

# **SABBATICAL REPORT**

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## **Title:**

To develop new strategies to enhance performance, culture and relationships.

To learn more about the founding charism of Baradene College of the Sacred Heart

To look at ways schools prepare students for life beyond school, academically and personally.

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**Period time:** Five weeks Term 2, 2014 and five weeks Term 3, 2014

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## **Executive Summary:**

During my sabbatical leave I had the opportunity to take part in diverse experiences.

It began with a week's course at the London Business School "High Level People Skills" followed by a visit to schools in Finland.

I also visited a school in Northern France in the district of Chauny. We are working with this school on a "Shared Histories project around World War 1".

The religious order that founded Baradene College of the Sacred Heart had its origins in France. I was able to visit the birthplace of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat (the founder of the RSCJ order) in Joiney, south of Paris and places in Paris significant to the RSCJ order.

At the end of June I attended a conference at the University of Roehampton in London. This academic conference was based on the education, spirituality and leadership of Janet Erskine Stuart – a noted RSCJ educator (1857-1914).

The last part of my sabbatical was for rest and relaxation.

## **London Business School**

This programme had the following objectives:

- Gain insight into key people skills for high performance.
- Enhance personal effectiveness through feedback and self-knowledge.
- Improve teamwork and teambuilding abilities
- Gain facility in understanding and managing subordinates, peers and superiors.
- Develop new techniques for influencing and leading others
- Develop a personal action plan for the next six months
- Assess learning using a follow-up survey.

## **Summary**

I found this course very worthwhile. The format was lectures in the morning followed by small-group coaching sessions in the afternoons.

## **Finland**

In Finland I was very impressed with the KiVa programme which has been introduced in the majority of Finnish schools. The programme has been written following extensive research and the three stage programme is applicable for Years 5 & 6, 7 & 8, and 9 & 10 students.

## **Kiva Programme (Finnish schools resilience programme)**

- Government funded anti-bullying programme which is based on building resilience
- It was developed in Finland and evaluated 2006-2009 and subsequently implemented
- It takes the viewpoint that bullying is pro-active aggression rather than reactive aggression
- Bullying can be a strategy to gain status
- Bullies choose targets who are more vulnerable, socially anxious, new students or physically weaker
- Choose time and place with peers present so that they can demonstrate their behaviour to others
- What the peers do when the bullies bully reinforces the bully's behaviour:
  - 20% cheer or laugh
  - 8% also bully
  - 12% victims
  - 7% assist the bully
  - 25% outsiders
  - 17% defend the targets of the bully
- It really matters how the bystanders behave, even one defender is better than none
- People who are bullied are often more upset about how other people behave
- Don't need to change the victims, make them less shy etc
- Too difficult to change bully's behaviour
- Better to change the behaviours of the onlookers to counter bullying

## **How it Works**

- School must be committed and arrange online survey done each year by students involved in the programme. This compares their results with National data and their own class and individual data each year.
  - At the classroom level – student lessons
    - After five lessons – play Level 1 computer KiVa game
- Programme is structured lessons and computer games to raise awareness of bullying – to emphasise it is everyone's responsibility to stop it and to enhance empathy for the victims and to provide students with strategies to keep themselves safe.

- The computer games consider:  
I know – facts  
I can – practicing skills  
I do – motivating students asked to reflect on their behaviour
- Five levels of the game – at the end of the school year students get feedback on their development
- Can't make all bullying disappear but if it does arise the KiVa team deal with the issues
- Evaluation of the programme has involved 30,000 students from 234 schools
  - Evaluation of empathy, self-esteem, depression, anxiety, academic motivation and performance
  - KiVa had less effect on 13-15 year old student – better for younger students – 10 years old most effective
- There was still some non-reporting in KiVa schools
- Being translated into several languages

Video giving information about KiVa: <http://vimeo.com/58542042>

### **Other findings from visits to schools in Finland, France & England.**

For a long time I have thought that society expects too much of schools in the way of fixing all the “social woes” but I return from a sabbatical with new insights.

In New Zealand we believe that the family is the prime carer and where the social spending should be geared. This despite the fact that our wide discrepancies in PISA results and our child health statistics show that there is a huge difference between the haves and the have nots.

In the weeks I was away I spoke to educators in Britain, France and Finland. These three countries differ in how they implement spending in the education sector, but I believe all three have ideas to offer us.

Education is the best means of ensuring a more equal society – but how to ensure all students have the right environment to ensure their education is successful?

Basic needs of mankind are food, shelter and safety and these needs have to be satisfied before any child is in the right frame of mind to be academically educated and reach self-actualisation.

In Finland every child receives a free school lunch. These lunches are made on the school premises and are monitored to ensure the students have a healthy diet. Surely this is one way we could, as a country, make some gains towards educating our young in good eating habits.

In the UK, school meals are provided and they are usually taken up by students. I didn't get the feeling that there was such an emphasis on healthy food education.

In France the school meals are accessed by nearly all students. They are subsidised by the local authorities but are not free. The emphasis is on providing healthy food.

Certainly it would be costly to provide free lunches to all New Zealand students but the benefits would be huge. Not only in low decile schools but in all schools – students need education on healthy eating.

One of the safety needs that a school can meet is to ensure children have their health carefully monitored.

Every child in a Finnish school is checked regularly by the school nurse and by a visiting Doctor at significant stages in their development.

In New Zealand we give free health care to young people but we rely on the young person actually being taken to visit the Doctor.

We spent \$26.1 billion on social security and welfare in 2012-2013 – surely if some of this spending was targeted to ensuring the health checks were at school and every child had a healthy meal once a day the pay-off would be substantial – maybe flowing over to reducing the health budget as well.

I could be accused of suggesting we become more welfare dependent, but if money was targeted more to the actual people we want to help (the children), we may see more significant improvements in our child poverty rates, our child health statistics and our children's educational statistics.

Food for thought?

Sandy Pasley  
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