



MACKILLOP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1 2015, 6 FEBRUARY

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

Welcome back to 2015

Rarely has the school commenced the year more smoothly. Congratulations to the students who have very quickly settled in, have welcomed those who are new among them, and who are quickly establishing relationships with their teachers.

Thank you to the staff who have been responsive to student needs and who have already set the direction for learning – where did those holidays go? Welcome to the new staff who have joined us from interstate and other parts of Canberra. 2015 sees only one first-year-out teacher joining the staff. MacKillop enjoys hiring early career teachers, but to further develop experience in key learning areas, the school has recruited a number of staff with lengthy, successful teaching experience which will bring further gravitas to teacher talk, preparation, resource development, and curriculum data analysis.

Welcome to all the new families who have joined MacKillop and to a very good number of students who are returning from colleges and schools elsewhere in Canberra.

New Canteen for Wanniasa

Although most of the capital development over the next few years will be on the Isabella Plains Campus, the Wanniasa Campus Canteen was badly in need of refurbishment and that has been splendidly done over the holidays. The school board will now consider further development in the area between the theatre and the canteen to further promote dance facilities and flexible learning spaces. Thank you to College Business Manager Mrs Louise Davidson for Project Managing this refurbishment over the break.

Strategic Planning for the future

The College will be undertaking major reviews of subject choices, assessment, pastoral care, parent inclusion, and Catholic identity, the results of which will be incorporated into a strategic plan taking us through to the end of the decade. The College leadership will be working closely with the College Board, heads of department, and pastoral coordinators, past students and current students, and of course parents, to assist in our evaluation and planning for the future.

Some parent focus groups will be established later this term and a survey for all parents will be electronically delivered later in the term. The College is looking for honest feedback and thoughtful suggestions to enhance the school into the future. This is a good opportunity for parents and their children to talk about MacKillop in a constructive light and to contribute to building on the strengths of the school.

Yours in St Mary MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE
PRINCIPAL

PRINCIPAL'S PRAYER

Lord, bestow your blessings upon our community for the academic year of 2015. Let all we do be to honour you and your servant, St Mary MacKillop. Amen.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB MONDAY 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 10 Info Session • Year 11 Info Session
FEB TUESDAY 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 7 Info Session
FEB MONDAY 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 8 Info Session • Year 9 Info Session
FEB WEDNESDAY 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 12 Interviews • Ash Wednesday
FEB TUESDAY 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo Day (W)

WANNIASSA NEWS

Welcome to 2015

Welcome back to the new school year. The first week has been a particularly smooth one with students returning to the College quickly settling into the daily routines. 24 new students commenced this week in Years 8 and 9 along with 350 Year 7 students. Following the success of last year's Try MacKillop Day and Orientation days in December, the Year 7 cohort started a day before the rest of the Wanniassa Campus students and were assisted by the SRC in finding their way to their first lessons of secondary school. Consisting of students drawn from over 30 primary schools, Year 7 have shown an enthusiasm to do well as they have come together as MacKillop students for the first time.

Drop-off and pick-up

All parents, or others, who drop-off or pick-up students before and after school are asked to do so on the Basketball Courts, via the entrance off MacKinnon Street. This is in the interests of maximising the safety of all students and road users at these busy times of the day.

Parents are requested not to utilise the small car park outside the front office and not to stop on McBride Crescent or MacKinnon Street.

Students crossing roads and cars parked on surrounding streets increases the risks of accidents that may otherwise be avoided.

Status Awards

The College has a Status System whereby students are recognised, affirmed and rewarded for their positive behaviours. Students may progress to the levels of Bronze, Silver or Gold Status.

All students are encouraged to seek recognition for their positive contributions to the life of MacKillop by aiming for progression to Bronze, Silver and Gold Status. When students have met the criteria for each level they should see their Pastoral Care Coordinator for an application form.

Congratulations to the following students who have this week been presented Status Awards at the Wanniassa Campus Assembly:

Bronze Status: Nicholas Batten (8A3), Erynn Hamley (8E3), Keely Harrison (8E2), Angela Rusanov (8W2).



Pastoral Teams

Pastoral Care teachers play an important role in the school life of each student. Students meet with their PC teacher at the start of each day and strong student/teacher relationships usually develop over the course of the year. In most cases the PC teacher is the first point of contact for parents for issues of a general nature.

Students have been introduced to their Pastoral Care Coordinators and have already engaged in Year Assemblies, setting the tone for the year ahead. The Pastoral Care Coordinators provide leadership and direction to each Year group, overseeing the organisation of particular events. They work closely with each of the Pastoral Care teachers in their team and often manage complex or sensitive student issues.

