



St Paul's
Mount Lawley

Annual Community Meeting
School Advisory Council Chair's Report
2023

Good evening everyone. On behalf of the St Paul's School Advisory Council, thank you for attending this evening's ACM. My name is Carla Chatzopoulos and I'm pleased to deliver my Chairperson's report for 2023.

Our Advisory Council supports CEWA and the St Paul's leadership team in the planning and implementation of our school's strategic direction. We have an important role in ensuring the voice of the community is a central consideration in decision making, whilst balancing the sustainable operations of the school in line with our Catholic faith.

This year has been my first as Chair, and I'd like to acknowledge and thank my fellow council members for 2023 who have each brought diverse talent, experience, and perspectives to our meetings and activities:

- Deputy Chair – Melinda Young
- Treasurer – Louise Johnson
- Secretary – Garrett Smith
- Parish representative – Mark Tindale
- General members Carla Morris-Luck and Chris Perera
- P&F representative – Junior Soliano
- And Fathers Timothy Deeter and Marius Grzech who have joined us throughout the year.

We have two members of Council retiring this evening:

Special thanks to Treasurer Louise Johnson who is stepping down after 3 years on Council. And to Carla Morris-Luck for 5 dedicated years of service, including as Secretary.

2023 has been a dynamic year for our school (including a welcomed return to community events), but also a time of change.

I acknowledge the fantastic leadership of Principal Peter Merry and Assistant Principal Hayley Sheppard, who have not only guided our school over the past 12 months but have set us on a clear path for the years ahead.

On behalf of the Council, I wish Peter and Hayley all the best as they depart St Paul's to pursue other opportunities in 2024.

I'd also like to acknowledge Yvonne Liebeck who officially retires from St Paul's at the end of the year after an extensive career in Catholic Education across WA.

In 2023, the Advisory Council guided a range of projects and initiatives including overseeing our capital development project (thanks to Melinda Young for her architectural and project delivery expertise). St Paul's also delivered a new and much-loved early childhood playground in July of this year.

These have been delivered concurrent with an extensive range of behind-the-scenes capital improvement and general maintenance projects across the school. Thank you to Prelean Bismark for her astute management of the St Paul's budget again this year, which sees St Paul's in a steady financial position – and we wish her all the best in her new role.

Another key focus for the Council was on strengthening communication. This year, we sought to reconfirm what makes Saint Paul's unique as a school – and promote this more deliberately and single-mindedly – to both existing and prospective families. We also engaged to better understand what St Paul's could offer in the future, to make our fantastic school even better.

With student retention an ongoing focus, we established an open dialogue with parents about their intentions for senior school – enabling greater insight to support our financial planning. Parent surveys were also initiated this year to understand preferences for the St Paul's year 4 – 6, experience, whilst our 'Transition to Senior School' evening was held for the first time.

The Advisory Council has developed a student attraction and retention action plan which will continue to guide our efforts in this area. This centres on:

- Embracing feedback and co-design within our school community
- Enhancing our school's presence and profile through marketing and promotion
- Building new and different opportunities for students to experience the great outdoors
- Strengthening partnerships across sport, community, environment and the St Paul's parish community.

A key project, resulting from this work was St Paul's 2023 partnership with Perth Glory. As the first of its kind for the club, it is a testament to what can be achieved at St Paul's by thinking outside the box and partnering to deliver unique experiences for our students. Special thanks to Chris Perera for his efforts in securing this for us.

I'd also like to thank Junior Soliano and the P&F for funding this Perth Glory trial program, as well as their significant contribution towards the new early childhood playground and a range of other projects and initiatives, including the Gin and Quiz night, which all make such a vital contribution to the life of the school community.

Looking towards 2024, the Advisory Council's focus for next year will centre on development of a new Strategic Plan for St Paul's.

This will be another very important opportunity for the school to listen and learn from the parent, student and parish communities, as we set the school's vision and direction for the coming four years.

The Council look forward to working with incoming Principal Nicola Lee and Assistant Principal Leanne Fanetti on setting the direction for our school's next chapter.

As I reflect on 2023, I'd like to thank Father Tim and Father Mariusz, for all their work during the year in supporting our students to celebrate their Sacraments, for school masses and for your tireless dedication to the St Paul's school community.

Finally, a huge thank you to our St Paul's teachers and staff for continuing to put our children at the centre of all that you do. We are so fortunate to be blessed with your dedication.

In closing, this year has seen St Paul's maintain its exceptionally strong educational position and a sound financial position, all whilst undertaking a transformational capital project and navigating a period of transition and change for our school. With the continued support of the school community, I look forward to building on this momentum in 2024.



Carla Chatzopoulos

Chair

Saint Paul's School Advisory Council