Dear Parents

Thank you to everyone who was able to come along to the Parent Information sessions last week. These sessions were well attended and provided parents with the opportunity to meet their child’s teacher who explained important class organisation details for the year.

A large number of parents attended the first 2014 Parent Group meeting last Tuesday evening. At this meeting, the Parent Group shared the various fundraising events and activities that they will be organising for the year and encouraged all parents to support these ventures. All money raised this year will go towards purchasing much needed maths resources for the children.

New school bags and hats were on display at the Parent Group Meeting and parents overwhelmingly voted for these to be available for purchase. An order will be placed with the company and we will let parents know when the new stock arrives. There will be no change to the cost of the new bags and hats.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to share any concerns or ideas that you have. You voice is very important as we continue to make St Patrick’s a great school.

Kind regards

Jenny Webb
Principal

WEEKLY VALUE

Moving around the school in a safe manner
As we progress into the new school year we are starting to notice the re-emergence of traffic problems on Calliope Street. We ask that all parents be considerate of others and be patient. The parking situation is much better now than a number of years ago when the street would be full of train commuters. This has been eliminated by the timed parking zones.

We also ask that parents respect the 40km/h school speed zones as these are in place for the safety of all 570 children in our school. Recently we have also had a number of incidents where parents have driven through the crossings despite the STOP sign being out. Please be careful as this is where our children cross the road.

The council rangers have, and will continue to patrol Calliope Street during mornings and afternoons. The fines for breaking the law during school zone hours are quite significant.

As I said earlier, it is the safety of the children that we are most concerned about. Thank you.

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**CHOCOLATE DRIVE**

A very big THANK YOU to those families who have already sold their box of chocolates and returned the money. We encourage everyone to support this fundraiser and to sell as many chocolates as possible. If parents would like more chocolates, please contact the school office. A reminder that all unsold chocolates and money must be returned to school by the 7th March.

**NEW DRINKING BUBBLERS**

Four new bubblers have been installed at the hall at a cost of $4200. Last year, Year 6 raised $1000 which they donated as their gift to the school. This money has gone towards the installation of the bubblers and we are very grateful for their gift.

**SCHOOL BAGS**

If any parent has a St Patrick’s school bag that is in good condition and is no longer required, the second hand uniform shop would be very happy to accept the bag. The St Patrick’s schoolbag has always been a part of the school uniform policy and it is important that children purchase the bag and not any other bag that is dictated by fashion or peer pressure.

**STAFF CHANGE**

Mrs Barber (PE teacher) has decided to take study leave for the remainder of the year. We are currently interviewing for a new PE teacher and we wish Mrs Barber well with her studies.

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**CONCERN**

We have had a number of parents complain about the unsavoury language that is being used by some parents while waiting for their children to be dismissed from school. While parents using this language are speaking in Arabic, there are a number of parents (and young children) who understand Arabic and find their conversation unacceptable. As we strive to instil a culture of respect and courtesy in the children, so too, do we expect parents to model those values for all members of our St Patrick’s community.

**FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION GOAL FOR 2014
Every year all schools in the Diocese of Parramatta form goals for learning. Specific Implementation plans for Religious Education, Literacy and Numeracy are reviewed and adjusted to suit the needs of the students or to extend prior learning in each school.

This year at St Patrick’s, the Teachers will continue to strengthen the understanding of Catholic Faith and Spirituality through meaningful learning experiences so that students will know why and how to integrate their faith in their daily lives.

By using the model:

**Head** (knowledge- what we know, ideas, thoughts, scripture, Jesus)

**Heart** (who we are, what we value, our faith)

**Hands** (what we do, how we act, to live our faith)

and exploring our baptismal calling, we hope that students can fully understand and be called to action as modelled by Jesus and lead by our faith.

MASSES
Parents and friends are always welcome to celebrate Mass with the children and the parish.

- Week 6
- 9am Wednesday 5/3
- Years 3-6 Mass
- Ash Wednesday Mass

K-2 will receive the ashes on Ash Wednesday during a separate Liturgy of the Word.

FAITH IN OUR FUTURE
This year Bishop Anthony has launched the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, “Faith in Our Future.” It is a result of a large consultation process that was conducted in the Diocese and includes announcements about future directions and provides a vision and practical ideas to assist in the renewal of our Catholic life as schools and parishes. Everyone is encouraged to visit the new Pastoral Planning website on www.faithinourfuture.org.au The Pastoral Message and summary copies of the Pastoral Plan will be published in the March issue of our diocesan magazine Catholic Outlook.

