



## **FREMANTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL BOARD REPORT**

**MARCH 2017**

The recent 2016 parent survey indicated that some members of our school community do not know what the Board does or who sits on the Board. We therefore want to provide more information to help develop parents' understanding.

### **BACKGROUND**

As you will be aware, Fremantle Primary School (PS) became an Independent Public School (IPS) at the start of the 2015 academic year.

An essential part of a school's transition to IPS was the establishment of a School Board. These elected members work closely with the Principal to achieve the best outcomes for students.

The Board does not have influence over operational matters such as staffing, selection of specialist subjects, and day-to-day matters.

During 2015, the School Board developed the school's three year Business Plan (2015-17). This document set the new strategic direction of the school. It outlines the key priority areas that we feel the school needs to focus on during that time, and specifies targets the school needs to achieve by the end of the three years.

A key ongoing function of the Board is to closely monitor to the school's progress against its Business Plan targets.

The Board also oversees school finances; develops school policies and procedures; and approves things such as room hire use and voluntary contribution levels.

During 2018, the school will be externally reviewed by the Department of Education Services. This independent review will investigate whether the school has met the commitments outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (a contract between the school and the Department of Education) and achieved its Business Plan targets. The Board will have an active role in this review process.

### **WHO SITS ON THE FREMANTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL BOARD?**

There are 8 parents representatives on the Board who have been elected by parents. Staff have a further 5 places on the Board – the Principal and Deputy Principal plus 3 other staff who were selected through staff nomination and election. The University of Notre Dame also holds a place as a co-opted member.

Different tenure terms have been decided by the Board to provide continuity and sustainability. The current members and tenures are as follows:

<b>Person</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>
Emma Herrick (Chair)	Parent (Mum to William in Year 5 and Lucie in Year 3)	Until the end of 2017
Jen Jackson	Parent (Mum to Eleanor in Year 4 and Odetta in Year 3)	Until the end of 2017
Nicole O'Connor	Parent (Mum to Luka in Year 2)	Until the end of 2017
Katrina Sachse	Parent (Mum to Milan in Year 5 and Gabriel in Year 4)	Until the end of 2017
Tamsin McArdle	Parent (Mum to Minnie in Year 5 and Emmanuelle in Year 2)	Until the end of 2018
Nina Rovis-Hermann	Parent (Mum to Molly in Year 5 and Aliza in Year 4)	Until the end of 2018

Cate Turk	Parent (Mum to Amelie in Year 6 and Roland in Year 3)	Until the end of 2018
Joanna Ryan	Parent (Mum to Lucas in Year 2 and Emily in Pre Primary)	Until the end of 2019
Hayden O'Mara	Staff – Principal	Ongoing
David Sachse	Staff – Deputy Principal	Ongoing
Edwina Allen	Staff (Year 5 teacher)	Until the start of 2018
Jen O'Neill	Staff (Pre Primary teacher)	Until the start of 2018
Belle Thompson	Staff (Kindy Teacher)	Until the start of 2018
Serena Davie	University of Notre Dame (Manager of Professional Practice, School of Education)	Ongoing



Parent Board representatives: Standing (left to right) Katrina Sachse, Emma Herrick (Board Chair), Cate Turk, Tamsin McArdle, Jennifer Jackson, Joanna Ryan, Nina Rovis-Hermann. Front row (crouching): Nicole O'Connor.

There were some membership change to our Board in 2016 and at the start of 2017.

Tamsin Reed, mum to Zephyr in Year 2 and Catherine in Year 5 stood down at the end of her tenure. We thank Tamsin enormously for her significant contribution to the both Board over the last 2 years, and previously to the School Council.

In her place we welcomed Joanne Ryan as a new parent representative. She is both a parent and a primary school teacher at a local school. This expertise and dual perspective will be incredibly useful.

We have also very recently had a change of staff members with Jen O'Neill and Belle Thompson joining us following staff elections in February. We thank Kathy Brierty (Year 6 teacher) and Amy Goodrick (Year 4 teacher) for the time and effort they have put into the Board over the last two years.

### **BUSINESS PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING**

As outlined earlier, a huge amount of work was done in 2015 to establish operating protocols for the Board such as our Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct.

