



ST MARY MACKILLOP COLLEGE CANBERRA



26 July 2013

IMPORTANT DATES

JUL
WEDNESDAY
31

• Year 12 Retreat departs

AUG
THURSDAY
08

• Variety Night

AUG
THURSDAY
15

• Moderation Day (Pupil-free)

AUG
MONDAY
19

• Opening performance of the College Musical



PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

Welcome back

Welcome back to all the staff and students from what was, I hope, a great holiday. Happily, the school has returned refreshed and quite a few were lucky enough to be able to travel north to warmer climates over the break. The College community will have noted that during all the excitement of the State of Origin, Essendon has quietly moved into second spot on the AFL ladder - one wonders how long for..

PRINCIPAL'S PRAYER

Lord, we give thanks for a new semester and all the opportunities it will bring.

Amen.



Architects Award for our College Chapel

Readers of the Canberra Times will have noticed several days ago that the Chapel of St Anthony of Padua, dedicated to the memory of Foundation Principal Paul Butz, was awarded the prestigious W Hayward Morris Award for Interior Architecture at the 2013 ACT Architecture Awards. The Chapel also won the InLite Light in Architecture Prize.

All of us in the St Mary MacKillop College community will be proud that, not only are we working through a much needed and exciting redevelopment program, but we are building facilities of exceptional design, award-winning concepts, and style.

Thank you to architects from Collins Caddaye who worked so closely with the College and to Project Manager and College Business Manager Louise Davidson whose skill and energy underpin much of the success of the project.

College Variety Night

The annual fundraising event, Variety Night, takes place on Thursday 8 August. Tickets will be available at the Front Office at both campuses next week for \$10. Variety Night showcases some of MacKillop's best performing arts talent - including music, dance, singing, drama, magic, and comedy. It will be an entertaining night!

Yours in St Mary MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE
PRINCIPAL



College News

Term 2 School Fees.

Term 3 Fees have now been sent out. Fees are to be paid by 9 August 2013 unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved method. If you would like more information regarding Direct Debit payments or have any queries regarding your fees, please contact the Fees Office.

Michelle Predovan, Fees Manager

Clothing Pool.

Families looking to get rid of unused MacKillop uniform are invited to donate to the College Clothing Pool. Contact Vivienne Joice at Wanniasa for details.

Defence Mentor's Report.

Term 2 was fantastic! I got to know Defence students, took excursions to ADFA and launched relaxation sessions at both campuses.

The ADFA excursion certainly tested the stamina of the students as they gingerly attempted the assault course over the pool! This was followed by lunch in the cadets mess and a tour of the university and living quarters. A few students have now decided that ADFA is the place for them.

It was lovely to meet some Defence families at the Defence breakfast in Week 7 and many thanks to those students who helped organise this event.

Relaxation sessions started off slowly with one or two students attending but once they realised that they could learn how to breathe deeply and relax, the numbers increased! There was even a hint of snoring in one class! This class is at lunch time on Tuesday at Isabella and Thursday at Wanniasa and is open to all students.

Jewellery-making sessions will be starting at lunch time this term and all students are invited to attend. More information will be sent out via student messages about these sessions.

If any Defence family has a deployment coming up please let me know as I would like to support your sons and daughters during that period.

Tutoring is available for Defence students who have moved to Canberra from interstate or abroad in the last 18 months. If your son or daughter is struggling with certain subjects as a result of the move, please contact me on 6209 0152.

The ADFA Open Day is on Saturday 31 August from 9am - 4pm, at which you will see a range of exciting displays by the Navy, Army and Airforce and learn about life at ADFA.

I look forward to a busy Term 3 with more excursions, events and activities.

*Steph Stephens
(Defence Transition Mentor)*

Top History student.

It is with great pride that we learned that Nathan Schmidt from Year 10 is the ACT State Champion of the Australian History Competition 2013. Nathan is the winner of all of those who competed across the ACT and was ranked 14th in Australia from approximately 18,000 students Australia wide.

