

2021 Shine E-Magazine



St Pius X Primary
School

2021 Principal Report

Throughout 2021 the power and strength of the school as an inclusive community continued to be evident. In and through the ongoing collective respect and responsibility of staff and parents working in partnership ensured our students remained healthy, mentally well and fully connected and engaged in learning. The result is a whole school community enabling each other to shine.

Remote flexible learning featured for almost one full semester of learning in the 2021 school year. Despite the challenges of communicating and working through online learning platforms our students demonstrated intrinsic resilience, confidence and capabilities to engage and succeed. Growth in student learning outcomes in all areas of the curriculum is a direct result of teachers and parents working together to provide the environment conducive to achievement and success. Despite the challenges, Remote Flexible learning at home has enabled and empowered families to develop a deeper understanding of the learning process, knowledge of curriculum and high impact teaching strategies. Families also had the opportunity to celebrate the learning achievements and highlights on a daily basis. Digital Technology skills have also been learned and developed thus enabling parents to have a stronger connection to the practice of contemporary learning and the capabilities of a successful learner.

Throughout the year, regardless of the situation the school community found ways to stay connected. Our Trivia Family Fun night provided lots of family fun and entertainment and the Learning Showcases and Learning Conversations supported the children to share their learning using the SeeSaw Application. Our St Pius X Parents and Friends created online communication platforms to support each other as well as developing online fundraising sites to mark the main calendar events such as Father's Day.

The Return to School in October, after many sudden and prolonged lockdowns, has been a delightful gift, allowing the school community to reconnect and the children to settle back into the joy of school life on a daily basis. The staff have continued to be attentive to the wellbeing of each and every child to feel safe and secure by providing inclusive classroom programs. Play has been central to the successful transition back to school allowing the children time with classmates and teachers as well as the child feeling comfortable with the routines of communicating and learning face to face. I extend my gratitude to our families who have been committed to ensuring the ease and safe return to school, by collectively keeping to the health practices of a regulated environment to protect the learning, development and growth of the children. The return to school also allowed the celebration of the Sacraments for children in Year 3,4,5 & 6. The new classrooms and outdoor learning spaces especially the Community Garden have been well utilised and enjoyed by all. The introduction of Nature Play has been a great success with the Prep and Year 1 children interacting with the environment through scientific exploration and discovery learning activating imagination, wonder and awe. In 2022 we plan to extend our P-6 Environmental Sustainability Program, further embedding our Food Web Permaculture Education & Garden Cooking program and Nature Play thus providing the conditions for motivated, empowered and adaptable learners who have a strong sense of self, purpose and integrity. The explicit teaching and learning experiences will promote holistic development for lifelong success.

2021 Chaplain's Report

The first year under the new governance arrangements. No longer was I responsible for the administration of the school. Mrs Gomez was this year and continues to be accountable to the new system of Catholic Education, Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS) Board. A challenging year with the Covid Pandemic with a number of lock downs and the children having to learn from home for a sizeable part of the year.

Although not in an administrative / governance role I continued to be involved with the faith and pastoral formation of our children. Of recent note were the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation administered to the children. When able to do so we had the children come to the church and participate in liturgies / services.

While the school itself is under the control of the new board there is a School Advisory Board made up of St Pius X parents, Mrs Gomez, teachers and myself, making sure that the interests of the school and community's interests are being met. Apart from the school buildings and playgrounds / areas surrounding the buildings, much of the remaining property is shared space between school and parish.

As before and now and into the future collaboration between the two has been very important to me. I want to thank the School Community for the respect it has shown to me and to each other. A special thanks to Mrs Gomez the school principal, teachers, volunteers, parents, and the children for their shared engagement in the education of our children. May each of you have a happy and holy Christmas and I pray that the new year will be a bright and prosperous one for you. May God bless you. Regards. Fr. Wayne

Food Web Report

Our year in the garden started with heavy headed sunflowers and feasting rainbow lorikeets, ripening corn and rambling pumpkins. We battled the waist high weeds and found our place again under the fig trees ready to chat and learn.

We noticed that everything changes, some things change fast, like the weather! and some things slow, like the seasons. The Kulin Calendar showed us how this place has always cycled and gave us clues to how we can care for it.