Crucially, the Board also produced a Business Plan for 2015-17. This was a massive undertaking and took a great deal of thought and discussion. This outlines specific areas that the school wants to target to further improve the academic performance and social development of all pupils over this period. To see the full business plan, please go to <http://www.fremantleps.wa.edu.au/>

The Board also set a new vision for the school. Our vision is: Fremantle Primary School is a contemporary learning community which empowers students to be active and engaged citizens.

It also established new school values of Integrity, Care, Respect, Perseverance and Curiosity which are very much being embedded at the school.

In 2016, the main focus of the Board has been to monitor the school's progress against the targets set in the Business Plan.

There are 4 strategic priority areas in the Business Plan and a number of key focus areas sit underneath each one. Each priority area has targets to be achieved by the end of the three year cycle.

**1) Every child is a successful student**

- Striving for excellence in Literacy and Numeracy
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) as a whole school focus.
- ICT (Information and Communications Technology) embedded and balanced in the curriculum.
- Early intervention and support for SAER (Students at Education Risk)
- A dynamic and inclusive Arts programme.

**2) High quality teaching and leadership**

- Proficiency of explicit teaching of Literacy and Numeracy skills.
- An inquiry based approach to HASS (Humanities and Social Sciences) and Science.
- Strong, ethical and collective school leadership team.
- Responsible and accountable school governance.

**3) Beneficial Partnerships**

- Maintain and strengthen positive school and wider community partnerships.
- Promotion of Fremantle Primary School as a school of choice.

**4) School Environment**

- A contemporary and vibrant school environment.
- A focus on sustainability.
- Safe and Inclusive.

In order to track progress in these areas, the Board has formed 3 monitoring committees (Teaching, Learning and Leadership; Beneficial Partnerships and School Environment) to oversee progress in these areas and allow more detailed planning, activity and scrutiny to happen.

Each Board member sits on one of the committees. Each committee meets once a term (usually mid-term) then reports progress back to the full Board at the last board meeting of each term, allowing all members to have oversight and input.

Board members have full access all committee's monitoring spreadsheets that track progress in achieving business plan targets. This has been a very useful development and has allowed for much greater Board understanding, engagement, discussion and input.

**Teaching, Learning and Leadership Committee achievements**

This committee takes ownership of the first two strategic areas of the school Business Plan. There has been much progress since the start of 2015.

Strategic Area 1: Every child is a successful student

A number of strategies have been put in place since the start of 2015 to support excellence in literacy and numeracy including staff given time to develop operational plans with articulated targets and evaluation methods; dedicated literacy and numeracy teaching blocks for all years across the school; an agreed structure of content delivery (ISTAR); and professional learning for early childhood staff on the implementation of Letters and Sounds

program. Staff will continue to embed further self-reflection practices for continuous improvement as well as a peer classroom observation processes.

For students with highly specified Individual Education Plans, the use of the Department of Education's Special Education Needs Assessment Tool has been introduced to be used for all students who are then reported against using this process, as best practice in this area. In addition, the Deputy Principal has formalised the role of Student at Education Risk Coordinator to attend case conferences and support staff.

On-entry assessment for students in Pre Primary through to year 2 has been implemented better track student progress and to monitor and facilitate learning and development in these foundation years.

In the area of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), a specialist science teacher and a specialist digital technology teacher have been employed to progress these priority areas. A greater presence of science based work has been achieved and provided opportunity to link with local secondary schools such as John Curtin College of the Arts, as well as links within the South Metropolitan Region.

Students are now gaining increasing exposure to the use of digital technology to achieve a range of tasks with upgrades to and purchase of new information technology hardware. The Digital Technology teacher has been involved in the initial training for the DREAM project which aims to bring multiple schools together into a learning community supported by digital leaders to explore the role digital technologies and design thinking can pay in supporting problem-solving and project based learning.

The Arts program continues to be embedded within classroom and across the school, including a range of choir performances such as the massed choir, and the school Christmas Concert production. The visual arts program has been aptly delivered by a relieving teacher over the past 6 months.

#### Strategic Area 2: High quality teaching and leadership

Staff access and are provided with targeted professional development days that align with the strategic development of staff capacity and delivery of the Western Australian curriculum according to the Department of Education timeline.

Kindergarten to year 2 staff now meet regularly to review the learning framework against the National Quality Standards (NQS) to support ongoing planning and teaching practice.