The best performers from St Mary MacKillop College were:

ACT State Champion: Nathan Schmidt

High Distinction: Daniel Bizjak, Jessica Apolinar, Joshua Thomas, Matt Walls

Distinction: Harry Brill, Ryan Cawley, Patrick Cunneen, Joshua Munn, Amy-Leah Tepes, Tanya-Jessica Tepes, Chelsea Tippet

Credit: Paige Baker, Samantha Bodle, Tegan Bond, Jordan Bowler, Samantha Collins, Jason Dillon, Remi Guglielmin, Olivia Hoytink, Georgia Inczedi, Rachel Mugridge, Alex Ozolins, Madison Perez del Pulgar, Michael Redondo, Jarrod Smyth, Phi Tran, Benjamin Wells.

MacKillop achieved an excellent standard in 2013 in the Competition, with almost 70% of all students who participated achieving at an equivalent merit level or higher. This includes 28 of the 96 students achieving at the Credit or higher level, placing them in the top 20% of Australia. Well done to all of those students who participated and special congratulations to Nathan who is the ACT State Champion.

*Michael Batten
SOSE Coordinator (Isabella)*

Future Stars!

Kieran Carew (Year 10) will represent the ACT U15 AFL team at the National Championships in Darwin next month.

Courtney White (Year 9), has won a Theatrical Scholarship following the Canberra Dance Eisteddfod last month.

Tom Makin (Year 10) will represent the ACT in the National Under 17 Fencing Championships later this year.

During the holidays, Tayler Altinger (Year 9), Carrie Altinger (Year 12), Sophie Pieper (Year 10) and Samantha Thomas (Year 8) represented the ACT in the Calisthenics National Competition in Melbourne.

Bronze Status.

Congratulations to the following students:

Jamie Anderson (7W2), Elle Caldwell (7A3), Sophie Cameron (7E1), Cameron Crick (7A3), Clare Daly (7W3), Sarah Duck (7A1), Sam Hiscock (8W2), Charlotte McFadzean (7E3), Taylah Megalli (8W3), Adelaide Quayle (7A3), Sam Ryan (7EW), Charlie Stephens (7W3), Rebecca Stoddart (8W3), Kyle Venis-McQuade (7W3), Ashley Yarrow (7F2).

COMMUNITY NEWS

Join CanTeen

Does your mum or dad have cancer? Then you can join CanTeen. Find out more by calling 6101 2207.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

This relationship enrichment for married couples takes place on 6 - 8 September at Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville, NSW. Visit www.wwme.org.au for Information.

Music Lessons

A local musician has returned from touring North America and is now offering music lessons for piano, guitar, and theory in Tuggeranong. Contact Jessica on 0402 935 787 for more information.

Isabella News With Mrs White

Welcome to Semester 2

It has been wonderful to see students returning from holidays to Semester 2 with such positive attitudes. Thank you to parents and students who have ensured that students are in correct winter uniform and have all necessary equipment to begin Term 3.

Time management

Planning and time management are key areas for individual academic success. Parents can assist their sons and daughters by ensuring that they have a large semester wall planner at home. As assessments dates are made available, students need to add each due date to their wall planner. Students have been given an A4 copy of a semester planner in Pastoral Classes. With a visual reminder, both parents and students can work together to manage family, sporting, work and study commitments.

Every senior student needs to be spending a minimum of an hour and a half each night on reading, research and review of the day's lessons, even if there are no pressing assessments due or specific homework tasks have not been set. Consistent revision and reading will help avoid late and stressful cramming sessions for exams.

Pastoral Program at Isabella

Pastoral Programs in Term 3 are centred around Relationships.

This week, Year 10 and Year 11 were treated to a very special NAIDOC presentation from Marcus Corowa, awarded Most Promising Young Talent at last year's Deadly Awards. Students and staff were fascinated and entertained by Marcus, who shared his life story in word and song, noting the relationships that have influenced him most - his family, his country and mentors. In a sincere and effective way, Marcus gave the message that his success was based on strong relationships of support, self-belief, hard work and perseverance.

