



MACKILLOP NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4 2015, 20 MARCH

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

Dear Parents, students and families,

The Opening Mass: thank you, MacKillop!

The Opening school Mass last Wednesday was a great community event in so many ways.

Fr Luke Verrell from Corpus Christi Parish, with Rev Deacon Vince Barclay, led the congregation with great dignity and presented the Gospel and Homily in a challenging and engaging way. The music, student participation, and setting, transformed a basketball stadium into a place that gave a deep sense of the Holy Spirit. It was gratifying to have so many other schools in our area present with us, including St Patrick's Cooma, and to have so many past students and parents attending.

For the rest of the day, Year 12 were on the junior campus and spent the day with Years 7-9, myself, and the Air Force Director of Supply Capability, Commodore Tolson, re-establishing relationships at Wanniasa and gaining insights into strategising and planning for a great last year of High School.

Thank you to Year 12 for their contribution to the day, and to the Wanniasa Campus for making them so welcome.

Catholic Education Awards

Part of Catholic Schools Week is the presentation of Catholic Education Awards by the director, Mrs Moira Najdecki, to teachers and support staff in our system schools who have made an outstanding contribution in a variety of categories.

MacKillop nominated six members of staff and all were successful. Congratulations to: Colby Cruwys, Margaret Fenotti (Assessment), Ben Antoniak, Dale Argall, Ruth Walton (Leadership), and Andrew Reay (Teacher Quality). Thank you all for your contribution to our school community for a number of years.

Congratulations also to our three early career teachers who were acknowledged at the CE Mass on Friday: Jen Fahey, Peter Johnson, and Lachlan Marshall.

Yours in St Mary MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE
PRINCIPAL

PRINCIPAL'S PRAYER

Lord, travel with us on our Lenten journey. Amen.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR WEDNESDAY 25	• Year 7 Community Day
MAR THURSDAY 26	• Year 8 MacKillop Place Pilgrimage • Year 11 Retreat begins
MAR MONDAY 30	• Year 8 MacKillop Place Pilgrimage
APR FRIDAY 03	• Good Friday (Public Holiday)
APR MONDAY 06	• Easter Monday (Public Holiday)

COLLEGE NEWS

Student Exchange

Over the last few weeks of the term, families from the College have kindly opened their homes to students from our French sister school, Institution St Joseph's, and our Japanese sister school, Oki High School. Both the host families and the international students had an enjoyable experience as they learnt more about each other's culture and shared their lives. The College still has a number of opportunities to host exchange students this year. The opportunities are:

- Students of the World Italian exchange students - 2-3 months from late June
- Institution St Joseph's (French sister school) exchange students - 1-2 months from late June
- Liceo Fermi (Italian sister school) study tour - 1.5 weeks in early September

If you feel that you are able to open your homes to any of these students, can you please contact Mr Andrew Mitchell at the College. You do not need to be studying the languages to participate in this program.

Andrew Mitchell, Languages

International Women's Day

On Thursday 5 March, Sophie Pieper and Emma Clarke attended the International Women's Day Lunch at the Canberra Convention Centre accompanied by their Year 12 Pastoral Care Co-ordinator Anna Keppel.

On the day, attendees were informed that 20 years ago world leaders agreed to a road map to achieve gender equality: The Beijing Platform for Action. In the 20 years since the agreement some progress has been made but we still have a long way to go. Even today, worldwide: women are paid 10 to 30 per cent less than men, 1 in 3 women and girls experience sexual violence in their lifetimes and just 1 in 5 parliamentarians are women. We were told that we can change these statistics by making donations to the UN Women National Committee of Australia and by becoming more involved in giving this movement a voice. The UN Women delivers innovative projects and advances policy to:

- Protect women and girls from violence
- Provide safe and stable jobs
- Develop women as leaders
- Ensure women's participation in peace processes
- Advance gender equality

Anna Keppel (Year 12 Pastoral Care Co-ordinator)

NAPLAN

The dates for NAPLAN are 12, 13 and 14 May 2015. On Wednesday 25 March all Year 7 and 9 students will be given a 2015 *Information for Parents newsletter* to take home. This newsletter provides information about NAPLAN.

Please contact Clare Fletcher or Maria O'Donnell (6209 5298) to discuss special provisions, exemptions or any other matters related to NAPLAN.

*Clare Fletcher and Maria O'Donnell
Teaching and Learning Coordinators*

School Fees now due

Fees for Term 1 should now be finalised unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement. Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately. If you require more information regarding Direct Debit arrangements or other approved payment methods or are experiencing difficulty paying the fees please contact the Fees Office.