Professional development practices have been implemented across the school with curriculum leaders selected at the commencement of each year. The school administration team and teachers reflect on professional practice using the Australian Standards for Teachers / Principals (AITSL), this is embedded in performance management or self-reflection processes.

The School Board has grown in its capacity and function to establish the strategic document and monitoring tool to measure its effectiveness. The Board has implemented sub-committees to focus on strategic areas and take ownership of the outcomes. Board self-reflection surveys demonstrate an improvement in members' capacity to govern. Board members have participated in training and have worked with School Boards from other schools to share good practice.

#### **Beneficial Partnerships Committee achievements**

This committee oversees the work in the third strategic area of the business plan, namely how we engage with external organisations; improve contact with parents and increase their involvement; and increase satisfaction levels with the school.

Many new external partnerships have been developed over the last couple of years. Fremantle PS has become the only official partner school of the Fremantle Dockers and a three year partnership agreement was signed in 2015. Players visit the school and children also benefit from a number of sports related activities and clinics that are delivered throughout the year.

Stronger links with the City of Fremantle have developed including participation by the school choir in their Christmas Spirit events in 2015 and 2016; funding for planting at the school; and participation in the Low Carbon Schools Project.

Our partnership with the University of Notre Dame's School of Education has also flourished with more student teachers engaged in teaching practicums. UNDA undergraduates are also supporting our students by delivering the Multi-Lit programme (Making Up Lost Time in Literacy) for children developing their reading skills. Their Manager of Professional Practice from the School of Education is also a co-opted Board member.

EdConnect has been rolled out at the school. This is a community volunteer program which matches adults to children in schools. They can support children with learning, interest development or in a mentoring capacity.

Links are being developed with Indigenous organisations. Our Year 6's are working with partners to develop a new Acknowledgement of Country specific to our school.

Links with various charities have been further embedded or new links implemented.

This committee also oversees the work to maintain and increase the involvement of parents in the life of the school and improve communication methods. It should be noted that Fremantle PS does far more to engage with parents than many primary schools.

The main areas of improvement over the last 2 years have been refreshing the school newsletter and ensure all parents are receiving it; creating a new website (although this needs some further updating); creating a new Facebook page; implementing the use of the Skoolbag app; implementing the MSGU system; the introduction of an annual bulk billing for incursions/excursions etc.; development of curriculum guides for K to 3 for parents; formal communication to parents about annual NAPLAN results; and sending home work samples for each child 2 times per term.

The 2016 parent survey indicated that some parents were very pleased with communication, however some felt this needed further improvement. The Board will continue to monitor this and develop new ways to communicate with parents and carers. It is anticipated that individual parent/teacher sessions will be coordinated in 2017.

This committee also deals with school branding and marketing in order to promote FPS as a school of choice and arrest the decline in student numbers. Much work has been done in this area: a refreshed school logo and letterheads; new faction names and the adoption of faction t-shirt as part of the uniform; development of a school prospectus and kindy information pack and new school signage for both his main site and ECE. New values banners, sports gazebos and factions teardrop signs have also been purchased.

School numbers have increased significantly over the last few years which shows that Fremantle PS is now a school of choice.

### **School Environment Committee achievements**

The School Environment Committee takes a holistic approach to both the physical and social environment of the school. The aim is to ensure that Fremantle Primary School's environment is nurturing, vibrant, safe and supportive while encouraging students to actively adopt sustainable environment practices.

Our school community believes that the building and environment in which children spend their day has a direct impact on their learning.

We want the school to be a contemporary and vibrant environment. Key improvements in the last couple of years include the rebuilding of the undercover area and canteen; the refurbishment of the school library; and a significant investment in upgrading digital technology infrastructure including the purchase of over 80 iPads, new library computers, interactive whiteboards and increasing the number of wireless access points in the school.

Significant improvements to the school grounds have been made though new play facilities, planting, signage and painting our school logo on the bottom of the Brennan Street steps and on the metal doors of the undercover area. The basketball court has also been re-lined, and improvements to the ECE space have also been made such as the installation of the chicken coop, a new bike track, and further development of the kitchen garden.

We thank the P&C for their generous funding to enable many of these things to happen.

The Board has also encouraged the rental of the undercover area for after school activities for our children to participate in such as drama and ukulele sessions.

