



Christ Church Grammar School

Headmaster's Report

March 2014

**Old Boys' Association
Parents' Association**

FROM THE HEADMASTER'S DESK

As is the case with any year, the first four weeks of the School programme have been unsurprisingly hectic. This is, however, balanced against a deep sense of relief one sees on the faces of most parents who finally have their boys back to being gainfully engaged and appropriately exhausted!

In a similar way, staff across the entire School (no matter what their roles) take a little while to get back into the pace of the school term, given that for many they have had a significant period of down time.

I am particularly pleased with the manner in which our new staff have managed their beginning at Christ Church. My impression is that they are genuinely pleased to be working in an environment where they not only feel valued, but where they are also witness to an aspirational culture within the student body. In this I wish to acknowledge the Director of Staffing and Strategic Projects, **Mr Murray Robertson**, and his Executive Assistant, **Ms Louise Whittle**, who take responsibility for an extensive induction programme that is consistently applauded by participants.

I also wish to acknowledge early in the year in this formal way the Director of ICT Services, **Dr Geoffrey Alagoda**, and his team who have managed to facilitate the step up in our ipad programme (reported later). Geoffrey's capacity and leadership in this area is balanced by his accommodating and considerate nature. He is a rare geek indeed!

Finally, it is most appropriate at this time to acknowledge the work of the Director of Finance, **Mr John Price**, in leading the way to the Outline Development Plan approval for the Brockway Playing Fields development. Working most closely with our planner, Mr Erwin Roberts from Roberts Day, and our engineering consultant, Mr Barry Smith from TABEC, and patiently (most of the time) addressing the 'irrational' that exists in community consultation, John has managed what is a brilliant outcome for the School community. It seems most appropriate that his good work has built on the similar attention to detail, given by the previous Bursar, Mr Vince Evans, without whom this project may never have begun. Also in this context I, would like to acknowledge the support and guidance of Mr David Rose with the practical aspects of this project and pay due respect to previous Chairs of Council, Mr John Saleeba, Dr Pip Hollingsworth and Mr David Fardon, who have all led the Council through to this point. Should events unfold as we would hope, we might well be playing at the new facility in the middle of 2015.

STUDENTS

The LW Parry Preparatory School

Academic

The Prep School academic year has commenced with a maintained focus on consistency and continuity of programme. The recent introduction of specific programmes designed to target comprehension and spelling is beginning to show results in the school data collections. The focus of 2014 is strengthening our writing, a relative weakness of our boys. The Vocabulary, Connectives, Openings and Punctuation (VCOP) / Big Write is an evidence-based programme with a track record of improving students' writing. A group of staff trialled the programme in 2013 and have begun sharing the procedures and pedagogy with their teams, before a formal Professional Learning day in May.

The Prep School first standardised data collection for the year is complete. This data enables the staff to track progress across the year. However, more importantly, it provides the Director of Studies, Co-ordinators and class teachers with a gap analysis to guide teaching programmes.

Pastoral

The central aspect of the Prep School Pastoral Programme, The Champion Quest, was redefined with staff at the beginning of the year. The outcome is a more consistent implementation across the Prep School. The introduction of a silver and gold badge created much excitement from the boys.

The Prep staff have planned for the introduction of a Protective Behaviours programme in all year groups.

The Director of Pastoral Care, Planning and Co-curricular (DPCPC) has been planning for the introduction of Vertical Tutor Groups (VTG) in the Prep School. Trialled by the DPCPC in 2013 the staff were shown the outcomes of such groups with Prep aged boys. This trial was part of the DPCPC research as part of the IBSC Action Research. The Prep School will begin to trial VTG from Term 2.

Planning and Co-curricular

The Prep diary has been increased to an A4 size and all foreseeable events were contained in the diary for the first time. The Prep start of year events, such as the Parent Information Evening, have been completed efficiently.

The Prep Co-curricular Programme offered 38 activities available to boys for Term 1, a 100% increase over the previous five years. The participation rate is exceptionally high with most activities full.

Sport has commenced and Inter-House Swimming carnivals have taken place with Giles being successful for the second consecutive year. The Inter-School team will defend a fifth straight JPSSA Swimming Title.

Senior School

Academic

It has been a very smooth start to the year through the Studies office. New staff and boys have settled in well to their respective routines. Reports from Year 7 parents, in particular, have been very positive and at this time of the year it is always a relief that all the machinations of a very sophisticated timetable have fallen into place. Acknowledgement for the success of this timetable should be given to **Mr Matt Kameron**, Assistant Director of Studies, who commences the task part way through the previous third term.