We imagined our school as a nest that has everything we need and our school nest sits in the larger nests of West Heidelberg, Australia and the whole EARTH.

When the rain came and the days got shorter we went hunting for fungi and mycelium. We grew some strange fungi in the library, invented our own kinds of fungi with interesting stories and discovered that fungi are experts at changing wood into soil.



Food Web Report

While the days were cool we turned waste into wonder by making Biochar(charcoal) for our compost. The fire showed us how fast things can transform. We watched the smoke dance in the wind and felt the heat on our hands.

In lockdown we found ways to explore our world through the screen. We made cubbies and discovered the stuff our homes are made of. The magic school bus and our digital microscope took us on adventures into the micro-world and David Attenborough showed us the amazing ways plants survive and thrive.

When we came back to school the weeds had moved in again! We had lots of work to do and we spread compost and mulch, made room for new plants and propagated plant babies. We harvested helpful herbs, like our giant lavender and lemon verbena and felt so much gratitude for all of the gifts from plants we receive everyday.



Nature Play

This year marked the pilot Bush School program at St Pius X. Although Bush Kinder has been an established and highly regarded program in Australia for some time, St Pius X has been a pioneer in teaching Bush School in a primary school setting.

At its simplest, Bush School is child-led, play-based outdoor learning. It shares some features with Montessori education in its emphasis of long, uninterrupted blocks of time for child-led learning, the use of real tools and the teacher as a guide.

Bush School offers a plethora of benefits for children's learning, which include greater agency and choice in learning; improved confidence and self-esteem; resilience and risk-taking; gross and fine motor skill development; improved attention span and focus; connection to nature; mental health and wellbeing; social skills and cooperation; creativity and imagination; and, simply, fun.



The children in Foundation and Year 1 have been loving Bush School, and have made great gains in the areas above. Our vision is to develop the program further to include the older children at the school, and to equip them with the skills and desire to become environmental stewards of the future.

Nature Play

We have been so fortunate to have the support and partnership from local organisations, including the Darebin Creek Management Committee and Occupational Therapy students from La Trobe University. We welcome visits from anyone who is interested in implementing a similar program. Come and see our self-directed learners in action!

Here are some quotes from our Foundation and Year 1 students about Bush School:

"I like Bush School because we get to stay outside and enjoy the fresh air. There are so many activities we get to do outside, like reading outdoors, picking strawberries and climbing trees."

- Stella

"I like Bush School because we get to make things in the sandpit and the mud kitchen. Once we made a mud spa and painted our teachers' arms with mud!"

Savannah

"In Bush School we learned about "no pick, no lick". This is because we might not know which plants are poisonous or safe to eat. Also if we take too much from the plants they won't be able to grow."

- Bastian

"I like Bush School because we get to make new friends in the Montessori classes. We also get to see cool insects like dragonflies."

- Farrah

"I like Bush School because we get to play families and use our imaginations."

- Rowan

"I like Bush School because we have more time to play and learn. At Bush School we learn to respect nature and look after nature. We learn to identify which plants are safe to eat and which ones are not."