Michelle Predovan, Fees Manager



Parliamentary Debating

On Friday 6 March, four Year 12 students represented the college at the Parliamentary Debating Competition held at the ACT Legislative Assembly. The team was the first to present and was commended for its extensive research and polished presentation skills. Throughout the day Jessica Apolinar, Hayden Montgomery, Emma Holgate and Grace Barclay offered insightful and thought-provoking questions for presenting teams, resulting in fiery debate over hot-topic issues.

As usual, the MacKillop students were outstanding in both their presentation and team work and in the manner in which they conducted themselves throughout the day.

A huge thank you to Millicent Henry for supporting the team both before the day and at the event itself.

*Nicola McLennan & Millicent Henry
English (Isabella)*

ANZAC Competition

ANZAC 2015 Centenary is a key event of special significance to all Australians. St Mary MacKillop College has developed the ANZAC Centenary creative competition, using the theme of "The Values of Remembrance". This provides entrants with the opportunity to express what ANZAC means to them via a number of creative media. It will be open to all students from Years 7 to 12.

What to do

Students are to engage in a creative representation, which address the theme using a variety of media: visual arts, print, performing arts and/or multimedia. You are to creatively represent the idea of "ANZAC 2015 - A Century of ..." to commemorate the centenary of ANZAC Day in 2015.

To determine what ANZAC 2015 is a century of, students are to select one of the 15 values represented in the stain glass windows defining the qualities of Australian servicemen and women from the First World War. The windows are divided into three sets of qualities: Personal Qualities, Social Qualities and Fighting Qualities.

The 15 values are: Resource, Candour, Devotion, Curiosity, Independence, Comradeship, Ancestry, Patriotism, Chivalry, Loyalty, Coolness, Control, Audacity, Endurance, Decision.

Your entry can be one of the following or one of your own choosing:

- Visual arts: photography, painting, print making, textiles, drawing, sculpture, decorated cake, model, diorama, woodwork (portable size, max 10kg, max size A1)
- Print: Poetry, essay, interview (A maximum of 500 words)
- Performing Arts: Music, dance, drama, song (time limit of 5 minutes to be submitted on DVD)
- Multimedia: Slide show, movie, interview, documentary (time limit of 5 minutes)

The major prize winner will receive \$100. Category winners will receive other prizes.

Applications close at 4pm on Tuesday 27 April.

Please see Mr Batten on the Isabella Campus or Ms Tulpule on the Waniassa Campus for more details.

WANNIASSA NEWS

Seasons for Growth Program

Learning to live with change and loss

Change and loss are issues that affect all of us at some stage in our lives. Changes occur in families through death, separation, divorce or related circumstances and young people can benefit from learning how to manage these changes effectively. In Term 2, the College will be offering the successful education program called Seasons for Growth.

This program is facilitated in small groups and is based on research which highlights the importance of social support and the need to practise new skills to cope effectively with change and loss. The program focuses on issues such as self-esteem, managing feelings, problem-solving, decision-making, effective communication and support networks.

MacKillop is pleased to be able to offer this important program and we are confident that it will be a valuable learning experience for those who request to be involved. If you think your son or daughter would benefit from participating in the Seasons for Growth program please contact either Monica Bailey or Lachlan McNicol on 6209 0100 or by email at monica.bailey@mackillop.act.edu.au and [lachlan.mcnicol@mackillop.act.edu.au](mailto:lnicol@mackillop.act.edu.au)

Status Awards

Congratulations to the following students who have this week been presented Bronze Status Awards at the Wanniasa Campus Assembly: Kenan Dowden-Carlisle 7F1, Harry Dube 8E3, Zoe Evans 8F3, James Goodchild 9F1, Ella Hrstic 7W1, Darcy Lynch 8F1, Jessica More 8EW, Gabrielle Petersen 8F3, Dakota Tulk 7W3



Supervision before school

When students arrive at school of a morning, it is a requirement that they remain at school and do not leave the College grounds. If students arrive and then leave the College grounds they are out of bounds. For students who catch school buses, the College bus stop is where students are to disembark. Students should not be getting off buses that service the College at any other stops other than at school.

Students have been reminded of the above information in Year Assemblies and reinforcement of this from parents would be appreciated.

