

## Welcome

Our second annual special addition newsletter has been created to reflect, thank and celebrate our teachers, support staff, students and families on a successful 2018. Throughout the year as a staff, we challenged each other to be Marigold flowers, due to the fact that in gardens if you plant a Marigold near any other flower, it will enable them to grow. It symbolised what we wanted to stand for, to be Marigolds that grow with, and from, one another.



As a school we reached many milestones and achievements, linked to our intended 4-year targets and goals from our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. I invite you to take a minute to read this 'year in review' as we reflect on 2018 and prepare for what is planned for the year ahead.

## Our ever-growing community

The municipality of Manningham continues to demonstrate high population growth. In recent years the Templestowe and the Lower Templestowe areas have seen a regeneration (combination of empty-nesters selling, increased sub-divisions and young families moving back into the area) and coupled with our growing reputation as a school of choice, growth is inevitable.

We have carefully managed our increased student enrolments from 250 (at the start of 2015) to 395 (projected at the start of 2019) through the construction of new classrooms within our existing buildings, enabling us to continue an emphasis on maintaining our strong sense of community.

As I have mentioned previously, growth is not all bad. The growth that we have experienced has enabled us to provide additional opportunities for the children, as increased numbers have resulted in increased funding for the school. Some of the ways we have invested in our additional funding have been:

- Significant investment in developing our teachers' skills, knowledge and understandings in instructional practices that are shown by research to have a high impact on learning
- Employment of a literacy intervention and a year 3-6 enrichment teacher
- New goal posts and padding on the oval and basketball backboards
- 13 different lunch time interest clubs for students to select from
- Purchase of 3 new interactive TV/whiteboards, 20 laptops and more Lego Robots
- Maintaining our sustainability program with our school chickens and community garden

It has been so pleasing to see how these initiatives listed above are continuing to add to the breadth of positive experiences and engagement that students are being exposed to at Templestowe Heights Primary.

I am aware that whilst there are significant benefits from continued growth, it also raises concerns amongst some families about losing what makes us special. This is something I am very aware of and something Andrew, School Council and I continue to review regularly.

Of the two biggest concerns I hear from parents, the first is the worry of growing too big. As we are now becoming the school of choice in our local community, we are now only able to cater for the enrolment of students from within our local catchment area.

The second concern is around class sizes. While we continue to grow, our average class sizes have remained the same and well below that of other local primary schools in Manningham. In 2019 we will have 18 classes with an overall average of 22 students per class, well below the State's expected average of 26. Next year classes will continue to be supported by Lisa Clark (*literacy intervention*), Janine Reid (*year 3-6 enrichment*) and our newly appointed *Learning Specialist* Jeanette Breen and *Leading Teacher* Celene Black.

## Celebrating our Learning Achievement

Over the past three years, we have invested heavily in developing teacher craft (skills, knowledge and understandings) to ensure we are delivering high quality lessons for all students. In this year alone we budgeted over \$70,000 on providing learning opportunities for our teachers to work with coaches, as well as observe each other in classrooms to deliver on our goal. Coupled with our new teaching & learning model

and new reading, writing, spelling and maths zones programs, we have continued to see exceptionally strong results in our annual NAPLAN tests. Our belief about NAPLAN is that we are not preparing our children to be “test ready citizens” and have never given our students countless practice tests, but rather preparing them as 21<sup>st</sup> century learners by instead focusing on the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms.

We also pride ourselves on being an inclusive school, every child has the right to participate in the NAPLAN tests. Our participation rate was one of the highest when compared to the state. Our results in 2018 reflect all the hard work the school and children have made. Everyone is to be congratulated.

Specifically, over the past 4 years when compared to all Victorian schools, Templestowe Heights Primary has significantly:

- High levels of students achieving medium and high learning gains (i.e. measuring the growth of a student’s position from grade 3 to grade 5)
- High levels of students performing at the very top two band-levels of the test
- Very low levels of students performing at the bottom two band-levels of the test

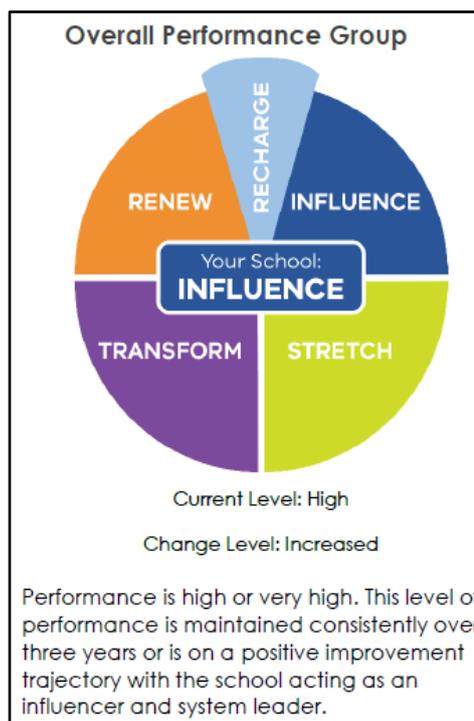
These results were acknowledged by the Department when we were asked to present to the leaders of over 130 schools in the Manningham and Waverley Network on our curriculum and instructional change initiatives. Whilst this acknowledgement is very much appreciated and valued, what I am most proud of is that it reflects our teachers’ commitment to improving their practice to deliver high quality learning experiences.

