

## Wesley College

<i>Moderator, as visitor</i>	Rev Steve Francis
<i>Headmaster</i>	David Gee
<i>Chairperson</i>	Jim Walker
<i>Members</i>	Matt Braysher
	Dr Ross Goodheart
	Cheryl Haak
	Richard Hayes
	David Parker
	Greg Ruthven
	Rabia Siddique
	Professor Grady Venville
	Grant Vernon

### **I. A THEOLOGY OF EDUCATION / FULFILLING THE MISSION OF GOD**

Wesley College prides itself on a holistic approach to education, educating the whole child, from Pre-kindy all the way through to Year 12, developing a strong sense of self and community and instilling a lifelong commitment to their faith and personal and communal responsibilities.

### **2. SERVICE**

Service forms the central tenet of the human element of fulfilling the mission of God. Across the College, more than fifty different entities are reached by our community. There is a strong emphasis on doing, and where fundraising is the key outcome we endeavour to connect it to some form of symbolism (for example Shave for a Cure and Relay for Life).

During the last holiday break, two staff members accompanied eight students on a ten-day service and immersion tour to Kupang (West Timor) and Lubuan Bajo (Flores). The students planned and ran activities for students at both Sonof Maneka Orphanage and Melo School which included Bhasa/English Twister, science experiments and truck making. They shopped at a local market and bought lunch supplies for the 135 people who live at the orphanage. A particular highlight at the orphanage was the hip hop dance lesson given by one of our students.

Wesley College was also able to provide necessary resources from fundraising undertaken by various groups within the College this year. This included a fence for the orphanage, 100 school uniforms, back to school stationery for 100 students, cooking utensils and classroom chairs. The Wesley students were also able to learn about Indonesian culture, taking part in rice harvesting and planting, visiting local museums where they saw memorabilia and relics unavailable in Australia and visiting traditional villages.

Another recent example of Service, was the return of Old Wesleyan, Michael Dunjey, who is the head of the Ascent Foundation, a philanthropic foundation which he began after living in India and wishing to help the people around him. In Term Two a new partnership was formed between a school in Bangalore India and Wesley Junior school facilitated by the Ascent Foundation. The Junior School children learnt about the Bangalore children at an assembly where Sera McCulloch from the Ascent Foundation introduced and showed the Wesley children photos of the children in Bangalore.

The children learnt that these children do not have the luxury of learning equipment like we do in Australia. The students, with help from their parents, brought in stationery items like pencils, note books, sharpeners etc. and washing baskets full of these items were

collected. The children also wrote letters to the children in Bangalore. At our last assembly for the term, Michael and Sera were there to be presented with our collection. When the items are delivered to Bangalore, Sera will take photos of the children receiving the gifts and using them in their learning. A pen-pal relationship will also be established between the schools and our Wesley children are interested to learn more about what life for these children is like.

There has been a direct intent to move towards educating the children about philanthropy and how we can make a difference in the lives of others. It has become a priority to ensure any fundraising activities are not purely a money collection but the children are educated as to why people and communities need help, what we have is not what everyone has and how we can do small things that can have a great impact on changing people's lives in many varied ways.

- In Term One the key philanthropic learning was around educating our students about the importance of Women in the world and the contributions women have made. Two celebrations were held:
- International Women's day was celebrated from Pre-kindergarten to Year 6. Our Year 6 girls sold purple wrist bands, all girls were given purple ribbon for their hair and purple balloons were around the buildings. A banner was also prominently placed to inform the community about Wesley's support of women. Each class engaged in activities to learn about some of the contributions women have made in history. Our Year 12 Junior School Prefect ran a colouring competition which used pictures of women contributing to the world as the colouring template.
- Harmony Day traditionally celebrates the many cultures of the world living together and embracing each other. Our Junior School children dressed in a costume from a different world culture for the day. An assembly was held with

the guest speaker, Abdullahi Alim, Young Australian of the Year 2017, WA, addressing the Junior School children. Parents contributed to the day as the children rotated through four lessons on different world cultures run by parents. The children also watched Wesley's own Moorditj Mob perform and explain their performance.

Both celebrations raised funds that were donated to Care Australia to support women and girls to have equal opportunities and education in countries where this is not occurring. These funds will go toward helping 430 000 women around the world to have greater access to economic resources for a brighter future.

### **3. THE CHAPEL**

The role of the Chapel and chaplaincy in Wesley College's life remains pivotal and is in keeping with the open tradition of faith enquiry in fulfilling the mission of God that frames the nature of what Wesley College is about, especially affirming the ethos of the Uniting Church, under whose remit the College exists.

The past year has seen many highlights including joyful celebrations of significant life occasions including weddings, baptisms, thanksgiving services and funerals. "Altar Ego", the College Chapel Band, has performed regularly throughout the year and also gave a performance at the Angelo Street Marketplace. The Organ Scholar Program has offered students the opportunity to work with Mrs Angela Currie, Director of Music at Perth's Wesley Church. Great progress has been made with these students regularly contributing to College Chapel services and special College occasions. In the Middle School, Mrs Nicholls, Director of Piano and Keyboards, has introduced new contemporary praise and worship songs. The enthusiasm and sense of connectedness arising when these songs of worship are sung with accompanying drums during our student chapel services is poignant and uplifting to all who witness it.

### **4. THE INDIGENOUS PROGRAM**

The Moorditj Mob is Wesley College's Indigenous Program. In the Nyoongar

language, Moorditj means 'great', 'strong' or 'excellent' and fits well with what the College strives to achieve. The program is an important part of the College's culture and fosters great pride within the Wesley community. Due to the success of the program, Wesley receives support from a number of philanthropic bodies and government agencies which we use to offer 30-40 needs-based Indigenous scholarships. Students are expected to celebrate their aboriginal culture and to share it with others. One of the most well-known and public aspects of the program is the Moorditj Mob Dancers and didgeridoo players. The Moorditj Mob has been known to perform up to 60 dances annually both at the College and at outside community events. In 2017 the Moorditj Mob are visiting the USA and Canada to perform and present at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference. At the time of writing, they had just been videoed doing an impromptu dance performance in Times Square.

## 5. THE CURRICULUM

The Katitjin Program in Year 8 continues to be our signature educational experience. This program is experiential and deeply rooted in the construct of community, self and relationship with others. There is a strong social justice theme running through the program with sustained close relationships developed with UnitingCare West (Tranby House in particular). The boys are also heavily involved in the Food Rescue activity in the city.

At a curriculum level PREP (Philosophical, Religious and Ethical Perspectives) is taught through the Junior and Middle School years. Philosophy and Ethics is taught as an elective subject in the Senior School. In the Middle years, service learning is incorporated into PREP. The study of PREP has a broadly Christian basis, but in an endeavour to embrace cultural diversity we ensure a better understanding of major world religions is also developed (at last count more than sixteen different religious faiths were identified in our community).

## 6. FINAL WORDS

There are no easy answers to human suffering and pastoral issues in any community. However, as "People of God" we are followers of "The Way". Our stated mission is not for the purpose of compliance with all the checks and balances, ticking the right boxes, but rather is an unequivocal statement of our commitment to actually being what we claim.

We present as a community in which all people can grow, experiencing the love and grace of God in a safe, nurturing supportive environment. Our primary core business might be education, but a key element of that is the creation of a safe, nurturing, inclusive, supportive learning environment, in our best endeavour to fulfil the Uniting Church's National Educational Charter.

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