Year 12 will be attending their three-day Retreat at Collaroy next week. They will be accompanied by Fr John Armstrong and I wish them well for their time away.

Seasons for Growth program for students suffering loss and grief will begin in the next two weeks. The program is facilitated by a trained member of staff. This small group program is confidential and has been carefully planned to help each individual understand and come to terms with the stages of grief using the seasons to explain and explore their natural responses. This is a well researched and successful program and has proved its effectiveness in hundreds of schools and college throughout Australia. If parents or students are interested and would like to ask more about the Seasons for Growth program or to be part of a small group, they are asked to contact Mrs. White. Sessions will take place each Wednesday.

Vinnies Winter Appeal

Each Pastoral class is currently aiming to raise enough money to buy a good quality blanket to donate to the Vinnies Winter Appeal. Like Mary MacKillop, we want to help those in need. Thanks to the generosity of students and parents, we can help. If every student donated \$5, we would be able to help bring comfort and warmth to those who are most in need. All donations are welcome and can be sent with your son or daughter to be donated during Pastoral class.

Uniform reminders

- Traditional black, polishable lace-up shoes with a heel are to be worn.
- Facial piercings are not permitted.
- One earring in each ear. Small silver or gold stud. No spacers.
- Navy blue stockings (not sheer)
- Only college bags are to be used.

Techniques to Manage Emotional States

- Avoid sleep deprivation (research says teenagers need 9 hours sleep each night)
- Deep breathing
- Creative visualisation
- Ask 'What would love do right now?'
- Be mindful of 'awfulising'
- Artistic effort - dance, paint, draw, sing
- Ensure healthy nutrition
- Build sense of humour and learn to laugh
- Reduce other stressors in individual's life
- Calming music, especially creative visualisations
- Being really heard and understood
- Make another choice
- Allowing nature to nurture you
- Practise honesty
- Staying in the moment - is it really happening?
- Taming the negative critic voice with circuit breakers

Source: Maggie Dent - *Saving our Adolescents*, Pennington Publications, Murwillumbah. 2011

This is a practical, well-researched book written by a mother of four with 30 year experience teaching, living with and counselling adolescents. Highly recommended for parents.

AST News

With Mr Cruwys

The ACT Scaling Test (AST) examinations for Year 12 are fast approaching. All students across the ACT seeking an ATAR will sit the AST on 3 and 4 September - this is just over 6 weeks away! The following things can be done to prepare for the AST:

1. While Year 12 have no more formal AST trials, if any were missed for whatever reason, students can come and see me to receive a copy of the missed exam so they can have a sit it at home. Exposure to AST examinations is one of the key strategies to feeling confident on the day.
2. AST Workshops are continuing to be run every Monday at lunch (13:15 - 13:45) and every Friday before school (08:00 - 08:45) in the Media Lab. Students are invited to come along and hear from different teachers on the different aspects of the AST examinations. Students who have been attending these workshops have shown significant improvement in their performance in AST Trials.
3. Week 5 Compulsory AST workshops. In Week 5 I will be handing all students a copy of the AST preparation booklet and giving final advice on the AST examinations. This is not only a good chance to feel more prepared for the AST but to also ask questions.

Students in Years 10 and 11 are also invited to come along to the workshops. While they are primarily focussed on preparing Year 12, the skills and content are directly relevant to all students looking to achieve an ATAR in the future.

The AST exams are not to be taken lightly. Since the performance of each individual impacts the ATARs of everyone else in the College, we need students to feel prepared to give those tests their best effort. If you require information about these exams or any other aspect of senior schooling please don't hesitate to get in contact with me.

Colby Cruwys, Senior Studies Coordinator

Wanniassa News

With Mr McNicol

Week 19 of Semester 1 was an eventful week at the Wanniassa Campus with students in each Year group involved in a variety of activities. The following student accounts of the different events provide an overview of their experiences.