### Recognised as a Leading School

The inner-eastern region of Melbourne is the highest performing region in the state of Victoria. Within the inner-east region, the three networks of Manningham, Boroondara and Monash are the highest, specifically in terms of learning achievement.

As part of The Department of Education’s model for identifying the performance level of schools, they have established five categories. The first category “renew”, identifies schools that have declining results over time and their performance is low, right up to “influence”, which means a school with high or very high performance, that is maintained consistently over 3 years. Schools in this category are seen as an “**influencer and system leader**”.

**There are over 120 primary and secondary state schools combined in the Manningham and Monash Networks. Templestowe Heights Primary was again recognised as one of only 5 “influence schools” across both networks and the only school within the networks to achieve this status in consecutive years.**



This significant and extraordinary achievement is something we should all be proud of and places Templestowe Heights Primary in unique company as the only school to be recognised in consecutive years as an Influence School, within the highest performing region and network in Victoria. This result affirms that the research-based curriculum initiatives we have implemented, the focus on developing teacher practice and the introduction of new assessment tools to inform our teaching and learning continues to be world class. It also demonstrates that our teachers continue to be learners, that they have embraced the challenge of being the best teacher they can, and are delivering high quality lessons to our students.

The achievement as an Influence School is also reflected in results from state-wide comparable student, parent and staff surveys. The strong results from these three surveys over the past four years indicates overwhelmingly that:

- Our **students** feel safe at school, identify that they are provided with a stimulating learning environment and recognise they have strong student-teacher relationships
- Our **parents/guardians** are supportive of our school, are encouraged and have opportunities to contribute to the school and trust that our teachers are preparing their child for the next stage of their education
- Our **staff** have a strong sense of collective responsibility to helping all students to flourish, have trust in one another and know of, and buy-in to the school's vision

Due to the recognition we have received as being a high-performing school, we have had many school leadership teams visit us from within and across Melbourne. We are very proud to share our initiatives with any other state school, as we firmly hold the belief that all schools should be able to learn from each other as this is how, as a system, we get better.

### Staff Profile

We will have two additional classes in 2019, bringing the total to eighteen (we had eleven classes in 2015). In addition to our two new grade class teachers, we have employed two more teachers to cover our staff that are leaving at the end of the year (Mary Tran and Stuart Hanmer).

Like all schools we want to attract the best teachers that are learners, who can lead change, drive standards and help our school move forward. In 2019 we will have 36 members of staff, 21 of which have been appointed in the past three years. The hiring of so many new staff over this time period is symbolic of student population growth. We now observe potential candidates teach lessons in our classrooms, moving away from the traditional approach of interviewing candidates where they would **tell us** what they could do, to an approach where they need to **show us** what they can do.

Due to the increase in numbers, the school was in a position to expand the executive leadership team, appointing Celene Black and Jeanette Breen to Leading Teacher and Learning Specialist roles respectively. These new positions will be aligned to the school's future strategic targets, more specifically focused on leading the continual growth of teacher capacity (through our teaching & learning model) and driving the implementation of our new research-based reading/writing curriculum. We are fortunate that Angela Makris is coming back from family leave one day per week to grade-share with Jeanette and Celene, enabling them to fulfil their additional leadership roles.

As well as leading the implementation of our Annual Plan, our School Improvement Team's role is also to lead their year level teams. They have and will continue to provide a pivotal role in driving the standards and strategic direction of our school.

<b>Administration</b>	<b>Rhys Coulson (Principal), Andrew Veal (Assistant Principal) Margaret de Haas (Business Manager), Anna Sanos (Office Administration)</b>	
<b>Education Support</b>	<b>Ashleigh Bowman, Vikki Brereton, Kerryn Clark, Kirsty Creek, Navaara Matherson, Yvonne Tan, Mary Wakefield</b>	
<b>Foundation</b>	<b>Cassie Dykstra, Ashleigh Danes, Jacqui Nicolazzo</b>	
<b>Year 1/2</b>	<b>Celene Black*, Julia Laidlaw, Tania Martini, Marie Petzierides, Julia Rossi</b>	
<b>Year 3/4</b>	<b>Jeanette Breen*, Liz James, Linda Spencer, Louise Wood, Alex Bruinwood</b>	
<b>Year 5/6</b>	<b>Ross Toogood, Julie Gibbs, Sam Wang, Brittany Chipman, Sylvia Petrovska</b>	
<b>Specialist Team</b>	<b>Kate Stacker</b>	<i>Physical Education</i>
	<i>Lisa Clark</i>	<i>Literacy Intervention, EAL Support</i>
	<i>Janine Reid</i>	<i>Enrichment</i>
	<i>Jayne Setford</i>	<i>Performing Arts</i>
	<i>Dina Velona</i>	<i>Italian</i>
	<i>Joy Birrell</i>	<i>Visual Art</i>
	<i>Angela Makris</i>	<i>Leading Teacher/Learning Specialist class share</i>
<b>Highlighted names in bold denotes member of the School Improvement Team.</b>		
<b>*denotes Leading Teacher/Learning Specialist</b>		

