultural Identity

Appreciating other cultures (particularly Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) is integrated into the curriculum

- Year 2 – Unit on different religions, cultures and beliefs
- Cultural day - students encouraged to bring food from their own cultural background
- Visits to a local Buddhist temple
- Prep, Year 3, 4, & 5 – Units on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Excursions to Ngutanal-Lui Centre.
- Years 6 & 7 – Asian Expo
- Year 6 – learn about religious beliefs of other cultures
- Spanish language is taught from Years 3 to 7
- Spanish Day
- World Harmony Day

Practices & programs are responsive to spiritual traditions, customs and beliefs of students from other cultures

- Students from other cultures are encouraged to explain their beliefs
- Where appropriate students are allowed to communicate in a variety of different languages
- Specific traditions of various cultures, for example, hand painting, are accepted
- Traditional owners of the land (Algester) are acknowledged

Students from other cultural backgrounds & students who have English as a 2nd language can achieve learning success

- Students from various cultural backgrounds and students who have English as a second language are provided with support to achieve success in their learning i.e. monitoring performance, planning support programs and providing hands on support

Feedback on suggested areas for improvement

- Establish a school Cultural Committee to help organise cultural celebrations
- Increase the emphasis placed on significant cultural days such as NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day
- Celebrate World Harmony Day over the whole day rather than just at assembly
- Increase cultural visitations and learning experiences
- Acknowledge traditional owners of the land before assembly