Dear St Mary’s Catholic School Community,

Big smiles of excitement and enthusiasm have been the norm as we started off the 2016 school year. It’s great to see and it’s lovely to be a part of. Students, teachers and parents alike all enjoyed catching up and starting the year brightly and positively.

To those of you who, like me, were looking forward to hearing Mr Williams’ traditional holiday adventures on the first day back, you’ll have to wait a couple more weeks as he enjoys some well-earned sabbatical leave visiting schools in USA.

Our school is blessed with a wonderful staff who genuinely want to work in partnership with you to best assist your child’s spiritual growth, learning and wellbeing. This year on staff we welcome Miss Shanae Healy, Miss Emily Snelgrove, Miss Hayley Hughes and Mrs Kim Healy.

To the new families who have joined us, whether your child is in Kinder or an older grade, we extend a very warm welcome and we hope you have many happy interactions and experiences during your years with us. We also hope you quickly feel a sense of belonging as you get to know our culture.

During the year there will be many opportunities for you to be involved with the school and engaged in your child’s learning. We will once again offer some practical, informative Parent Workshops. The first of these will be on 16\textsuperscript{th} February and a flier will be sent home promoting and detailing this event. It is about helping your child with reading at home and is aimed at Kinder to Year 2 parents. Your attendance is highly recommended.

Please join us for our Opening School Mass if you are able to. The children always get a special kick out of seeing you there.

Parent Information Night

We will be holding an Information Night for all parents and carers on Tuesday 23\textsuperscript{rd} February. The format will be: 6.30 Kinder to Year 2 parents in classrooms, 7.00 K-6. All parents and teachers in the Church.

7.30 – 8.00 Years 3 – 6 parents in classrooms. These sessions will give you a chance to hear about the year ahead at your child’s specific year level. It’s a great chance to meet the teachers and hear everything first hand. It may also let you arrange another time to speak with a teacher in greater detail if required. Generally the children do not attend this evening.

Car Park

Our car park can be a very busy and thus, potentially dangerous place with many vehicles and many precious pedestrians. Please be extra vigilant when parking or pulling out of a parking spot. A reminder that there is no right turn out of the driveway when you exit. If picking up children at 3.15 you are required to park and walk over to meet your child/ren. No child will be permitted to leave the grounds unaccompanied. Thank you for helping us keep all our kids safe.

P&F Meeting AGM

Our P&F AGM is on Wednesday 17\textsuperscript{th} February at 7.00pm in the staff room. You are most welcome to join us. Our P&F Meetings are run efficiently and conclude by 8.15pm.

Mobile Phones

A reminder that mobile phones are not permitted at our school. If a parent believes their child requires a mobile phone please contact me to discuss the situation.

WOW!

We have been very impressed with the settled way the new Kindergarten students have started school life. They are beautifully presented and keen to learn. Equally as impressive is the leadership, maturity and responsibility being shown by the Year 6 students as they support their Kinder Buddies and set a wonderful example for all in our school. Thank you Year 6. Keep letting your light shine!

Kind Regards

Julie Baker
Acting Principal
From Our REC

Welcome to the 2016 School Year! I hope you had a relaxing and joyful Christmas and New Year Season. I am here to support families in their faith development, so if you have any questions regarding Masses, making Sacraments, connecting with the parish or anything else regarding the religious life of our school, please give me a call.

Opening School Mass
Our K-6 Opening School Mass is next Tuesday 9th February. We welcome parents, grandparents and new families to celebrate our first school mass for 2016 with us in the church. Mass begins at 9.15am.

Sacramental Program
The Sacramental Program includes children in Year 2 (Confirmation), Year 3 (Reconciliation) and Year 4 (Holy Communion), as well as children in older grades who may have previously missed one of the Sacraments. If you have any questions, please contact the school office and I can discuss your individual circumstances.

Confirmation 2016: 25th September 9.00am (Enrolment Forms home 25th July)
Reconciliation 2016: 15th March 4.00pm (Enrolment Forms home 12th Feb)

Holy Communion 2016: 29th May 9.00am (Enrolment Forms home 18th March)

Ash Wednesday
This year, Ash Wednesday falls on February 10th (Next Wednesday). The older children will be coming together for Mass while the younger children will participate in a Liturgy. Time will be confirmed this week. Parents, we invite you to both of these occasions.

Catholic Schools Week
Catholic Schools Week is Week 7 (March 7th-11th) of this term. Upcoming newsletters will detail times and dates of liturgies and open classrooms. Watch this space!

Sacred Space and Assemblies
Each class performs one Sacred Space Item and one Grade Assembly Item each year. This term, the classes who will have a Sacred Space item to share with the school at assembly time (Fortnightly Thursdays, 1.50pm) are 6 Gold, Year 5, 2 Gold, 1 Green, 4 Gold and 4 Green. Teachers will notify their class in the weeks leading up to their item. We would love for you to join us whenever possible.

Emma Sellars
Religious Education Coordinator

From Our Family Liaison Officer

Welcome back for another great year at St Mary’s. In my role as Family Liaison Officer I am available to provide support to parents/carers in times of need with family issues such as family breakdown, death in the family, sudden unemployment, etc, through either practical support or referral to appropriate service providers.