## Our 2019 Goals

With the conclusion of our 2015-2018 Strategic Plan, it provided us with an opportunity to reflect and review what went well over the four years, how we knew it went well and what areas are identified for growth. At the commencement of 2019, the school will be participating in its planned review with a goal of setting out recommendations to help steer the strategic direction over the next four years. This is an exciting time and an opportunity to plan for how Templestowe Heights Primary will look in 2022. At this time I would like to thank the incredible work of the policies committee, lead by School Council Vice President Amber Elliott, for developing and ratifying over 20 policies this year.

We will continue to invest heavily in our teachers, including professional learning with instructional literacy and maths coaches, leadership coaches and a teacher observation model which supports our continued target of developing teachers' skills, knowledge and understandings to deliver high quality lessons. We are aiming to increase the rigour of our teaching and learning model, employing a numeracy coach to reinvigorate our maths curriculum and are continuing to embed wellness strategies as our redeveloped wellbeing program.

Our financial focus for 2019 will research the feasibility of constructing a standalone Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) learning space. While we have established our robotics (coding) and 3D printing (Design Technology) programs, the next goal is to build a designated STEM-learning space where students can work in.

Through the support of Monash University, we are in the early stages of exploring a partnership that will see the introduction of Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality learning opportunities via a purpose built area within the proposed new STEM room. This exciting prospect will mean Templestowe Heights Primary would be the only government primary school with VR and AR learning opportunities for its students. While we are seeking grants to fund the software requirements, the capital works build will be entirely paid for without the need for additional funds. This is possible due to our increased student numbers and the slight surplus we have been able to save over the past four years.



At the start of term 1, 2019 we will be taking 2 of our 4 yearly allocated curriculum days to focus on inducting our new staff, launching our new maths curriculum redesign and further invest in developing our teachers, as early into the year as we can. I also understand from families that these curriculum days prove challenging for working parents. Given this, we have secured a school holiday program for the Tuesday (29<sup>th</sup> January) and Wednesday (30<sup>th</sup> January) to operate during our first two allocated curriculum days.

## Staying community-focused

We continue to balance our growth with maintaining our strong sense of community and individualised learning approach.

I sincerely mean this when I say at Templestowe Heights Primary we have one of the most positive and strongest communities I have ever seen. The generous donations to our community garden, chickens and

library funds have further enabled our success. Our *Parents & Friends (PAF) Association*, led so competently and willingly by *Cath Hanslow* and *Clare Stephens*, and supported by so many giving parents have raised over \$17,000 in 2018, allowing us to construct the first stage of our shade-sails in the playground adjacent to the outdoor basketball court. In addition, other community benefits this year have included:

- One third of our students now participate in our school basketball program (18 teams in 2018), that is coached and managed by parents (and led by *Kate Stacker and Sarah Mabin*).
- Our community garden, generously supported by *Laura David, Jeanette Breen, Jacqui Nicolazzo and Brittany Chipman*, that now has a weekly gardening club, a watering roster and a host of after school harvesting markets which have been very successful.
- Introducing a new online school management system and school App/portal to create an effective communication channel between home and school.
- Introduced a new school uniform provider, that includes a retail shop to allow families to purchase and collect their child's uniform straight away.
- The continuation of our school chickens, driven by our very assertive student voice leaders, has taught our students responsibility. It has been greatly supported by *Jeanette Breen, Brittany Chipman* and keen families.
- Our volunteers from class reps have not only supported the families that commenced at the start of the year, but also warmly welcomed our new families throughout the year.
- The many community-focused events that the PAF organise and run.
- Our School Banking parents and our many classroom helpers who stay after 9am to listen to children read.
- Our new student-run canteen that operates every Friday lunch time. This initiative was developed in support with Janine Reid. The canteen is now making a profit and they are continuing next year.
- The huge support we receive at every working bee, and functions we run – your time and skills are incredibly valued

In summary, thank you to you the parents, your children and our staff for making 2018 an eventful, yet rewarding year. As we enter the last few days of school, I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

Kind regards,

Rhys Coulson  
Principal