Year 7 Camp

Our experience at Year 7 Camp was one that we are not likely to forget. The days were filled with ten activities, of which each group got to do seven. The activities were archery, outdoor laser tag, abseiling, rock climbing, high ropes course, drop pole, flying fox, team challenges, a challenge course and (our personal favourite) the vertical challenge. However, camp was not just about the activities. We also did a night walk and had five different meals, after all of which we had free time. The camp was also an experience to meet new people and make new friends, which everyone did over the three days of camp in either the activities, free time sessions or sleeping in different cabin groups.

We would like to thank the staff at MacKillop for giving up their time with their families to give us the opportunity to go on camp. Also, we would like to thank the people at the Collaroy Centre. Many of us faced our fears and overcame challenges that we were faced with. This is sure to be a great memory for the rest of our lives.

Aiden Mavity (7EW) and Jaimie Forster (7EW)



Year 8 Coastlife

On 26 and 27 June all of Year 8 participated in an exciting event full of teamwork and strategies, hosted by Coastlife. Each House group participated in a three-hour session. In that period we interacted in five different team building activities that tested our knowledge, problem solving abilities and teamwork.

There were around 15 people in each team and the good thing was the majority of our team members hardly knew each other let alone their strengths and weaknesses. This was quickly solved by one of the activities which was called 'Blind Shapes'. All but three people were blind folded and had to direct the rest of the team into creating a certain shape with the rope. We were judged on our accuracy of the shape and given an overall score at the end. Our favourite activity was the 'Spider Ball', which involved intense teamwork and focus. The aim of the spider activity was to have six people on two teams, each holding two joined strings. Our team was timed on how long it took us to move a balancing tennis ball on and off three different sized pipes using only the six strings and six team members, then we had to cross over to another set of three pipes and repeat the same method.

We had a very good couple of days and we enjoyed our time with Coastlife. We learnt a lot about teamwork and the importance of working together, trust and good communication. We would like to thank our PC Teachers and the Year 8 Coordinators for taking the time to assist us and supervise us in these activities.

Lauren Frost (8EW) and Kyle Howson (8W1)

Year 9 Careers Focus Sessions

On Thursday 27 June, the College Careers and Vocational Education Coordinator, Ms Hundy, volunteered her time to explain the work-force and career opportunities. The aim of the day was to educate students about the importance of their future, and help them to achieve their dreams in a simple yet effective way. Ex-students, senior students, and visitors from local businesses also gave their time to speak with Year 9 before we looked at the writing and setting-up of a resume. The students thought it was fantastic that ex-students who had previously graduated from Year 12, and also current students spoke to us about their lives and the fact that all goals are achievable and relevant, contrary to what others might say. The biggest lesson we learnt is to have a back-up plan, but also to stick to what you believe in and try your hardest to make it happen..If you set your mind on something, you can achieve it.

Gemma Kirk (9E2)

Year 9 Rising Generations

During the Rising Generations presentation on Thursday 27 June, I, along with the rest of Year 9, was given an entertaining and engaging experience. With activities on leadership, and its influence, we were given key concepts to realise, and to aim for in later life. We participated in many group activities to work on strengthening the relationships we have with our peers. Some of the key concepts addressed were relationships, self confidence, disregarding pre-emptive judgements, and vision. We were encouraged to participate in community activities, and to contribute to the world. With an open minded perspective, and a driven motive, you can achieve anything.

Natalie Blick (9F2)



Year 9 Transition Day

On 26 June, Year 9 went to the Isabella Campus for the first of three Transition Days. This allowed for students to obtain the knowledge of what is at the other campus and to get a feel for what happens there. Year 9 first had to determine how to reach this campus via bus (or car if required) and this went well. Upon arrival, we gathered in the library for a talk with Isabella Campus Head, Mr O'Callaghan. Afterwards, students divided into groups and went around the school visiting different elective classes to learn what each Year 10 elective offered. At each room, we received talks from the respective coordinator for that subject.

