

**Our Lady Star of the Sea**  
**Minutes from the 3rd P&F meeting in 2020**  
**9/06/20**  
**via Zoom Meeting**

**Present:** Robert Peers (Principal), Maria Kennedy (Deputy Principal), Adam Haines (President), Jacqueline Powers (Vice President), Lee Wallis (Secretary), Campbell McArthur (Treasurer), Amanda Yates, Sara Sabbagh, Liz Bladon, Sally Bowden, Tamara Bowyer, Kylie Douglas, Katie Moss, Leah Rayner, Nadia Aanerud, Heidi Bridger.

**Absent:** Paul Quinn (DPC Representative)

**1. Welcome and Introduction to protocol on Zoom:**

**1.1** The meeting was opened by the President “Adam Haines” and Principal “Robert Peers” at (7:05pm) and they thanked everyone for attending especially the representatives from the Social and Welcoming committee.

**1.2 Apologies:** Paul Quinn (DPC Representative)

**1.3 Opening Prayer:** Maria led the opening prayer- Harmony Song

**1.4 Previous Business**

Skorts Update:- Jacqueline explained to some of the new attendees the background information about the Skort. She briefly explained how the idea came about, the design and processes involved in getting it into production but mentioned due to COVID it had slowed down.

Rob had some updated information and had been talking with Sandy and they were hopeful the order would arrive soon.

Social Committee:- Sara Sabbagh and Liz Bladon spoke on behalf of the social committee about some ideas in the pipeline for indoor and outdoor activities. While they conceded it was hard to organise given current restrictions, ideas included barefoot bowls at Breakers Country Club, winetasting/antipasto platters at Bamvino at Erina Heights and possibly a family friendly meet at Kincumba Mountain involving walks /scavenger hunts.

Adam suggested if numbers were still restricted, it could be divided into junior and senior grades like the school disco. Rob mentioned it might be worth tentatively putting a date down so people can plan towards it, which both agreed with.

Creative Play Space:- Jacqueline introduced and explained the idea around the creative play space for those new to the group. She mentioned it was going to be designed for those less sporty children, with more STEM based learning. She mentioned that the biggest hurdle to date was the drainage problem.

At that point Sally Harrison from CSO entered the meeting to discuss the creative playground project. She explained the rationale behind the plan and explained how it would enable the children and share and engage via interactive play. She mentioned improving the sandpit area

to incorporate some of these ideas and renovating the current cubby house to fit the concept. She said the space would provide stimulus for the children and teach them to look after and care for new equipment.

Designs and pictures were well received by the group, with Rob supportive. He said he was keen to get the plans moving and spoke of his vision that some classroom teachings could be brought to the outdoors within the space. He spoke of the school employing a landscape architect who he has already met with on a number of occasions to get it started. He hoped that the first part would be installed by the end year and that it could be added to over time. He wanted the students to be a part of the design process and hoped it would give them a vested interest in the project. Rob thanked Sally for her time and effort and Sally left the meeting.

Welcoming Committee:- Adam welcomed the two representative from the Welcoming Committee Kylie and Nadia. Both ladies spoke of their role and how they had been helping the new families and welcoming them into our school community. Rob thanked the committee for making them feel so welcome and appreciated all of their efforts.

### **1.5 New Business**

Treasurer's Report:- Adam spoke about the costing involved with the Mother's Day stall. These gifts were purchased prior to COVID and with the stall not going ahead the idea was to put them in storage until next year. Adam discussed that the P&F would be donated \$40,000 to the creative playground and that would leave the account with a balance of \$9,500.

President's Report:- Adam mentioned he had a few email enquires after the P&F was mentioned in the school newsletter. The questions were mainly asked around how the P&F worked and he replied to those explaining that it was the voice of the parents and ideas to be collated in order to better our school. He explained that parents contributing to the school this way also maintained the connection between the school and the parent body. The P&F levy within the school fees also removed the need to fundraise for the school.

Life after COVID:- Rob asked the panel if they liked P&F Zoom meetings to continue and toyed with possibly implementing a mix of both into the future. Tamara mentioned that she liked the face to face contact but thought a mix of both would be great and suggested possibly a live stream when it was a face to face meeting.