*Lachlan McNicol
Assistant Principal Pastoral Care, Wanniasa*

IT TIP OF THE WEEK

HOW TO SEARCH FOR UNIT OUTLINES IN STUDYWIZ

1. First you have to click on the More under the title 'Latest Resources':

Title	ID	Duration	Date
Body Systems Investigation	81SCI-Science-10: Assessment	13:35	13/03/2015
Science Graphing rules	81SCI-Science-10: Classwork	13:25	13/03/2015
7-8 Girls Rugby League Information Note.pdf	Year 7 & 8 > Year 7 & 8 GIRLS	13:30	12/03/2015

2. Then you will see this:

Type	Title	Date Created	Created By
Student Message	Student Message - 13/03/2015	13/03/2015 1:08 PM	By Jack_Sin
Body Systems Investigation	Body Systems Investigation	13/03/2015 1:30 PM	By Jack_Sin
Science Graphing rules	Science Graphing rules	13/03/2015 1:30 PM	By Jack_Sin
Student message	Student message - 13/03/2015	13/03/2015 1:32 PM	By Jack_Sin
7-8 Girls Rugby League Information Note.pdf	7-8 Girls Rugby League Information Note.pdf	13/03/2015 1:30 PM	By David_Sutton
Analysis Download	Analysis Download	13/03/2015 1:44:38	By Jack_Sin

3. At the top of the list there is a search bar. You will need to search for "Outline":

Search Criteria:

4. Then press enter and your unit outlines will be listed!

Dylan Williams, Year 8 Mactechies

SPORT NEWS

Cricket Champions

One of our Year 7/8 Girls Cricket teams became ACT Milo T20 Champions on Monday. These girls have won an all expenses paid trip to compete at the National Championships in Melbourne in November - a fantastic achievement!

The girls from the victorious team were: Abigail Adera, Samantha Bowles, Tamica Chifley, Maddy Garfath, Georgia Opie, Lauren Phillips, Charlette Polmanteer, Gianni Rosin, Alanah Smith, and Maddy Watson.



Softball Champions

Mackillop girls have once again demonstrated superior athletic prowess in the recent ACT schools Softball carnival. Our teams finished runners up in the Year 7/8 division and champions in the 9/10s. This outstanding result comes at a time when women's sport is being pushed into the spotlight supported by the national campaign "Play like a girl!". Our girls were beacons of skill and talent. Brave with the bat, fearless in the field and never once looking like dropping a match. Special thanks to Simone Marks for her diligence and organisation and Kirralee Nolan for her wisdom and energy. Congratulations to Year 9s Breanna Payten, Sarah Nolan, Katie Buxton, Lauren Thomas, Amber Brophy, Abbey Jameson and Year 10s Tahlia Howard, Nicola Williams, Felicity Spratford, Grace Bowyer and Maddie Banks.

Petrina Mansfield

Tennis

In Week 5, 33 students represented the College at the ACT Secondary School Singles Tennis Championships. Owen Levings reached the semi-finals of the U14 Boys (A grade), Sam Roestbakken the final of the Open Boys (B grade) and Holly Nolan won the final of the U14 Girls (B grade) tournament.

Olivier Camus



Rugby League Champions

The St Mary MacKillop Year 7/8 boys rugby league team had an outstanding campaign in 2015. On Tuesday 10 March, 17 boys from Years 7 and 8 went to the ACT Schools Southside rugby league competition in Braddon. The team played 6 games on the day, winning all of them convincingly and only conceding one try all day. This meant the team was off to the finals to play the top two teams from the north side competition on 17 March at Raiders West Belconnen.

The semi-final was played against Belconnen high, where the boys won 58-10. They progressed to the grand final, where they played St Francis Xavier College. The boys started off well and quickly took the lead out to 22-0 in the first 10 minutes, St Francis hit back just before half time making the score 22-6 at half time. The boys started the second half slowly but found their rhythm towards the end, with the final score MacKillop 32, SFX 12.

Team: Tyson Kelly, Josh Henderson, Dylan Blewett, Mitchell Leighton, Adam Slingsby, Harry Grant, Jackson Galagher, Josh Guthrie, Liam Dredge, Ash Laing, Khi Langridge, Jayden Newsome, Jordan Van Aalst, Heath Baran, Kayleb Waterson, Will Granger, Stephan Ficovic

Braden Longo

Future Stars

David Rodriguez (Year 8), Lachlan Fields, Luke Masters, and Jakeb Wiseman (all Year 9) have all received football scholarships with the ACT Academy of Sport.

Sophie Highmore (Year 9) is currently performing in the production of Mary Poppins, where she plays the roles of Neleus the talking statue, a toy soldier, a boy and a chimney sweep. The show is on at the Canberra Theatre, so if you're looking for something to do, get out there and show your support!

Sebastian Kris (Year 11) was the sole representative of the Canberra Raiders who attended the NRL Indigenous Youth Summit on the Gold Coast last month.