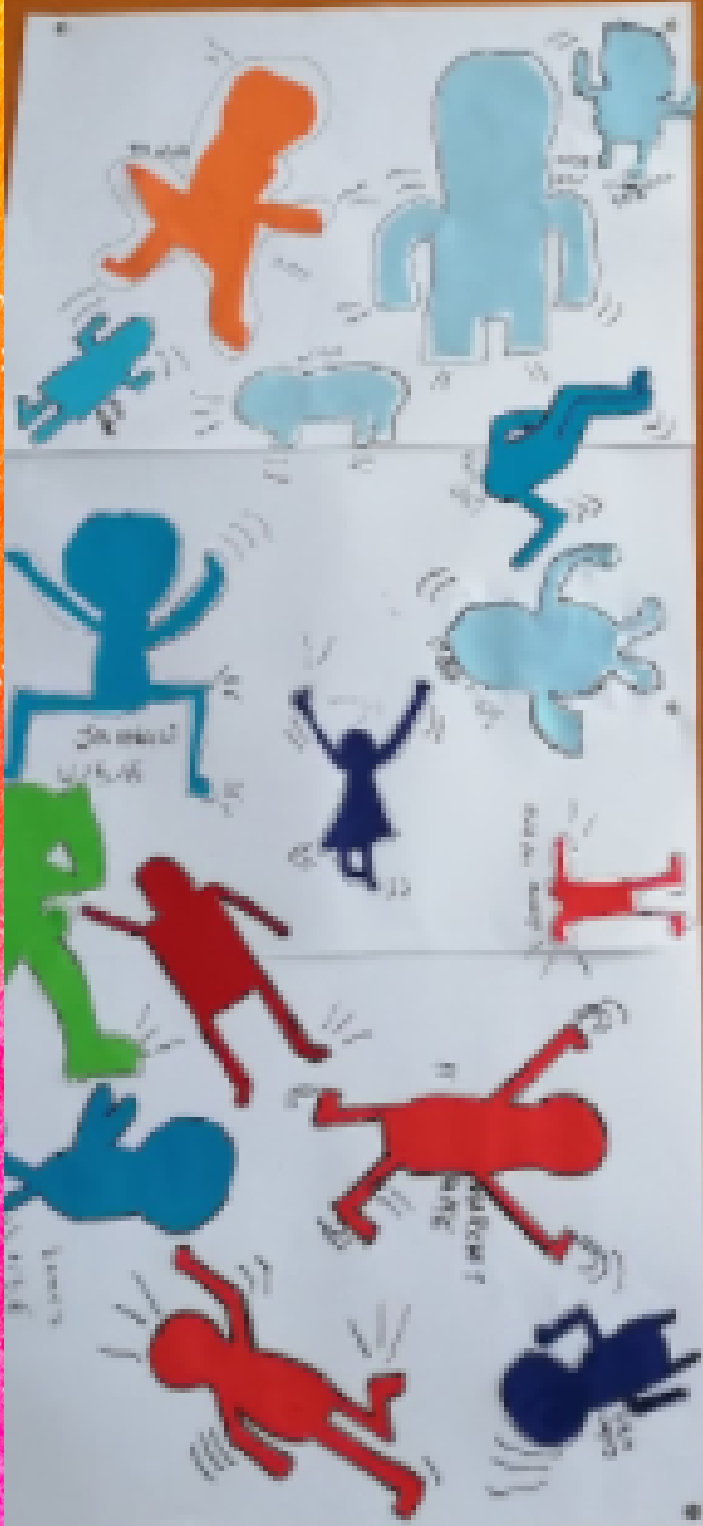
- Evan

"At Bush School we get to make our bodies stronger by running, jumping, climbing, balancing, rolling down the hill, spinning and swinging."

- Ryland

Visual Arts

In Visual Art this year we explored the pop art style of American artist Keith Haring. We mimicked his bright, dancing, block colour people and took influence from his mural which can be found in Collingwood.



Visual Arts

We also used overlapping 2D shapes to explore line, space and colour in new ways.



Digital Technology



Sylvie: I enjoyed reading books from Epic and learning about Maths using Studyladder.

Lena: I learnt so much about coding this year.

Mikolo: We got to use laptops for the first time and it was amazing!

Ruben: We used Google Classroom to share the work.


Noor: I uploaded my work on Seesaw and shared it with my friends.

  **Animals Information Reports** Go to Page 2

1. Complete the Platypus report

What I know about an animal...

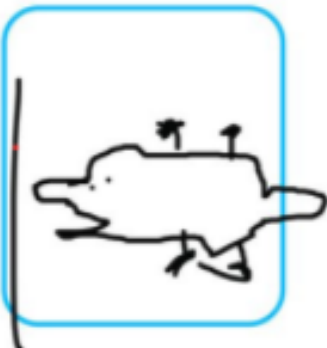
Animal Name:	platypus
What does it look like?	a seal with a beak and a beaver tael
Where does it live?	in water
What does it eat?	fish
What does it do?	swim



Words to help when writing facts:

- hurry
- insects larvae
- fresh shrimp
- bill
- duck
- claws
- web
- feet
- fish
- rocks
- swim
- forty tail
- flowers
- streams