I can also assist with practical day to day issues such as getting the children organised for school, managing challenging behaviour, how to engage with your children’s learning, building resilience, etc.

Please feel free to call the office on 4396 5100 to speak with me. Otherwise, feel free to pop in to the canteen and I can make time to see you privately.

Donna Falzon
Family Liaison Officer
**KidsMatter**

St Mary’s is proud to be a KidsMatter School since 2007. For those families new to St Mary’s, KidsMatter is an Australian mental health and wellbeing initiative set in primary schools and early childhood centres.

Funded by the Australian Government and beyondblue it is a partnership between education and the health sector bringing together all of the most important people in children’s lives, particularly families.

Each week we will have links to KidsMatter articles relevant to school and family life. You can also visit the website at any time - [click here](#) where you can also register for regular email newsletters.

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**From Our Librarian**

Welcome back to our first week in the Library. It is exciting to see the enthusiasm children have in returning to school.

This term in the library Kindy will be revisiting our all-time favourite nursery rhymes. Nursery Rhymes are important in connecting children to texts they have experienced. Nursery Rhymes also help beginning readers develop one-to-one correspondence between the spoken word and written text.

Years 1 and 2 will be reading and responding to texts about family. Talk about your family members and who is who in your family over the next few weeks. ‘Cousins’ are sometimes a tricky concept for young children.

Years 3 - 6 will be examining how to work on projects and assignments using the Information Skills Process. The children are making a book mark outlining the key steps in making a project manageable as well as evaluating information sources on the web. It would be great if these could be laminated but please keep it safe and handy next to your computer at home for future reference.

*By the way have you read?.... The Fall of a Watermelon by S. Platt*

Happy reading everyone

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**From Our Office**

Welcome back!

Invoices for the 2016 school year were e-mailed to our families at the end of January. If you have any questions or you didn’t receive your invoice please contact the office.

A reminder to call the office if your child is going to be absent from school.

Office: ph. 4396 5100
E-mail: smt@dbb.catholic.edu.au

Thank you
Lyn and Jacqui

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**Something We’ve Noticed**

The ‘little things’ in our school count. One of them is our school uniform. Parents and carers, we appreciate the considerable lengths to which you have gone to ensure your child is dressed in the correct school uniform. It certainly makes a difference to our place. Thank you.

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**Piano Tuition**

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

Ph. 0414 186 044

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**Uniform Shop News**

The shop will be open every morning this week (from 8:30am – 11am).

From next week, normal opening hours resume (Monday, Wednesday, Friday mornings). Please note that if you cannot get into the shop during opening hours or if you want to avoid the queues during the extremely busy times, there are other options for purchasing uniforms:

- Send a note to school with your child
- Via text – 0402 311 749
- Arrange an appointment (ring 0402 311 749)

In stock!!! Recorders $12 each.

Reminder: a St Mary’s school bag is a compulsory item.

For any uniform enquiries please call Julie on 0402 311 749.

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**KidsMatter**

*From Our Librarian*

*From Our Office*
For Fun, Fitness, Friendship

McDonalds Tennis Academy
Ray St. Toukley
4333 3380

- Free Junior Racquet for new enrolments—$39.95 Value!
- Tini-Tots Program 5—9 years
- Tennis Australia “Hot Shots” Program
- Junior Squads: Junior Comps
- Private and Semi-private lessons
- School Holiday Camps: Social Play

You’re Gonna Love it!

Parents, we need you! You are a crucial part of your child’s education. We want to develop a genuine partnership with every St Mary’s family, allowing us to work together to ensure your child can be their very best.

Important to know:
- Free child-minding will be available at each session
- A coffee van will be available for morning workshops
- Workshops will each have a morning and evening session
- No experience is necessary - Share as little or as much as you feel comfortable with
- Workshops are great opportunities to make connections with other St Mary’s families
- These sessions are different to the sessions from previous years.

Parent Workshops
Term I 2016

Workshop 1: Reading at home with your K-2 child
- How do I read with my child at home?
- What does reading look like in the classroom?
- Should I ask questions as they read?
- What do I do if they don’t know a word?

Tuesday 16th February, 9.15am and 6.30pm.

Workshop 2: Making the Maths at Home + School Connection
- What does Maths look like in the classroom?
- How can I work with my child at home? (New 2016 activities!)
- How can I best support my child?

Thursday 10th March, 9.15am and 6.30pm.

We welcome you to join us at all Parent Workshop opportunities!

From Our PE Teacher

Saint Mary’s Swimming Carnival Monday 15th February (week 4) – we would love your help!!!!
Especially in the water with our Year 2’s and 3’s for games.

REGISTRATIONS FOR WINTER SPORTS NOW OPEN
Please go to these websites and register online for the sport your child would like to play

Rugby Union - www.futuretahs.com.au or myrugby.rugby.vom.au/myrugby/find_club
Rugby League - www.playnrl.com
AFL - Play afl.com.au
Netball - Mynetball.com.au
Soccer/Football - www.ccfootball.com.au
Tennis Hotshots - Gosford—Greg Brownlow ph. 0414 642 938

Liz Bain
Sports Coordinator

Mrs Boulton & Ellie KGold