The Pastoral Care Coordinators on the Wanniassa Campus are:
Year 7 – Mrs Colleen Kain and Mr Iain Robertson
Year 8 – Mr Steve Lowe and Mr Joe Ciccarone
Year 9 – Mrs Monica Bailey and Mr Gary Pickering

If parents or carers wish to speak to a staff member regarding a classroom or curriculum issue, the classroom teacher should be contacted, or the Faculty Coordinator if that is more appropriate.

Parentingideas

In each edition of the College Newsletter this year, a one page "parentingideas" article, written specifically for parents will be published. The articles provide a wide range of practical parenting advice on topical issues. These resources are provided to support parents with the challenges of raising their children, particularly through the complexities of adolescence.

The article below "Kids Shine with tough love parenting" presents authoritative parenting strategies and their benefits.

Lachlan McNicol, AP Pastoral Care

ISABELLA NEWS

Senior Studies

As the Senior Studies Coordinator it is my job to ensure every student seeking a Year 10 or Year 12 certificate is able to do so with the best results and outcomes possible. I'm here to help both students and parents change or understand any aspect of their studies. Whether they're working towards employment straight from MacKillop, further study at places like CIT/TAFE/AIE/University, or simply to achieve the best ATAR they can, I am here to help. If you have questions or concerns regarding your son or daughter's package of study please don't hesitate to contact me on colby.cruwys@mackillop.act.edu.au or 02 6209 0173.

During these first few weeks of the new year my biggest priority is to ensure students are in the correct subjects and so students are invited to visit me at their earliest convenience to discuss their package of study if they are not in their correct class. Students and parents may also find this a good opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Assessment Policies of the College. These are outlined in the Student Diary and having a good understanding of processes and procedures will ensure a semester that runs smoothly for everyone.

I look forward to working with all members of the MacKillop community; staff, students and parents alike to ensure each student achieves their full potential.

Colby Cruwys, Senior Studies Coordinator

COLLEGE NEWS

Fee Payments in 2015

Term 1 fees will soon be mailed out. Fees are to be paid by 6 March 2015 unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved payment method. The following methods of payment are available:

Cash & Eftpos: Cash and Eftpos payments may be made in person at both Isabella and Wanniasa Front Reception.

Bpay: Bpay is available at the College for payment of School Fees only. Payments can be made through internet and telephone banking by quoting the Biller Code and Reference Number located on your school fee statement.

Direct Debit: Payment of School Fees by Direct Debit will require completion of the relevant paperwork. Please contact Jayne Limbrick via email, jayne.limbrick@mackillop.act.edu.au to set up your Direct Debit. Direct Debits commence in January and run over 52 weeks or 26 fortnights. All Direct Debits are to be altered in December for the following year's School Fees.

Credit Card Payments – Mastercard or Visa: Credit Card payments may be made in person, over the telephone, or details can be provided at the bottom of your school fee statement.

Please note: St Mary MacKillop College is unable to accept cheque payments as of January 2015.

Michelle Predovan, Fees Manager

Absences and late arrivals

If students are absent from school for any reason, or arrive late, a signed note or parent email is required explaining the late arrival or absence. A proforma is also available for this purpose and can be downloaded from the College website:

<http://www.mackillop.act.edu.au/index.php/our-school/publications-policies/policies-forms/item/absence-proforma>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Letter from the Archbishop

The Archbishop has written a letter to the Archdiocese and all its parishioners. The letter can be viewed at: http://www.mackillop.act.edu.au/images/publications/Archbishop_Message_2015_1.pdf

Buffaloes Rugby League

Registrations are being taken for the 2015 Rugby League season. Register Online through www.foxsportspulse.com. Simply search for the Tuggeranong Buffaloes and follow the prompts. Contact information can be found via the portal.

Girls' Brigade

Girls' Brigade is a Christian group that helps girls seek, serve, and follow Christ. Participants sing songs, go on camps, learn to dance, paint pictures, play games, try new things, help those in need, explore the Bible, and experience God's love! For more information, contact Marian at info@gbact.org.au.

2015 ANU Tuckwell Scholarship

The ANU Tuckwell Scholarship Roadshow visits the ACT on 10 February (5pm-6.30pm) at the ANU. Learn about the possibilities open to students at the ANU. To RSVP for the event, and for information, visit: <http://tuckwell.anu.edu.au/tuckwell-roadshows/>

Velocity Cheersquad

Join in the sport of Cheerleading with the Velocity Cheersquad. Contact 62601171 for information.



ACT Secondary Bursary Scheme

The ACT Government's Secondary Bursary Scheme provides assistance to low income earners in the ACT with dependent full-time students.