In the afternoon Year 9 went into their respective PC classes and wrote letters to themselves to be opened on the Year 12 Retreat. These letters were about what we wanted to achieve by the time we read the letters again. After this students went to a liturgy in the gym. Here students placed their letters in specially made time capsules that were decorated by various members of each house. The liturgy had an emphasis on the 'Footprints in the Sand' prayer and ran well thanks to Mr Lowe and Mrs Kain, the Year 9 Pastoral Care Teachers as well as many students who assisted. As a result of this day the vast majority of Year 9 students found the day very helpful.

Brock Ginman (9E1)

Parenting Ideas

In addition to the usual Parentingideas article, attached to the newsletter email is a copy of Parentingideas magazine, Issue 9. Please take the time to give it a read.

Lachlan McNicol, AP Pastoral Care (Wanniassa)

INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose – No. 1 parenting educator



When things go wrong at school

Your approach as a parent when your child has difficulty at school makes a huge difference to their resilience, and their future relationships with teachers and peers.

Every parent wants the best for their children, and that includes having great experiences at school. By and large, schools deliver on these expectations. They are generally safe places for kids, staffed by hard-working teachers who have the best interests of their students at heart. Achievement, discipline and student well-being are high on the list of priorities for most teachers.

Despite best teaching practice things do go wrong at school. Most kids experience learning difficulties from time to time. Conflict and peer rejection are a normal part of school-life. The developmental nature of childhood means that there will always be some turbulence, particularly around key transition ages, such as the start of adolescence. During these times young people frequently experience a dip in their learning as well as significant relationship difficulties. Kids will often come home from school with grievances, and call on their parents for assistance.

Your approach as a parent when your child has difficulty at school makes a huge difference to their resilience, and their future relationships with teachers and peers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there's been a significant increase in aggressive incidents at schools involving parents reacting to their children's grievances. This not only presents a danger to teachers but harms the all-important teacher-parent relationship. Here's a six point checklist to help you stay focused and be effective if your child experiences difficulty at school.

1. Stay calm and rational

It's natural as a parent to protect, or defend your children, particularly when you think that they've come in for some unfair or poor treatment. But acting when you are full of emotion is not always smart. Rather than getting on the phone straight away to organise a meeting at school, take your time to think through how you might assist your child.

2. Get all the facts

Once you've calmed down, then get the facts about the situation. Kids are faulty observers and often only see one side of a story when there's a problem with a teacher or a fellow student. They sometimes can't see that perhaps they may have contributed inadvertently to a dispute at school, or perhaps said something that may have upset a teacher. It's the job of parents to help kids process what happens in an incident, so that all the facts emerge and understand their place in any problem. Ask good questions to help the full story emerge.

3. Assess whether to go to school or not

Kids, like adults, like to vent and will benefit from having told their side of a story to a trusted source. Often problems can be dealt with at home, simply by talking through an issue, and giving kids some common sense tips to help them cope.

If your child has a recurring problem that he can't solve himself, or you think adult intervention maybe needed to sort out a relationship issue with a teacher or peer, then consider meeting with your child's teacher or year level coordinator.

4. Go through the right channels

Approach the school calmly, going through the school office, or directly to your child's teacher if that is the usual protocol. If you have already established a relationship with the teacher concerned, then it's often easier to approach them directly.

5. Look for solutions rather than blame

Parent-teacher meetings usually get nowhere when either party blames the other. State the problem as you see it and view your child's teacher as an ally, not a foe. "I'm really worried about Jeremy. He's been acting strangely lately and I need some help" is the type of approach that will elicit a helpful response. Talk about your concerns and keep the discussion focused firmly on what's best for your child. Listen to your teacher's viewpoint, valuing a different perspective.

6. Stay in touch

Be realistic with your expectations, remembering that some problems can't be solved to your satisfaction, nor will they be resolved straight away. Be prepared to work alongside your child's teacher over the long-term, which means you need to keep communicating with each other. Parenting is easy when things are going well, but testing when your children struggle or experience difficulty. Stepping back and taking a long-term, reflective view is often the best approach when your child experiences difficulty at school.