190 Year 11 boys spent a day at St George's College, UWA listening to a range of speakers including Old Boys and industry representatives at the Ad Astra Day. This day is aimed at 'kick-starting' boys into the final phase of learning – *Expertise and Excellence*. Boys had a high degree of choice over which sessions to attend and this led to high levels of engagement. Focus on study strategies in a number of different subject areas was also appreciated. The subsequent Parent Evening was not as well-attended as anticipated. However, information was made available via the newsletter.

Boys and girls associated with classes impacted upon by our relationship with MLC have begun well. The 'Crossing the Fence' programme (as it has come to be known) has settled well and issues have been minimal. Of note is that this relationship made the departure of our German teacher much easier to manage.

Planning for the new WACE 2015/16 has commenced now that information is becoming clearer. Significant in this is the implications of OLNA ((Year 10 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment), a new mandated test from SCSA.

The implementation for the new assessment periods (Years 11 and 1) has immediately begun to Achieve its twin goals of increasing teaching time and ensuring integrity of assessment process.

In Student/Academic Reviews, the Studies Office is closely monitoring about 30 boys in Years 11 and 12 who are deemed to be at risk of not reaching a C grade in a range of subjects. Heads of Departments are monitoring some other individual boys who have challenges with only one subject.

Pastoral

In the Senior School the formal transition programme for Year 7 students has unfolded well. Once again the Year 11 Peer Support leaders have played an integral part ensuring that all transition activities have run smoothly and been enjoyed by all our new boys. Part of the activities involved sessions with Headmaster, the Head of the Senior School, the School Chaplains, the School Psychologists and the Health Centre Manager. The Year 7 boys will now participate in the Koorinal Outdoor Education experience in House groups over the remaining weeks of Term 1, as a culminating element of the Transition term.

In the pastoral domain another very successful Parent/Student/Tutor meeting night was held in the second week of term. These meetings engaged 80% of families with boys in Years 8 to 12 with the focus being on comments made in their 2013 report and their goal-setting for the year ahead. All Tutors have expressed very positive comments about the meetings and those families unable to attend have been contacted and alternative meeting times have been arranged.

The introduction of iPads to all boys, as well as the introduction of the new student diary app, has been well-managed. There will be inevitable teething issues with such devices and all staff have been provided with a good deal of support from ICT to become confident and conversant with their use and application.

Planning & Co-curricular

The beginning of 2014 has seen a significant shift in the administration and communication within the School community. The implementation of the Senior School Diary via the iPad diary app has been a significant rollout and change to students and staff, particularly in the Senior School.

The development of a model for service which incorporates SIA and Indigenous elements has been a focus of the first couple of weeks as we sought to offer as many opportunities to Year 11 boys, in the first instance, to undertake service within our indigenous communities. At present the SIA trips to Burringurrah, Looma and Marble Bar are full, as too are the west and east Kimberley Garnduwa trips. The final Kimberley trip to Yakanarra is still to be finalised, as is our potential new engagement with the Jiggalong/ Martu community.

PSA sport has started with plenty of energy and a good level of success in the first three weeks of term. Having a bye in the first week enabled the organisation of teams to be at a greater depth.

Drama, Music and Visual Art have all begun the year with busy programmes. The Visual Artists in the Senior School spent some time in Week 2 at their Annual Art camp held at Curtin University. The Drama Department (under the guidance of the Acting Head of Drama Nicky Garside) is currently in rehearsals for the Year 9 play, *Private Peaceful*, directed by Jenny Davis and have also cast the Year 10 play, *The 39 Steps* and the Year 11 and 12 production, *Henry IV* to be performed at the State Theatre later in the year.

Preparation for the Annual Outdoor Education programme is well underway. The Year 5 programme has begun this week with the last month of the term dedicated to the Year 7 House camps prior to the Year 8 Leeuwin programme in the first half of Term 2.

STAFF

Teaching Staff Appointments

Mr Greg Jones has been appointed as the next Artistic Director of the Midnite Youth Theatre Company and Head of Drama. Greg is a director and teacher and over the past ten years has directed and produced more than 40 productions in performance and education contexts in both Australia and the United Kingdom. Between 2007 and 2010 he founded the Whiplash Theatre, an independent theatre company based in Perth. He comes to us having been the Head of Drama at Camberwell Grammar School in Melbourne between 2011 and 2013 and the Head of Drama at Guildford Grammar School between 2005 and 2010.