Eligibility requirements and application forms are available online at <http://www.det.act.gov.au> and by following the links located at the top of the home page - School education/starting school/financial assistance for families.

For further information please ring the Bursary Administrator on 6205 8262.

Michelle Predovan, Fees Manager

Parent Information Evenings

Parents are invited to attend information evenings being held over the coming two weeks. Information relevant to each Year group will be presented at the sessions. There will also be an opportunity for parents to meet with their son or daughters PC teacher along with the Pastoral Care Coordinators. Each information session will commence in the Theatre on the Wanniasa Campus at the following times:

Year 7 – Tuesday, 10 February at 7.00pm
 Year 8 – Monday, 16 February at 5.30pm
 Year 9 – Monday, 16 February at 7.00pm
 Year 10 – Monday, 9 February at 5.30pm
 Year 11 – Monday, 9 February at 7.00pm

Maddies Netball Club

Maddies netball club is part of the Tuggeranong netball association. It plays each Saturday at the Calwell netball courts and trains once a week on a Wednesday night. If you are looking to join a netball team, please attend our registration nights at the Tuggeranong netball courts Wednesday 11 Feb and Monday 16 Feb 6-8pm. The first grading night will be Wednesday 25 Feb and the second grading night is 4 March. For more information, visit <http://www.maddiesnc.net/>

Music Lessons at MacKillop

In-school music lessons are now available at St Mary MacKillop in flute and saxophone. For more information or to enrol please call Canberra Music Tuition on 6299 9154 or jmtadmin@iinet.net.au. Alternatively, contact the teacher Liaison, Damien Leer.

Canberra School of Tennis

The Pines Tennis Club (Chishom) is holding a Tennis Carnivale on Saturday 14 February, 1.30-4.30pm. Try the latest programs and experience a range of activities. Bookings are essential to Robert Jamieson on 0432118204 or csot@hotmail.com.au

Vikings Rugby Union

U14's Vikings Rugby Union is looking for new players. No experience needed. We're a proven finals appearing squad that can teach anyone, any shape, any background – if you have the heart, we'll teach you the art. If you are born in 2001 and interested in playing Rugby please contact Sherree on 0408647750.

Legs Dance Studios

All ages are welcome to experience dance at Legs Dance Studios. Visit www.legsdance.com.au or call 02 6260 1171 for information.

COLLEGE COUNSELLORS

The Counselling Service

As part of their pastoral care program for students, Catholic Schools have access to a Student and Family Counselling service provided by CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn (CCG). CCG are contracted by Catholic Education and Congregational Schools to provide a counselling service to students and their families. There is no fee to access this service.

St Mary MacKillop College provides counselling services to all students and families within the school. Three counsellors, employed by CatholicCare, work across both campuses.

The counsellors have contact with students regarding a range of issues and for varying lengths of time. Some students may only require a one off meeting; others may be engaged over weeks, terms or even years.

The role of the counsellor is to focus on the emotional, social and educational well-being of the students. Counsellors welcome contact with students having difficulty with some part of their life, whether or not it affects their school work. The problem does not have to be a big one. It is better to seek help sooner than later. Some typical concerns that counsellors work with include: anger, anxiety, behavioural problems, depression, eating problems, family breakdown and family conflict, grief and loss, learning and educational challenges, parenting challenges, peer and other social relationships, school avoidance, stress and study skills. As well as individual sessions with students, counsellors can run groups, do family work, consult with parents and teachers and make referrals to other services and supports.

Counsellors are not employed as specialists in any area and at times will suggest referrals for specialist services. Counsellors also do not provide cognitive or learning assessments or court reports. Families requiring these will be referred to another service.

All Student and Family counsellors are professionally qualified Social Workers or Psychologists who participate in regular clinical supervision and professional development.

Student and Family Counsellors subscribe to a set of professional ethics that include duty of care and respect for the individual's right to privacy and confidentiality. The counsellors' obligation is to ensure the safety, wellbeing and confidentiality of the student they are working with. All counsellors are mandated to report any disclosure or sign of abuse (including self-harm) or neglect to Child Protection Services.

Counsellors use the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) as part of assessment and monitoring of change during counselling. Use of these measures is considered best practice and measures such as this are widely used in counselling services. The counsellor will request students to complete an initial questionnaire in one of the first sessions and a follow up questionnaire during and/or towards the end of counselling. Counsellors may also request teachers and high school parents to complete questionnaires. This will be done with the knowledge and consent of parents/carers and high school students. More information on the questionnaire is available at <http://www.sdqinfo.com/>.

