

# DOING LIKEWISE

“We were told to expect the unexpected, and that is exactly what evolved. Where we thought we’d find disability, we found gifts and talents in small, wondrous and creative ways. Where we expected suffering and difficulty, we found coping strategies that enabled and included and supported. The growth we found was in ourselves as the authenticity and charity of Mater Dei expanded us and catapulted our hearts wide open”.

These are reflections from Mary Clarke, one of two teachers who accompanied six students from our sister Good Sam school, Lourdes Hill College in Queensland. Mary, her colleague Anne and the students made the annual road trip in August and shared a busy and enjoyable week with the students and staff in our school, early intervention and living skills programs.

Student Greta Sweeney echoed Mary’s experience. “‘Doing likewise’ is the theme for Lourdes Hill College this year. The children and staff at Mater Dei have taught me more about ‘doing likewise’ than any parable could. The genuine love, compassion and interest they show in each other’s lives is truly heart-warming and inspiring. I have never been to a place



where difference is seen as such a wonderful thing, rather than a barrier. This community has touched me deeply and inspired me to embrace every challenge, difference and obstacle in my life”.

For fellow student, Laura Ricci “Mater Dei exceeded all of my expectations. When I walked into the playground for the first time I was embraced into a community like no other. The hospitality was so great that I never felt like a stranger at Mater Dei”.