2. Draw it here



Information Reports

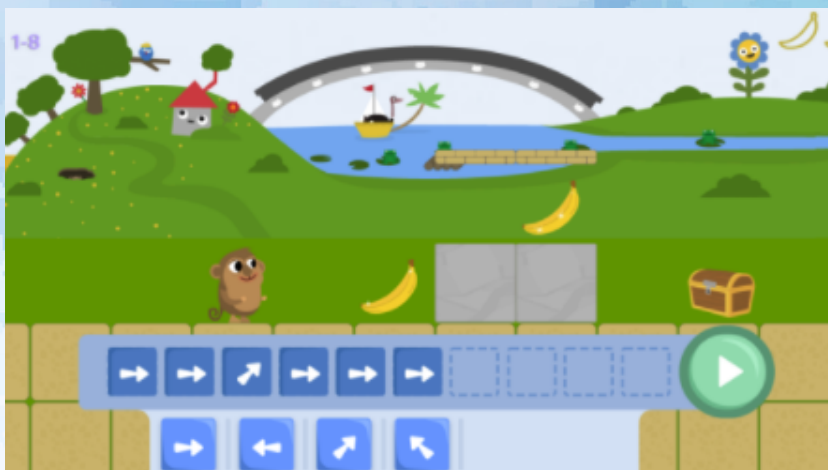
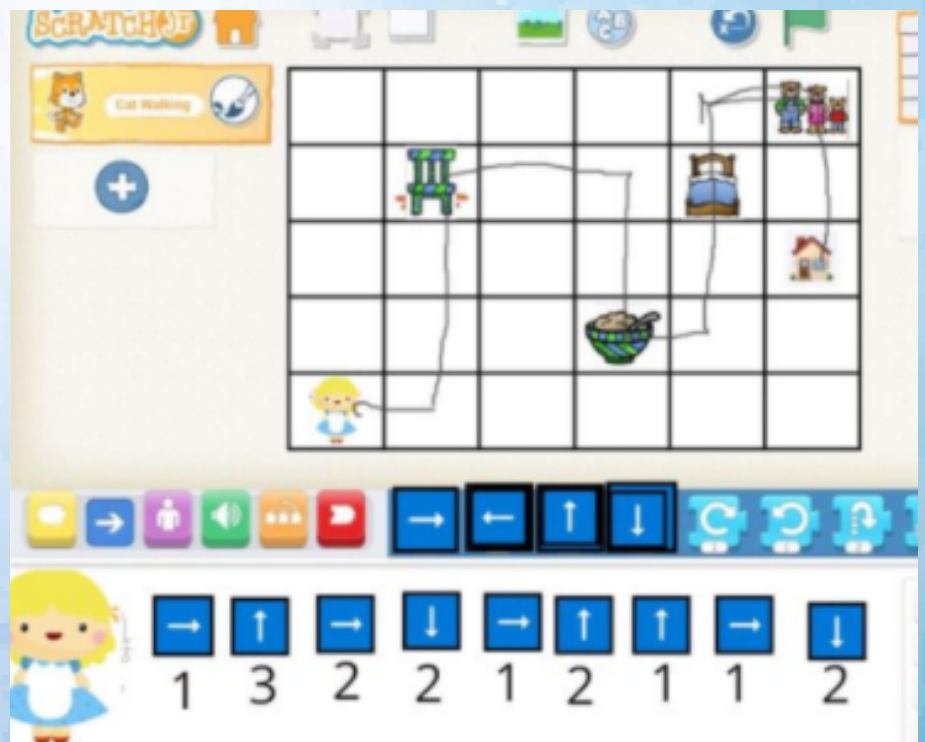


Researching and creating a chart



**Ryder's ebook about
Science Materials**

**Scratch Junior to
learn and practice
coding**



**Code Monkey to learn
about codes**

- 2022 Engage & Learn -

The St Pius X School community engages and learns through explicit, purposeful and innovative teaching practices, to effectively contribute with an authentic voice as an active global citizen taking personal responsibility acting with honesty, courtesy and fairness in response to the demands of our world.

Our P-6 Environmental Sustainability Program: Food Web Permaculture Education & Garden Cooking Program along with Nature Play provides the conditions for motivated, empowered and adaptable learners who have a strong sense of self, purpose and integrity and promote holistic development for lifelong success.



School Chicks



House Competition