Darcy Kinsella (Year 7) won a bronze medal in the novice sabre at the ACT fencing championships on the Canberra Day long weekend. Darcy fences with the Engarde at MacKillop Fencing Club, which meets at school.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Outward Bound

Outward Bound Australia's Navigator Program is a 12 day personal development challenge for 15-17 year olds. Our ACT Australian Alps Navigator Program is running April 7-18, 2015. There is also a program running Sept 22 - Oct 3.

South Tuggeranong Fire & Rescue

Construction of the new South Tuggeranong Fire & Rescue station has been completed. The Emergency Services Agency (ESA) will be holding an 'Open Day' on Saturday 28th of March (10am-3pm), for the community to visit the new fire station, which is located next to the roundabout intersection of Tharwa and Drakeford Drives. If you want to provide feedback about this new station, then please send an email to the ESA at esahaveyoursay@act.gov.au.

Canberra City Cheerleading

Canberra City Cheerleading has moved premises to the Erindale PCYC! Compete in State and National competitions, in high energy routines made up of stunts, gymnastics, tumbling, and dance. Recreational training available: www.canberracitycheerleading.com.

Joyelle Calisthenics Club

Joyelle CaliDance is looking for enthusiastic students aged 13 or below in 2015 to join their teams. Classes are held in Kambah and Pearce. No experience necessary! Call Ali on 0412831695 or email juniors@joyelle.com.au.

CURRICULUM NEWS

Current Brain Research and some Implications for Teaching and Learning

As Teaching and Learning Coordinators we attend a number of professional learning opportunities which explore effective teaching and learning practices in the light of current brain science research. Thanks to new brain-imaging technologies more has been discovered over the past two decades about the functioning of our brains than ever before. However, as Bruno della Chiesa from the Harvard Graduate School of Education says "brain research is not likely to solve every (any) educational problem but can shed new light on an old issue." It cannot provide simple answers to the complex nature of learning but it can help to explain why certain strategies are effective and what conditions best facilitate learning.

We would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of this research as we understand it.

1. NEURO MYTHS

Brain science and research has **dispelled a number of popular "neuro" myths**. These include:

- Intelligence is determined by age 3 (or 6 or 10)
- Listening to Mozart stimulates dormant neurons and so promotes a student's intelligence and ability to study
- Distinctive learning styles affect how students learn
- There is a new species called "the digital native"
- School learning has to follow brain-based learning principles
- We only use 10% of our brain
- People are right brainers or left brainers
- Men and boys have different brains to women and girls

2. SOME THINGS WE CURRENTLY KNOW ABOUT THE BRAIN

"Neuroplasticity, simply put, is the brain's ability to change structurally and functionally, in response to stimuli- to grow dendrites, to make new neural connections, to alter existing connections, to grow new neurons (neurogenesis)." (Arrowsmith, B. 2013) Research confirms that plasticity not only turns the brain into a fabulous lifelong learning device but it also makes remediation of certain learning defects possible even if not diagnosed early. The brain remains plastic way beyond childhood and adolescence which is good news for us all. It is important to note that a lot of research in this area has been done on people with acquired brain injury.

"Sensitive" periods for learning:

- Infancy is a very important time for brain development but not the only period for development.
- Functional maturity of the brain goes on until the third decade of life. This can explain some risk taking behaviour during adolescence.
- The pre-frontal cortex (the last part of the brain to develop) is involved in the management of emotions and planning. This is why teenagers may experience difficulty with authority and time management. These "executive function" skills, however, can be taught with "stop and think" strategies.

Emotions play a very important role in learning

"Fear is the worst enemy of learning." (Della Chiesa, B 2013) When we are in a fearful or stressful situation the ancient part of our brain, the limbic system, switches to "fight or flight mode" in an effort to protect us from danger. Messages to our pre-frontal cortex, which is responsible for laying down memories are blocked. The same process is true for students who are bored (they have already mastered the work or the material has low personal relevance) or their goals are frustrated (they want Cs and get Ds or As and get Bs). This understanding has obvious implications for teaching practices and environments.