Booking an appointment

Students can make an appointment to see a counsellor by filling out a slip available either from student reception or from outside the counselling offices, and by returning it either directly to us or to student reception. Offices are located at the end of the corridor to the left of student reception at Wanniasa, and in C block at Isabella.

Alternatively, teachers, coordinators and parents are all welcome to make a referral for counselling on behalf of a student. However, the student must provide consent before the referral can be made. Parents are also welcome to contact the counsellors directly if they have any concerns or wish to discuss their son or daughter.

At times, there can be a waiting period of up to two weeks for initial appointments. However, we always endeavour to see students as soon as possible and prioritise urgent cases. Current counselling hours are:

Wanniasa campus

Monday: Cate and Laura
 Tuesday: Cate
 Wednesday morning: Cate and Laura
 Thursday: Cate
 Friday: Cate and Laura

Isabella campus

Monday: Paula
 Tuesday: Paula
 Wednesday morning: Paula
 Thursday: Paula
 Friday: no counsellor

Privacy and Confidentiality

Contact with counsellors is carried out in a way that ensures as much privacy for students and families as possible. All contact with a school counsellor is confidential, and no information is discussed with parents, friends or teachers unless permission is given by the student, or the counsellor has serious concerns about the safety of the client. This will be discussed in more detail at the first meeting with the counsellor.

Contact details

Wanniasa: 6209 5268 (Cate) or 6209 5234 (Laura), or Isabella: 6209 0132 (Paula)

Email:
cate.robson@mackillop.act.edu.au
laura.pound@mackillop.act.edu.au
paula.tyrrell@mackillop.act.edu.au

Remember, you don't have to worry about things alone!

*Cate Robson, Laura Pound, Paula Tyrrell
 College Counsellors*

INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose - No. 1 parenting educator



Kids shine with tough love parenting

...research suggests that if parents want kids to develop the characteristics to succeed, then they should default to authoritative or tough love parenting.

Children with parents that use a tough love parenting approach are best prepared to do well in life, according to a recent British study.

Kids that experience a mix of discipline and warmth are more likely to develop important character traits, such as self-regulation, empathy and application by the age of five than parents that use permissive, authoritarian or disengaged styles.

The Millennium Cohort Study involving 9,000 UK households, found that while family structure and parent income levels impacted on children's development, it was parenting style that had the greatest influence on outcomes for kids.

An analysis of school results is revealing. One quarter of kids with authoritative parents were in the top 20 per cent at school. Next came permissive parenting with 18 per cent, 15 for authoritarian and 11 per cent of this top cohort going to kids of disengaged parents.

Parenting style is not necessarily fixed. It changes over time according to children's needs, our well-being and their ages. Common sense suggests parents need to be stricter with some children than with others and there will be times when parents need to adopt a more permissive approach.

Certainly parental mood and well-being contributes to how parents respond to kids. But most parents will default to one style. Recent research suggests that if parents want kids to develop the characteristics to succeed, then they should default to authoritative or tough love parenting.

Here are 10 tough love parenting strategies to use in your family:

1. Set **limits and boundaries** that expand as kids get older and become more capable. Boundaries make kids feel secure and teach them how to behave well.
2. Use a **negotiable style** with children according to their age and stage of development. Parents also need to realise that not everything is up for negotiation. There are times when the word 'no' needs to be heard as parents act in the best interest of their kids.

3. Use **consequences** and other tools to teach kids to behave well and develop a sense of personal responsibility. Resist the temptation to let kids off the hook when they do the wrong thing. Firm, but fair, is the key here.
4. Put **family rituals**, such as shared mealtimes, in place to make sure you interact regularly with your kids.
5. **Praise** kids for improvement, effort and contribution rather than their ability at school, in sport and other areas of their lives. Focus your positive comments on their participation rather than the results of what they do so kids learn that trying and persistence are important.
6. **Recognise cooperative behaviours** with positive attention such as praise, physical touch and rewards and **minimise negative behaviours** through a range of measures such as ignoring and using consequences.
7. Teach kids the skills needed for **independence** from an early age so they learn to look after themselves. Avoid regularly doing things for kids that they can do for themselves.
8. Adopt an **open communication style** in your family where kids learn that there's nothing so bad that they can't talk about it.
9. Encourage a sense of **empathy** in children by recognising their emotions and giving them permission and assistance to talk about their feelings.
10. Encourage **generosity and kindness** in your kids. They do this by sharing toys and other items, helping others and doing chores that benefit their family. This sense of community that authoritative parenting promotes is the real strength of the style.

At a time when a parent's voice can be drowned out by the din of modern life, this research is a great reminder that it's effective parenting not media, celebrities or peers that have the greatest impact on future outcomes for kids.

Published by Michael Grose Presentations.

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