Mrs Sophie Norris joins us in a two week part-time position in the English Department. Sophie is covering a leave of absence.

Mrs Gillian Croston has been appointed in a fixed term, part-time position in the Music Department. Gillian has previously spent many years working for the School and is covering a leave of absence.

Christ Church Initial Teacher Scholarships

We have been able to award our two *Christ Church Initial Teacher Scholarships* to Mr Simon Moore and Ms Sarah Nicholson. This is an initiative that has provided the School with the opportunity to access high performing trainee teachers through the Graduate School of Education at the University of Western Australia. The recipients will be working in the Mathematics/Science and English departments.

Support Staff Appointments

Miss Jessie Mitchell BA Fine Art (Honours), BA Fashion & Textiles has been appointed in the Art Department taking on the position of Art Technician. Jessie has most recently worked as acting Arts Co-ordinator at the Tresillian Community Centre and the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art.

Mrs Ruth Bisset has been appointed as Clothing Services Assistant in a part time permanent capacity following a long association as a volunteer.

Resignations

Mrs Ann Walker has resigned from the position of Canteen Assistant.

Mrs Sonya Silby has resigned from the position of Clothing Services Assistant.

The 'AMP Days' (Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose) conducted over the 2013 for both academic and support staff have concluded and in total 216 staff participated. A group report has been written using the Role Engagement Alignment Profile (iREAP) tool that examines various work aspects which have been proven to be motivating to people. The instrument measures the importance and satisfaction of each aspect for their current role. The detailed report will accompany the Monitoring Report of the Director of Staffing and Strategic Projects.

New Staff Orientation

New staff have had the opportunity to provide feedback on the programme and have overwhelmingly appreciated the high level of planning, attention to detail and support from colleagues they received over the first four weeks at the School. New staff recently had the opportunity to reconnect with each other and Executive at a New Staff Lunch held in the River Room on Wednesday.

COMMUNITY

News stories from the past month:

- *Romsey wins House Swimming*
- *Giles back-to-back champions*
- *Beach welcome helps Year 7 boys*
- *Summer sport captains announced*
- *University camp challenges Art students*
- *Boys given strategies for school and beyond*
- *Senior cadets excel on leadership courses*
- *New Zealand tour gives rowers pre-season edge*
- *Postcard from: Picardy, France*
- *School marks foundation and 104th birthday*
- *Students achieve global A grades*
- *Cambodia service trip challenging to the core*

Website

The new website has been launched and overall has received very good feedback from the current parent community, which is being directed to CCGS World each week for reports, articles, notices, Quick Links and calendar. Site visits have increased dramatically and soon we expect to be able to analyse traffic in some detail.

Of course, change is challenging for some, so we have experienced some disorientation from people learning where to find all their information and have been able to demonstrate benefits in the process. The site has also renewed interest from staff, who have identified content updates, some news ideas and thinking about better ways to communicate with parents regularly (e.g. music).

The final stages of development are to finalise home page animation and make some CCGS World presentation improvements, as well as some 'back end' processing changes to enable better archiving. Overall, the platform we are using, WordPress, has lived up to its expectations for user friendly updating. We also use WordPress for some select blogs to parents, as well as small groups like Executive and Council.

Welcoming new parents

This year we have introduced a special welcome dinner for parents new to the School. We held a dinner for Prep parents and a separate one for Senior parents. The newly refurbished Refectory space was used for these events. The goals are to introduce parents to the School's values and vision and feel connected sooner, with a view to helping their orientation as well as encouraging a philanthropic attitude. Both events were attended by more than 60 per cent of the parents and it was very pleasing to observe how well parents mixed together, the positive feedback from all about the commencement of their boys and how few issues of concern were raised.

Parents' Association

The PA has started the year very effectively under the leadership of Susan Montanari.

The first year level sundowner was for Year 7 parents, held on the Chapel Forecourt after a briefing from David Anderson, Director of Koorringal, about the Year 7 camp experience. The event was well-attended and organised by the PA, which undertook a personal call to every parent to invite them to attend.

The Association is promoting its forthcoming Red Carpet Premiere cocktail party (with the OBA) which will be held in the Chapel Forecourt on Saturday 29 March. Members of Council are encouraged to attend.

Parents' Auxiliary

The Parents' Auxiliary has commenced the year with more activity earlier than previously, thanks to forward planning by the 2013 committee. Most year levels had parent get-togethers scheduled before the Mid-Term break, which ensures parents feel connected and engaged early each year.

