
1983 - 1990 Principal - Mr Bernard Dowling

At the beginning of 1983 we saw a lay principal take over the school from the Sisters of Mercy who had run the school since its opening in 1971. This was a big change but one that could be foreseen because of the decrease in the numbers of sisters available.



1983 also saw the new school library, built during the previous year, come into full operation and this was of great advantage to the school.

Together with the library had been built new administration offices and the previous separated buildings were joined with a wide corridor to make conditions within the school much more pleasant.

During this period we saw the school reach its peak when the enrolment reached 280 at the beginning of the 1989 school year. As a result of the increased enrolments it was found necessary in 1985 to add two more rooms to the school to accommodate the increasing numbers of pupils and teachers. These rooms were large enough to accommodate all the pupils for assembly.

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A special interest by some of the parents in the mid eighties saw an increased involvement in physical education and sport, with the school winning the Handicap Aggregate Shield in 1987 in the Combined Schools Sports. This was a great achievement.

A number of our pupils in the 1980's did very well on the sporting arenas particularly in athletics and football. However, one in particular, Michelle Ferris, must rate special mention as she has gone on to do very well indeed in the cycling area and will be a competitor at the 1996 Olympic Games. We hope she is rewarded with a medal.

During this period we also saw a very close liaison with the Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education (now Deakin University) when students from there came to the school on a regular basis to help with physical education, mathematics and reading. This gave our children the opportunity to have a wider scope available to them as many new ideas were brought along by these students.

Parents were encouraged to have their children wear the new official school uniform which was introduced in 1982 as it helped to give them more pride in their school. 1984 saw the beginning of the school motto "Peace through Love and Respect." and this was kept before the children on a regular basis in an effort to get them to think about the motto in their daily lives.

Class Masses were celebrated on a regular basis during this period by the Parish Priest and these helped to get the children to understand the Mass a little better. The children were encouraged to be very much involved in these Class Masses, with parents being invited to participate also.

Four term school years were introduced in 1987 and these took a little time to get used to. The idea was that the children would not become so tired towards the end of the term but maybe teachers found that just as they were warming up during the term it was finishing again.

1986 saw a visit from the Year 6 children from St. Joseph's School in Collingwood. These children stayed overnight with the OLHC Year 6 children and had a good look around the area. These visits continued in 1987 and 1988 with our children having a one day visit to Collingwood each year. Both lots of children had their eyes opened in the different surroundings, the Collingwood children being amazed by the amount of grass around our school and our children being similarly amazed at the lack of grass at St. Joseph's in Collingwood.

- Bernard Dowling

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