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2024



Status Report:

Review of the Pastoral Ministries and
Religious Education & Spirituality teams

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29 October 2024

To the People of the Diocese, Clergy and Parish Leaders, Parishes, All staff of the Diocese, its Schools and Agencies

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

In July I wrote to advise you that the Implementation Committee overseeing the review of the Pastoral Ministries and Religious Education & Spirituality teams had provided their report to me.

Following my acceptance of their report, our Diocesan teams including our new leaders James Camden (Director of Mission & Evangelisation) and Ryan Gato (Assistant Head of Religious Education & Spirituality) have been working with their teams to implement the recommendations from Dr Dan White's report and the Implementation committee report. The Implementation Committee chaired by the Vicar General Father Matthew Muller meets regularly to oversee and report on progress.

I'm pleased to report that solid progress across the key areas of governance, strategic planning and collaboration, evangelisation and community engagement, and religious education and Catholic identity has been made. A summary of this progress reported by the Implementation Committee follows.

Work is also under way to enable a reconstitution of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The Pastoral Council will then be tasked with finalising the Diocesan Synod and developing a Diocesan Pastoral Plan.

I look forward to keeping you informed on this vital work as we refine our mission and evangelisation efforts, focusing on how we can guide others to encounter and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ within the community of the Church.

Yours in Christ



Most Reverend Michael Kennedy

Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle

Governance:

- Work is under way to develop a proposed new governance framework.
- Draft statutes for the Diocesan Pastoral Council is in development.
- Standing committees of the Diocese have been reviewed.

Strategic Planning & Collaboration:

- The Diocesan Shared Services People & Culture team have been working with the Director of Mission & Evangelisation and Assistant Head of Religious Education & Spirituality and their respective team members to review the future resourcing needs and roles of team members.
- Plans are being developed on the communication of changes to the Pastoral Ministries team and avenues for support for our parish communities.

Evangelisation & Community Engagement:

- Planning for the trial of the Family Engagement Co-ordinator and the Priest Chaplain roles are well advanced with the position descriptions drafted and consultation being sought thereon.
- A specific region in the Diocese (one secondary college and two primary schools) has been identified to host the initial trial of the Family Engagement Co-ordinator role, consultation with school leadership is occurring and plans are on target to have this role in operation at the commencement of 2025.

Religious Education & Catholic Identity:

- The Self-Efficacy Project for Teachers of Religious Education has been delivered with schools engaged in the process, reports based on school data produced and schools acting on their individual school Teacher Self-Efficiency Plans.
- Compliance and accreditation processes have been reviewed and streamlined by the Religious Education & Spirituality team for improved efficiency and alignment.
- Proposals have been developed and are currently being examined to address the challenges with respect to recruiting and forming both early career and experienced teachers.

The Implementation Committee and Dr Dan White's report can be found at the following:

[Implementation Committee Report \(May 2024\)](#)

[Dr Dan White Report – Executive Summary & Recommendations \(Nov 2023\)](#)