Adam asked if there were any other questions. Amanda enquired about Fair by the Sea and whether it would be going ahead. Rob replied and stated that Matt McCudden was hopeful they could still have something but possibly a more simplified version of the normal fete. Jaqueline thanked Rob and all of the staff for their ongoing support especially in the afternoons with pick up and appreciated the enormity of the job. Rob said he would pass on the gratitude. Rob mentioned there was a lot of lost property and said he would work to put something in place to encourage children to go and check the basket and reduce that.

## **2. Closure**

Rob and Adam thanked everyone for their time and contribution. Adam Haines closed the meeting at 8.28pm. The next meeting TBA.

## **Principal's Report –P&F Term 2 2020.**

- The last few weeks have been unusual to say the least. We've all been learning on the job (including me) and worked furiously to support families.
- Generally speaking, I feel Home-Based Learning went as well as it could given the circumstances. We received an enormous amount of positive feedback from a lot of parents. Having said that, we also worked on a case by case basis in homes where parents were struggling, often working from home themselves with multiple children.
- Families have managed to different degrees financially also. Some have suffered serious income loss through either loss of work or business. I recognise COVID issues have impacted several of our families and have been delighted with CSO structures to support our long serving families to ensure we are able to support all during this difficult time financially.
- The staff worked very hard to implement Home-Based Learning over the first few weeks. Although an evolving process and a massive learning curve, I have been enormously proud of their hard work.
- In acknowledging our staff, there were a number who behind the scenes who really stepped up above and beyond. Whether it was to support other staff members in their learning or reaching out to work closely with families who were facing their own struggles, I could not have been prouder of the efforts of the teaching and ancillary staff here at OLSS.
- I also want to publicly acknowledge our new AP, Maria Kennedy. It's been a whirlwind of a start here for Maria, yet her calm but determined demeanour has been a massive asset behind the scenes in the work of staff and me as we seek to serve the families and community here.
- We have learnt to be innovative on other fronts as well. We've sought to keep our sense of community alive with teachers reading stories aloud and made the local news for being the first school to consider live virtual assemblies when children were working from home (another learning curve).
- One of my big agendas as principal is to keep our parents feeling connected to our community during these times. It is true there is a fine balance between information overload and keeping everyone informed and we're trying to manage that.
- This was the motivation behind our recent live parent forum. This seemed to be well received, with 190 x live views (at peak) and 70 x watching the recorded version.
- Keeping parents connected to the life of the school is now one of our big priorities. This was evident in a beautiful Mother's Day Liturgy via Zoom from which we received enormous positive feedback.
- On June 26, we are trialling a Kindergarten assembly that will showcase the children and their learning live (and recorded) to their parents as part of their 'fairy-tale' day. All going well, this will be a prototype to support this across the school if restrictions continue.
- Generally speaking, our drop-off and pick-up procedures have been going as well as possible given the high volumes of traffic compared to normal. This has been a huge endeavour, and staff have really responded positively. The vast majority (although not all) parents have complied and have indicated their appreciation of the efforts behind the process. We continue to prioritise safety over swiftness, but also recognise the need for both to happen. Sadly, I have been disappointed with the behaviour of a small

number of parents and will continue to work with everyone where needed, even when we don't see eye to eye.

➤ We are continuing to work towards restoring normal school routines –but doing so as safely as possible. I'm pleased that we are returning to canteen operations this week, although this is on a very restricted basis –and will be reviewed weekly.

➤ Meanwhile, we have also had lots of external interest in our school. We have welcomed two new families in the last two weeks, and I am grateful to the Welcoming Committee and Class Parent Network for their support. I am also fielding a large number of enquiries of families from other schools (both from afar and nearby) and am currently liaising with new applicants.

➤ Kinder enrolments for 2021 have also been significant. Even with everything else going on, Maria and I have held an enormous amount of 'Zoom' interviews and we have a very healthy intake for 2021. Sadly, I've have had to say 'no' to several applicants. We look forward to continuing to serve the community as best as we can over the next few weeks, controlling what we can –and making the most of the external mandates imposed on us as a school –and the community more broadly.

God bless, Rob Peers.