Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

We have spoken to the children about the need to be aware of strangers. Earlier this week a stranger (a man in a white ute with no writing on it) was being inappropriate with some local high school students.

Would you please reaffirm the absolute importance of the need for our children to only talk to the trusted adults in their lives?

Partial Absences
The Class Roll is a legal document. There are strict guidelines by which the teachers need to mark absences. We have a ridiculous number of parents who are either bringing their children to school late or collecting them from school early. The vast majority of reasons given by parents do not justify the partial absence. Consequently, there is a strong possibility that a child will be marked with an unjustified absence in the roll. When absences reach a certain threshold I am obligated to notify the relevant authorities. A rare, one-off late arrival or early leave does not concern us and is more than understandable. It is the same children who arrive late (and miss crucial literacy instructions) or leave early (and miss pivotal information, notes etc). Each year a number of our Class Rolls are subpoenaed by various courts.

Catholic Schools Week
In Week 7 we celebrate all that is good in being a Catholic school. We invite you to join us for our Catholic Schools Week Liturgy in the Church at 1.50pm on Monday 9th March. Following the liturgy at 2.40pm you are invited to join us for our Open Classrooms until home time.

Thank You Parents
Organising for your child to be at school for a short period of time last Friday required great flexibility and effort from you. We appreciate the efforts you went to. The teachers certainly learnt a great deal about how your child thinks mathematically. The MAIs were very worthwhile.

Congratulations to Our New P+F Executive
We congratulate the following office bearers who were elected at last Wednesday’s P+F AGM:
President: Shannon Elwell
Secretary: Brian Cumming
Treasurer: Julie Anderson
DPC Rep: Cathy Whitmore

Your Thoughts and Prayers
Please keep the Vassallo family in your thoughts and prayers. Isabella (Year 7) and Ryan’s grandfather passed away very recently. May your treasured memories and Our Lord’s strength bring you considerable courage during this difficult time.

Cross Country
Our school’s Cross Country is on Friday at Jenny Dixon Reserve. We thank our local Police and the Highway Patrol for helping our whole school cross Budgewoi Road early on Friday. We aim to be returning to school around Recess time. You are most welcome to join us.

Kind Regards,
Kevin Williams
Principal

Upcoming Events

- Swimming Carnival Presentation
  2.30pm
  27 February
- Our Cross Country
  27 February
- Catholic Schools Week Liturgy + Open Classrooms
  1.50pm
  Monday 9 March
- Broken Bay Swimming
  6.00pm
  Tuesday 10 March
- Year 5 in Bathurst
  Thursday/Friday
  12 + 13 March

Ruby E and Bridie M
From Our REC

Project Compassion - Caritas Australia
The 2015 Project Compassion theme is ‘Food for Life’. It throws a spotlight on global food issues and how Caritas Australia is empowering the world’s poorest people to establish sustainable food sources for life. Children are encouraged to support Project Compassion by donating money into the boxes in their classrooms, whether it be some change from the canteen or some of their pocket money. This week focuses on Eric and Margaret from Fiji who had an unprofitable farm and limited diet before training at the Tutu Rural Training Centre, supported by Caritas Australia. Now they have a successful farm, a sustainable income and food for life. They are the couple you see on the posters around the school. You might like to talk to your children about sustainable food or look at the website together [http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion/](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion/)

Reconciliation
We currently have many children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 preparing to make the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please keep these children and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Catholic Schools Week
Parents and grandparents, Catholic Schools Week is in Week 7 (March 9th-14th) and we’d like to see you! The theme for Catholic Schools Week this year is ‘Educating for today and tomorrow’. To begin our week, we will be having a whole school liturgy in the church from 1.50pm on Monday 9th. This will be followed by open classrooms, beginning at 2.40pm, where you can come to visit your child as they show you around their classroom. A coffee van will also arrive during open classrooms so that parents can purchase a delicious afternoon coffee. As you visit the school through Catholic Schools Week, you will notice grade displays around the theme ‘Educating for today and tomorrow’, with students drawing what they would like to be when they grow up. We look forward to seeing you all during Catholic Schools Week.

Emma Sellars
Religious Education Coordinator

From Our Family Liaison Officer

St Mary’s has a Parent Resource Library of books, DVD’s and fact sheets covering a wide range of topics for parents/carers to borrow.

Titles include Raising Boys, Raising Girls, Tricky Kids, Real Wired Child and many others from authors such as Steve Biddulph and Michael Carr Greg.

There are many resources covering topics as diverse as developing positivity and optimism in children, a guide to children starting school, encouraging reading, teenagers, ADHD and dealing with separation and divorce.

