



Principal's Report ACM 2025

Good evening and welcome. A warm welcome to Fr Savio and Bishop Michael and thank you both for joining us tonight. I also extend my gratitude to the executives of our School Advisory Council and P&F. As parents in our community, you play a vital role in supporting the success of St Francis Xavier, and I sincerely appreciate your contributions throughout the year. I also warmly welcome my colleagues and thank you for being here this evening during such a busy time.

Although each year brings new challenges and new opportunities, our vision remains unwavering to offer a truly outstanding Catholic education. Throughout 2025, the staff of St Francis Xavier have embodied this vision with dedication and excellence. Our NAPLAN results continue to affirm the high standard of learning in our school, with St Francis Xavier once again recognised as one of the highest-achieving schools in Geraldton.

Our targeted support programs such as MultiLit and Spelling Mastery, ensure students are well prepared for the transition to secondary schooling, and the commitment of our staff to ongoing professional growth remains exceptional. This year, our K-2 teachers completed rich and practical professional development in the Early Years Numeracy Project which will continue into 2026. They have readily shared their knowledge and skills with their colleagues in our practical and well-planned cluster meetings.

Staff undertook training in disability and inclusion, assessment and pedagogical improvement, Autism and ADHD, EAL/D pedagogy and Wellbeing alongside our CEWA Accreditation requirements.

Staff completed professional learning in the Berry Street Education Model, positioning our school strongly to meet the evolving and complex needs of students both now and into the future.

The URSTRONG program has been an outstanding addition to our school's wellbeing approach. It provides students with a clear, child-friendly framework for understanding friendships, navigating conflicts, and building healthy, respectful relationships. Through common language, practical strategies, and engaging lessons, URSTRONG empowers children to recognise what positive friendships look and feel like, how to manage tricky moments, and how to confidently seek help when needed. We've already seen students using the program's language in the playground and classrooms, supporting one another and solving problems with greater confidence and care.

Alongside this work, our wellbeing dog Murray, plays a vital role in supporting the emotional needs of our students. The presence of a calm, gentle dog provides comfort, reduces anxiety, and helps students regulate their emotions, especially during challenging moments. Research consistently shows that therapy dogs can improve wellbeing, increase engagement, and create a sense of safety for children.

For us, the wellbeing dog is another way we live out our commitment to nurturing the whole child. While URSTRONG equips students with skills and language, our wellbeing dog offers connection, reassurance, and emotional support. Together, they form a powerful combination, helping our students feel seen, supported, and ready to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

We are in the process of employing a dedicated Mental Health Practitioner, a psychologist, counsellor or social worker, to continue strengthening the wellbeing support available to our students and staff. This role will provide specialised guidance, early intervention, and professional expertise to help students navigate challenges and to assist staff in supporting student needs effectively.

I extend my sincere gratitude to every member of staff for your professionalism, dedication, and the heart you bring to your work each day. Jesus came to serve, and in our roles at St Francis Xavier we continue His mission of service. It is both a privilege and a blessing to nurture the growth, learning, and wellbeing of the young people entrusted to our care. To my colleagues, thank you for being a living witness to Christ's mission in all you do.



The P&F Executive, led by Annalise Fosbery and supported by a dedicated team, has continued to meet regularly and create meaningful opportunities for our school community to connect. Throughout the year, our shared purpose remained clear: strengthening community. Events such as the Welcome Night, junior disco, raffles, Quiz Nights, coffee catchups, doughnut days, and the much-loved Colour Run all played an important role in nurturing friendship, belonging, and school spirit. I sincerely thank the executive for your commitment and energy, and I look forward to seeing what 2026 brings, a year full of fresh ideas, renewed enthusiasm, and opportunities to grow even stronger together as a community.

Our School Advisory Council, under the steady leadership of Chair Rohan Norris, has continued to reflect on our school's future needs and plan thoughtfully for ongoing improvement. While CEWA placed a hold on capital infrastructure projects for 2025, a comprehensive capital development plan is currently under review. Thanks to careful financial stewardship, we are moving closer to a position where we can self-fund significant projects that will enhance our learning environment. It is important to note that Western Australia remains the only state in the country that provides no government funding for capital works in Catholic schools—a challenge we continue to navigate with determination and creativity. To all members of the Advisory Council: thank you for your insight, guidance, and steadfast advocacy for the students and community of St Francis Xavier. As we look ahead to 2026, we are excited to turn plans into action, strengthen our facilities, and create spaces that inspire learning and belonging for generations to come.

And of course, we cannot forget Fr Savio. His enthusiasm and unwavering support for the faith journey of our staff and students has been truly immeasurable. From our beautiful liturgies and masses, face painting to art activities and preparing students for their sacraments, Fr Savio has brought joy, creativity, and most importantly friendship to our community. As you move to Mullewa, we wish you every blessing and success in your new parish. You will be deeply missed, but your impact here will continue to be felt for

years to come. At the same time, we warmly welcome Fr Larry to St Francis Xavier and look forward to the energy, wisdom, and pastoral care he will bring as we begin this new chapter together.

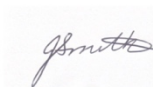
As we look back on the 2025 school year, we have so much to celebrate. Our successes have been many and each one is a shared achievement. In the words of St Francis, *“No one can ever excel in great things who does not first excel in small,”* and at St Francis Xavier, we excel daily in the small acts of kindness, learning, and service that make our community strong.

This year, we have faced challenges together, supported one another, and worked as a team to ensure that every staff feels supported, every child feels valued and every family feels connected. These moments of collaboration and resilience are what define us, and they will continue to guide us into the year ahead.

As a Christ-centred and child-focused school, we remain committed to nurturing students who are confident, compassionate, and lifelong learners. Looking forward in to 2026, we embrace new opportunities to grow, innovate, and strengthen the bonds that make our school community so special.

To every member of our community, staff, students, families, and friends, thank you for your dedication and partnership. May this holiday season bring you joy, peace, and time to rest with loved ones. Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a bright, hope-filled New Year.

God Bless

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Smith', is enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Justine Smith
Principal