When our stress levels are down and interest is high, the most valuable information tends to pass into the thinking brain. When



we are focused and in positive or controlled emotional states, executive functions can more successfully organise newly coded memories into long term knowledge. Every time we review or use that knowledge, activity along the connections between nerve cells increases. Repeated stimulations makes the network stronger - practice makes permanent. (Willis, J. 2015)

3. IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING

Some strategies that neuroscience suggests may be worthy of consideration include:

- Make content and assessment relevant ie more personally interesting and motivating.
- Give students a short break during lessons for a fun activity to reduce stress levels.
- Create positive associations by giving students opportunities to set personal goals and recognise and savour their successes.
- Prioritise information: What facts are worthy of writing down and reviewing when studying? Helping students learn how to reduce the amount of information they need to deal with is a valuable stress-buster.
- Allow independent discovery learning: Thanks to dopamine release and the consolidation of relational memories, students are more likely to remember and understand what they learn if they find it compelling or have a part in figuring it out for themselves. In addition, when students have some choices in the way they will study or report on something, their motivation will increase and stress will diminish. They will be more accepting of their errors, motivated to try again, and less self-conscious about asking questions.
- Create a safe haven: classrooms can be the safe haven where academic practices and classroom strategies provide students with emotional comfort and pleasure as well as knowledge.

"Future neuroscience outcomes with the most extensive and useful classroom applications will likely arise from input that educators provide to scientists. When experience reveals particular strategies as repeatedly successful, classroom to research lab channels will be open for teachers to suggest investigations to see what is happening in the brain in response to those conditions. Through this collaboration, the observations of neuroscience-savvy classroom teachers, about what works for their students, will become neuroscience research investigations." (Willis, J 2015)

*Maria O'Donnell and Clare Fletcher
Teaching and Learning Coordinators*

References

Arrowsmith-Young, B. The Woman Who Changed Her Brain Conference Papers, ACER Melbourne 7-16
della Chiesa, B. (2013) How the Brain Learns: What lessons are there for teaching? Conference Papers, ACER Melbourne 3-6
Willis, J. (2015) Why Know the Science of Learning? Conference Papers, Pearson Melbourne

INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose – No. 1 parenting educator



How much should parents push their kids?

We need to find a balance where we can inspire our children from the inside out.

Article contributed by Dr. Yvonne Sum



Parents today believe that their children need to stand out from the crowd in this highly competitive world. There is nothing wrong in wanting the best to unleash the highest potential in the next generation. If we are not careful, we can create excessive pressure as 'helicopter parents' hovering over them in so many areas: academia, sports, performing arts ... and even imposing cultural traditions. Just like in *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom* by Amy Chua.

We can also go to the other extreme and become free-range parents with our offspring dictating the boundaries of their existence. That would not work, either.

How much should we push our kids?

We need to find a balance where we can inspire our children to be motivated from the inside out. Each child is different. Read your child. Observe them and you will understand what makes them tick. Some children are more likely to thrive when they are challenged – so you can 'push' them more. Others will need more sensitivity.

Do I follow my or their wishes?

It depends. The difficult part about parenting is that different circumstances warrant different handling. Read the context. If a situation involves the child making a few mistakes to learn a skill (as they did when they learnt to walk!) then perhaps we can let them approach it their way. A Japanese proverb tells us to, 'Fall down seven get up eight'. On the other hand, a more complex decision will need more guidance and direction from the parents.

How much pressure is too much?

When it's a constant battle. When it's no longer fun. When no inner burning desire can be drawn from the child. Once more: read your child.

My daughter, Xian, had been dancing for six years. It was a shock when Xian told me she was quitting ballet. My natural instinct was to activate the 'Because I said so' reply – but I stopped myself in time to learn what had changed.

Xian confessed that she was exhausted. Besides ballet, Xian indulged in diverse extracurricular activities and was determined to continue her violin, piano, singing and gymnastics.

She assured me that she loved every minute of ballet and all the other opportunities she had been introduced to. However, she had recently found ballet classes had become a chore. She hadn't had a break in lessons since she was three and felt leaving for a period would do her good. Her ballet teacher assured me that a couple of years' break would not do Xian any harm. In fact, it may even help her motivation later.

When should we listen to our kids?

Always have an open mind. I am often surprised by the maturity in my children when I stop to listen. If they seem misdirected, by all means use respectful influencing skills to guide them. Always model collaborative engagement over a bulldozing approach!

What are the signs of pushing too much?

Simple, stressed-out children and/or stressed-out parents!

There are lots of questions to consider.

In summary, **do ...**

1. Set clear intentions and boundaries.
2. Come from a willingness to help – support *and* challenge them to be outstanding in their own right.
3. Use sensory acuity – be observant and present. Read the child and the context.
4. Communicate with care – know when to ask questions or give suggestions.
5. Inspire an inner motivation – light the fire in your kids so they are committed to what they do from within.

We don't have to continually push our kids. They will prod us lovingly to help us learn about their needs and desires. We just need to be willing to listen.

Dr. Yvonne Sum is a Sydney-based speaker, facilitator and parenting educator.
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