Thank you to St Mary’s P&F Committee who last week generously agreed to donate $250 towards new resources for the Parent Library and an additional $500 for parent workshops and programmes throughout the year.

The Parent Resource Library is out on the playground every Tuesday morning or see me any time about borrowing.

Donna Falzon
Family Liaison Officer
KidsMatter

Following on from last week and the issue of the challenges of children’s friendship, this week’s article is a positive look at Conflict Resolution.

Children won’t always have things go their way and conflict with others can arise, but how they are taught to deal with conflict at this stage of their life sets them up for future behaviour.

Learning to negotiate and being able to see things from another persons point of view (empathy) are necessary social and emotional skills everyone needs to develop positive relationships. Conflict resolution doesn’t have to result in winners and losers, havens and have nots.

The two extremes of dealing with conflict can be arguing and physical aggression or avoidance, neither of which is ideal.

What is most desirable is a happy medium where children learn to recognise their feelings in times of conflict and develop strategies to deal with their emotions and conflict in more positive ways. This not only improves their relationships with others but boosts their self confidence and happiness when they know they can deal with situations effectively.

From Our Librarian

NEW BOOKS !!!!!

Think back…. to our Book Fair 2014. Our goal was to purchase new books for each classroom library. St Mary’s order for almost 2 000 books has now been placed. Our new books should arrive any day now. Once these are processed each class, depending on the age group and cost of the books, will receive between 80 and 90 books. This will go a long way in supporting our children’s leisure reading in the classroom. It is always reassuring that here at St Mary’s we have a strong and healthy culture of reading!! We value the importance of reading that supports each person’s ability for life long learning.

From Our Office

You should have received a Photograph/Video Permission Note from your child/ren last week. It is very important that these permission notes are completed by you and returned to school ASAP. We are now using more photo’s of your children for our newsletters, school website etc and without these permission notes we are unable to publish photo’s of your children. If you didn’t receive a form you can download a copy from the school’s website. www.smtdgb.catholic.edu.au

Thank you

Lyn and Jacqui

Something We’ve Noticed

There is barely a child in the school who does not wear a hat at Recess and Lunch. Thank you for ensuring your child is sun-smart.

Piano Tuition

There are currently vacancies for piano tuition during school hours. Please contact Chris Hochkins for further details. Ph. 0414 186 044

Star Awards

Indy K
Jessica C
Eyli P
Kiara C
Halle O
Clayton B
Ryan V
Zoe J
Thomas S
Maya B
Zikye B
Ari S
Hilton M
Owen H
Obi M
Penelope F
Brae E
Sarah W
Sapphire K
Alexi M
Khalil M

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Owen H
Obi M
Penelope F
Brae E
Sarah W
Sapphire K
Alexi M
Khalil M
From Our PE Teacher

CCC Swimming – Mingara
Congratulations to our CCC Swimming Team – we are 7th on the Central Coast!!!
Great Swimming – Alexis, Maddison, Brae, Laura E, Laura N, Ella, Marea, Panea, Anna, Finlay, Maddie S, Libby, Luke, Izak, Rhys, Ted, Noah D, Zane, Brenden, Joshua, Nate, Tallin, Luka, Aaron, Noah S, Brodie, Liam, Zac

Age Champions
Congratulations to Alexis Cliff – 1st 8yrs Girls, Joshua Hawkshaw – 2nd 8yrs boys, Laura Nielson – 2nd 10yrs Girls, Maddison Davey – 2nd 8yrs Girls
Our Junior Girls Relay also came 1st overall – Laura N, Laura E, Alexis and Libby
All of these wonderful swimmers will be representing the Central Coast at the upcoming Diocesan Carnival at Mingara on the 10th March

St Mary’s Cross Country
Friday 27th February at Jenny Dixon Reserve.
9am – 11am – ORDER – 8yrs, Year 1, Kindergarten, 9yrs, 10yrs, 11yrs then 12yrs.
Children should bring water bottle, towel and fruit break.
They will be walking to Jenny Dixon and Police will Cross the children across the road.

Liz Bain
Sports Coordinator

Uniform Shop News
Our second hand clothing rack is overflowing!!!
Please come and check out small and large sizes of summer and winter, girls and boys clothing. Most items are $5. Grab a bargain.

Canteen News
The canteen still requires volunteers for Wednesday’s and Thursday’s for 12.00-2.00pm. Please leave your name with the office and Donna will contact you.
Thank you!

Parent Education
Our next Parent Education session is on Tuesday 24th March. Mrs Sellars will focus on how you can help your child at home with Maths.

Luke B and Ethan M

On Our Website
- Optional Homework Suggestions
- Canteen Roster
- School Newsletter
- Permission Notes
- Term Calendars
- Medication Policy
- Sporting Dates

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