

Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Deepdene

Parish School

Our Lady of Good Counsel School was officially opened on 29 January 1924 and was staffed by the Sisters of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ), with Mother Evangeline as Principal. The enrolment for that year was 62 pupils. The school numbers increased to 100 in 1927 and reached 150 in 1938.

In its early years, especially during the Depression period and for years afterwards, the parish school was not affluent. A number of families in the school had no link with the parish, and the daughters and sons of many parishioners attended either convent schools or the junior schools of boys' secondary colleges.

In 1951, lay teachers joined the staff and grew in numbers over successive years. By the mid-1960s, three more classrooms were needed to accommodate the growing school population. It was in the 1950s and 1960s that the Mothers' Club developed into a powerful force. Their support of the sisters and lay teaching staff was multi-faceted and their fundraising efforts resourced the school with essential teaching aids, amenities and equipment.

The FCJs' association with the school ended in 1981. Over their years of service, 20 sisters had taught at OLGC in conditions and with class loads that would now be considered intolerable. The first lay Principal of OLGC was Mrs Maureen Burke, herself a devoted FCJ past pupil who understood the traditions established by the sisters. During her 14-year tenure (1981–1994), enrolments increased by 30 per cent (360 in 1993) and there was a long waiting list of applicants.

Currently the school is a vibrant learning environment and community for students and their families. Its facilities are well equipped for contemporary learning and the school continues to be enriched by the partnerships between the parish and parents.