Building on sustainable practices is also a key part of this committee's work. Fremantle PS has joined the Low Carbon Schools Project, and our children are working to improve environmental sustainability and operating efficiency. They have also participated in the Millennium Kids project. Recycling practices have been embedded in all classrooms.

Our older children are also involved in the Coastcare scheme including work to revegetate South Beach. A student environment group has been developed.

Raised garden beds have been purchased and are being managed by the different classes.

Plans are also underway to conduct a whole school audit of resources to ensure what we have is being used effectively and efficiently.

The final area of work of this committee is around Fremantle PS being safe and inclusive. New Behaviour Management and Emergency Management policies have been developed and approved by the Board.

The buddy program has been further developed to foster supportive friendships and our new school values have been firmly embedded at the school.

Emotional resilience support has been strengthened. Smiling Mind (a mindfulness program) is now rolled out in many classrooms. A Social and Emotional Health committee has been formed including parent representative to look at ways of improving support in this area.

#### **OTHER AREAS OF ACTIVITY OF FREMANTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL'S BOARD IN 2016**

As outlined, the key focus of the Board was initially developing the Business Plan to improve the school, then in more recent times has been to monitor progress in achieving our targets. However, the Board also has a number of other functions. In 2016 we also:

- Developed the monitoring spreadsheet to track school performance against business plan targets and developed of the "committee" structure to help the Board best monitor its progress in reaching the business plan targets;
- Reviewed the school's 2016 NAPLAN data;
- Developed of a parent survey and assessed the findings. In 2017 we are developing an action plan to address these areas for improvement, particularly focussing on improving parent communication and engagement;
- Improved our understanding of the Delivery and Performance Agreement. This is the school's contract with the Department of Education and outlines the key obligations that must be met as an Independent Public School. We are currently developing a self-review document to ensure we are meeting and able to evidence all our contractual obligations in the DPA;
- Regularly reviewed school finances including Student-Centred Funding, Reserves Account planning and approval of the 2017 Preliminary Budget;
- Supported the implementation AUSLAN as LOTE across the school;
- Reviewed and approved new school policies and procedures for Evacuation; Dress Code and Personal Items; Class Placement; and Behaviour Management;
- Developed Board understanding of on-entry assessment and approved additional funds to implement this across years K-2;
- Reviewed and approved the personal items lists for students for 2016/2017;
- Approved the level of voluntary contributions and charges for 2016/2017;
- Undertook a Board self-reflection survey to critically review our own performance in 2016;
- Approved the rental of school facilities for out of school activities;
- Developed and endorsed a school Workforce Plan;

- Approved dates for school development days for 2017;
- Discussed mental health and resilience support for FPS children;
- Discussed and subsequently implemented ways to raise Board visibility - established a Board noticeboard to promote who we are to the school community and committed to including an article in the school newsletter outlining what has occurred at each Board meeting;
- Elected and inducted 4 new parent members;
- Linked with the Boards of other schools such as Subiaco and Rosalie Primary Schools to learn from their good practice and identify key approaches to potentially implement at FPS.

## **BOARD CONTACT**

If you want to discuss operational matters such as issues with teachers, class placements etc., we will signpost you to the school administration as this is outside our role.

However all Board members are happy to talk to parents in detail about any Board matters such as the Business Plan.

The Board hopes that this handout provides you with more information about who we are and what we do. We look forward to sharing more information with you in the coming months and years.

As outlined above, a rotating parent Board member produces a short update for the school newsletter to inform parents about what has been discussed at each Board meeting. Please make sure you read this and keep up-to-date with the news we share. If you have any questions, please approach a Board member for further information.

2016 was a very busy year for the Board. I would like to thank all Board members for the time, energy and expertise they bring to this vital, voluntary role. I would also like to thank our dedicated principal, Mr O'Mara, and all the Fremantle PS staff for their hard work. The school has made fantastic progress so far in achieving its Business Plan targets, and this is in no small part due to their hard work and commitment.

2017 will also be a very eventful year for the School Board. We will be monitoring final year progress against our current Business Plan targets, and will also be planning and ultimately writing the 2018-2020 Business Plan. We will also be preparing for our first external review next year.

As Chair of the Board, please do not hesitate to contact me via the email address or phone number below if you have any specific queries about anything in this handout.

In Partnership,

Emma Herrick,

Chair, Fremantle Primary School Board

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