

# St Mary's College

*"Together We Do Good Things"*

Issue 4, Friday 25 March 2022

## From Director Student Wellbeing & Inclusion

Dear St Mary's College,

Our school theme for 2022 invites us to do good things together. As a staff, we see a strong alignment with a focus on Inclusive Education, considering how we foster environments for learning and wellbeing that support the flourishing of every student. During our recent staff formation day, our focus was on working with students with disabilities.

As part of my Master of Education Research, I explore how we include, welcome, and engage all students within our school systems. I came across a partnership between Purple Orange and Flinders University, which studied inclusive school communities.

Purple Orange describes itself as "a social profit organisation on a mission to create a world where people who live with disability get a fair go at what life has to offer." Our presenters, Leeanne and Lauren (a St Mary's Old Scholar), both have lived experiences of disability.

Lauren and Leeanne explored the following:

- In society, disability is viewed as a deficit, yet most people with lived experience of disability do not see themselves this way.
- The medical model of disability see it as a problem of the person – they are 'disabled' by their impairments/differences – we need to shift this more towards understanding barriers that deny or limit access for people with disabilities
- The importance of language in understanding and naming disability.
- Universal learning design can be used in schools to shape the physical environment, learning, communication and assessment

Lauren and Leeanne raised awareness about unconscious bias, as described by Ing Ward-Wong, a disabled activist:

*"People shouldn't be afraid of addressing their own biases when it comes to disability. Many of us grew up with this notion that to look at a disabled person is to look at someone lesser than you, that a disability is something to be pitied because that person isn't able to do what a non-disabled person, can do. We need to shed that as a society. We all have limitations, and we all bring different strengths to the table. If we look at disability from the perspective of someone who's living with a disability, who doesn't see themselves as lesser, who doesn't see themselves as a super-human or a charity case, we'll be able to have some of these difficult conversations about what accessibility and inclusion mean for people with disabilities in the 21st century".*

[http://humber.ca/makingaccessiblemedia/modules/01/transcript/ing\\_wong\\_ward\\_transcript.pdf](http://humber.ca/makingaccessiblemedia/modules/01/transcript/ing_wong_ward_transcript.pdf)

It is challenging to consider our own biases. Our bias towards people with disabilities may not be intentional; however, it is not okay even when unintentional.

Our presenters also explored the ways that inclusive education benefits all students. Research supports this showing that all students benefit from inclusion through improved behaviour, independence, social development, increased awareness and valuing of diversity, higher quality instruction for all children's needs, and improved academic outcomes. This is exciting for us as a school community as we grow in diversity.



**Jo Cains**  
Director of Student Wellbeing & Inclusion



**Our presenters - Lauren and Leeanne from Purple Orange**

**Equality**



**Equity**



**Universal Design**



**A visual representation of how we can support students within our school**

What does Inclusion mean to you?



**Staff were invited to answer the question: What does inclusion mean to you?**

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## Sports Day 2022

The 2022 Sports Day was one to remember and was an amazing opportunity to gather as a whole community. Through some stormy weather, we were impressed to see students cheer on their House and their peers. Although we had an unusual start to the year due to covid restrictions, staff members managed to organise such a celebrated occasion in a short period of time and we are extremely grateful for this.

The Year 12 cohort showed their spirit through costumes and decorations in their House themes: Mary's Monopoly, Dominic Disney, Catherine Criminals, Thomas Tennis Tournament. The costumes brought a lot of laughter to the day and encouraged every student in the stand to cheer and sing for the competitors.

Thank you to all the students who not only competed in multiple novelty and track events, but also cheered throughout the day. A big thank you also to our House Captains for allocating students to events, spreading House spirit, and preparing instructional videos prior to the day. Your preparation and patience was very much appreciated.

The participation in all events exceeded our expectations, especially after having students nominate for events online. For this to happen, our exceptional PE staff organised new online forms and templates for the day to run as smoothly as it did, so we thank them very much for all their work in the lead up to the day. Another thanks to the Maintenance staff for assisting with the equipment, to the staff house supervisors, and the staff who recorded results as well.

### House Results:

Junior School Trophy- St Thomas  
Meich Team Trophy – St Mary's  
Buchanan Spirit Trophy- St Catherine's  
Overall Perpetual Trophy- St Dominic's

### Age Champions:

Year 6 - Georgia W  
Year 7 – Maddi T  
Year 8 – Chaise M  
Year 9 – Audrey F  
Year 10 – Isabel B and Sophie T  
Year 11 – Mackenzie D  
Year 12 – Abbie P



**Jasmine Edmonds and Lucy Palmer  
Sports Coordinators**

