

Principal Update

Term 1 Week 9

23rd March 2021

Dearest Parents and Carers,

The floodwaters that have relentlessly taken over parts of our school, neighbouring properties, and community this weekend have left a path of destruction, however ironically it will also leave a special mark on many a heart. In particular, I have watched how this experience has weaved together grief with a true sense of *community*, where all have *come together in unity*.

Many of us have been the fortunate recipient of 'check-ins' and supportive messages via phone or email. I was blessed to receive regular updates over the weekend from caring neighbours and friendly locals, including teachers. Significant support has also been provided from the Catholic Schools Broken Bay and the neighbouring Catholic Schools and Principals; Mr Kevin Williams, Mrs Yvette Owens, and Mr Barry Shanley. Though the most heartfelt experience has been the brotherhood shown from St Cecilia's staff in rallying together to support Mrs Gray and Mr Madigan whose classroom was most affected by the flood in our school. Yesterday, I watched in awe as all the staff prioritised in re-printing and laminating of new resources and assisting with the relocation and restoration of 3 Blue's new temporary classroom space. This certainly added to the many blessings I have already accumulated in my short time at St Cecilia's. Finally, as I left work yesterday, I passed the SES preparing for a rescue in the river and it reminded me of the courage and kindness that can emerge from disasters like this.

I hope that when the waters finally recede, we can remember the matter-of-fact heroism that occurred in our community and the strength of hands that helped and offered hope. May we draw strength and be comforted by the realisation that there are so many caring people in our local community and in this world.

We thank everyone for their patience, support and understanding during this time. I hope to be in touch very shortly today with another more detailed update regarding the upcoming days of schooling and whether we will re-open.

Take care and be safe.

Marta Chylewska
(Principal)