The committee has held its first meeting with class representatives and now has all year levels covered with organising representatives. This is a great outcome.

Other parent support groups

The Friends of Music began the year in fine style with their annual breakfast, this year featuring members of the Australian Chamber Orchestra brought to the School by current parent and Old Boy, Simon Yeo. The event was well-attended and very much enjoyed by everyone. The FoM also hosted with the Music Department their start of year 'Meet the Musos' Sundowner.

The Friends of Midnite and Friends of Walters also held significant start of year sundowners for their communities.

The DFC Friends of Rowing community has also begun the year well, hosting their annual Quiz Night fundraiser this week and planning for the Christ Church Regatta to be held at Champion Lakes on Saturday 8 March.

Old Boys' Association

The OBA published its February/March newsletter edition on the new website platform featuring a new design enhancing excellent content. Progress is being made towards developing a new OBA website as part of the Potentiality platform (which enables Member Directory and social media access).

The OBA is also leading the charge for the School in the social media environment on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The goal will be to increase Old Boy 'subscribers' through newsy regular updates.

A successful Basketball game between current students and an OBA team was held recently. This is a 'step back into the future' with regard to OBA/School sport matches – a practice that fell into disarray some seven or eight years ago. It was wonderful to see 40 or so spectators enjoy a good match and a sausage sizzle afterwards.

The gift from the OBA to the School of Sports Captain, PSA and motivational quote Honour Boards in the School gymnasium and window signage, has been very well received by the School and wider community.

ICT, FINANCE and FACILITIES

ICT

The launch into the 2014 schooling year was both an exciting and a challenging phase for ICT services at Christ Church. The challenge was to deliver three key IT elements into the classroom for use on day one. Two of the three elements, namely the deployment of one to one iPads for each boy from Years 5 to 12 and the deployment of a working Electronic Diary, were made available on day one. The third element, the delivery of electronics textbooks to senior school students, was delayed for a week due to a supplier glitch. Subsequent improvements to each of these areas have stabilised the classroom use of these offerings.

The 2014 iPad programme is a whole school programme spanning the years PP to 12, teaching staff and some support staff. 700 iPads were purchased to supplement the existing student iPad fleet in order to provide each boy from Years 3 to 12 with an iPad. Boys in Years PP – 2 are allocated limited sets of generic iPads for shared use. Take home iPads are limited to the Senior School and storage cabinets are provided for students in the Prep School to charge devices overnight. All teaching staff have been provided with iPads.

With consent from the Studies, Planning and Pastoral offices, the App4 Student and Teacher electronic diaries have been introduced for immediate use by all Senior School staff and boys. The electronic diary's primary purpose is to adequately replace the paper diary with content that is dynamic and current. This diary electronically provides efficient update of school calendars, informational documents and agreements. In addition, it provides

teachers with information relating to boys and their workload in terms of assignments and homework. A parent version of this application will be released in the near future.

A significant lack of relevant textbook publishers on the Apple iTunes store has resulted in the procurement of Campion's electronic textbook solution for 2014. Through this iPad application 1000+ electronic textbooks (PDF versions) were delivered to boys across Years 7 - 12 within the subject areas of History, Geography, Economics, Languages and Physical Education. This has proven to be an exciting and effective entry into the electronic domain of textbooks, especially when backed by the cost-neutral licensing model used by Campion.

Finance

- Audit – Deloitte auditors arrive 4 -16 March 2014 for School and Foundation audits.
- The PWC workshop being arranged by School Council is now confirmed for 15 March 2014.

Facilities

- Brockway – ODP approved unamended by the City of Nedlands Council on 25 February 2014. The infrastructure planning for this project will now proceed in earnest. Importantly, the water pipeline construction is complete (cost \$580k). Water Corp will connect to the pipeline within the next couple of weeks.
- Chapel Refurbishment – final scoping completed. Development application approved by Town of Claremont. Project almost ready to be tendered.
- 10 Queenslea Drive – refurbishment of the property has started. However, forecast costing is not yet complete.
- Liaison and negotiation with the Shire of Murray on registration of Koorinal as a Lodging House.
- Traffic Management – ToC officers have asked for a number of modifications to be made to the plan prior to presenting it to the ToC Council for ratification.
- Main Roads – letter from Headmaster requesting flashing 40km/h signage in Queenslea Drive has been posted.