

19 October 2018

To: Parents & Carers in Catholic Schools

Dear Parents & Carers

On October 16 Bishop Bill announced the resignation of Michael Slattery from the role of Director of Catholic Schools and his appointment of me into this role.

Firstly, I acknowledge the leadership and contributions of Michael to our Diocesan landscape. In particular, we are grateful for Michael's contributions in the areas of school planning and development, the teaching of Religion, student leadership and the creation of a more just world, so symbolised in the Kenyan Immersions. In addition, Michael's work in developing structures and processes to support the work of Principals should be applauded.

From the perspective of a parent or carer of a child in a Catholic school, the key question is very much around *'will this decision have an impact on the learning and formation of my child or functioning of the school'?* I want to assure you on many levels that we are seriously in 'business as usual' mode. Our wonderful leaders and staff, both teaching and support, remain clear in leading your school communities to be places of quiet purpose and calm focus. Secondly, we at the Catholic Schools Office have a singular focus on our support and service to our school communities. We very much want the direction to be about the quality of delivery of local school leadership, as well as the solidity of support the staff at the Catholic Schools Office deliver to schools, and also the provision of Shared Service teams of the Diocese, especially in those critical areas of staffing, finance, buildings and facilities and technology.

The Shared Service teams are relatively newly developed teams that not only service Catholic schools but streamline support to all agencies of the Diocese.

Finally, I would humbly suggest your new Director of Schools, having served this Diocese for the past 42 years, has a keen understanding of this Diocese and will bring great stability and calm direction to our future. I have been a teacher and school leader at St Mary's Gateshead, the former St Anne's Adamstown, St Joseph's Aberdeen, San Clemente Mayfield, the Principal of St Pauls Booragul and All Saints College, St Mary's Campus Maitland. For the past eleven years I have been an Assistant Director of this Diocese.

As we look to the core issue, the quality education of your child, the past 42 years have taught me that Catholic education is actually really very simple. My own three children were formed in Diocesan Catholic schools and my grandson will commence his journey in



Catholic schools in 2022. As a father, grandfather and Director I want six core needs met for your children:

1. That your child will be always wholly safe.
2. That your child will be happy and feel loved in their school environment. It is my personal belief that the most important gift we give a child in a Catholic school is their sense of incredible self-worth.
3. That your child has his or her learning needs met appropriate to their abilities, needs and aspirations. This will also include access to a rich and diverse co-curricular experience.
4. That the skills and attributes your child will need to equip them for life beyond school will be met.
5. That all facets of their being – physical, cognitive, emotional, psychological and spiritual will be developed.
6. Finally and most vitally your child will understand the profound value of a relationship with Christ, and an involvement with our church.

If we can maintain these as our focus, we will achieve quality outcomes that you are proud of.

I give you every assurance of the commitment we bring to the needs of the children in our care. To be an educator is the greatest privilege and most significant responsibility because we have your children, our students, to support.

Our Diocesan catholic schools continue to be a place of choice for parents. We will continue to deliver outstanding outcomes for all of our students.

I offer you all my every good wish.

Should you ever have any questions or concerns at this time, you have your school Principals, our Parent Liaison Officers, the Assistant Directors of your child's school or myself to respond to your questions.

Yours sincerely



Gerard Mowbray  
DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