FEASTS
4th March - St Casimir / Shrove Tuesday
5th March - Ash Wednesday (fast and abstinence)
7th March – Sts Perpetua and Felicity

People who work with their hands are labourers.
People who work with their hands and heads are craftsmen.
People who work with their hands, heads and hearts are artists.

God Bless,
Mrs Wardeh Khoury
On Tuesday the 18th of February students represented St Patrick’s at the Cumberland Zone Swimming Carnival at Parramatta Pools. We would like to congratulate the children on their sporting achievements, behavior and sportsmanship they portrayed on the day. We would like to also thank the parents and grandparents who came to watch and support us as well as Mrs Budini for volunteering on the day to help out at the carnival and Mrs Kady, Mrs Estephan and Mrs Jable for transporting the children to and from the carnival. It was greatly appreciated.

Mikayel Tito        Johnny Estephan
Gabriella Imad      Tara Wall
Clara El Bayssari   Paige Jable
Nicholas Azizi      Olivia Budini
Nathan Kady         Kyle Schembri
Akaysha Waihi       Ben McGregor
Natalie Awad        Jacinta Sleiman
Michael Bejjani     Anthony El Bazi
Caitlin Mouawad     Elissa El Bayssari
Alice Wall          Audra Frangi
Jude Wall           Daveda Jable
Angus Wall          Angelina Mouawad
Josephine Moujaes   Nicholas Hasham
Charlie Rose El Riachi Jayden Camilleri
Giacomo Budini

We wish the following children the best of luck as they compete at the Parramatta Diocesan Swimming Carnival on Friday 28th February at Blacktown Swimming Pool: Kyle Schembri, Ben McGregor, Jude Wall, Caitlin Mouawad, Angelina Mouawad, Alice Wall, Daveda Jable, Angus Wall and Giacomo Budini

The next event in the sporting calendar is the Athletics and Cross Country Trials at McCredie Oval for Years 3-6 and 8 Year olds in Year 2 on Week 7 Thursday 13th March. Infants will trial at school.

Help needed in the library!

Do you have 30 minutes to spare on a Tuesday or Wednesday morning?

The library needs parent helpers two mornings a week, straight after the morning bell to put returned books away ready for your children to borrow. This is a very easy job but can be time consuming with no helpers.

Please note, you must have completed the child Protection Training and signed the Volunteer Declaration Form. This has to be renewed every two years. If you have not done this you will not be able to assist in the library.

If you are able to help please send a note to Mrs Joanna Gladwell or Mrs Sandra Fogarty in the Library with your preferred day.

We would really appreciate your help.

Library Borrowing and Overdue Books

Children are encouraged to get organised this year. They will not be allowed to borrow unless they have returned their books from the previous week and they MUST have a LIBRARY BAG to borrow.

Please have a safe place (away from little hands), where your child's library bag and book can be hung up or kept. Talk to your child about having clean hands before reading the book, not having a pen or pencil near the book that may mark it, and how to be gentle with the books so that many children can continue to borrow them. Many books are being returned with rips, writing and spines broken or pages falling out where the children have bent the front and back covers too far. Any damage to books must be paid for.

Children who still have outstanding loans from last year will not be allowed to borrow this year until payment has been made or the books returned.
FROM THE PARENT GROUP COMMITTEE

This year will be another great one for the Parent Group, judging by the excellent roll-up for the Term 1 meeting in the school hall last Tuesday night.

Around 40 parents were present for the meeting, which included the child protection presentation, which is required bi-annually for anyone wishing to volunteer at St Patrick’s in activities involving the children.

Assuming that roughly the same number have current authorisation (ie expiring in 2015), that’s a very healthy pool of helpers for any school and Parents’ Group activities this year!

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During the meeting an outline of the program for the Terms 2, 3 and 4 Parent Group term meetings was presented.

These meetings will feature presentations about the Mathematics and Literacy curriculums and cyber bullying, which should interest all parents.

Maria Chivers, (Isabella, KB) was appointed as a new Fundraising committee member to replace Ada Abyad, whose family moved to Canberra at the end of 2013. Welcome aboard, Maria!

* * *

We haven’t wasted any time getting this year’s fundraising underway with our first Chocolate Drive.

It was quite a job organising all the boxes, but Kate Nasrallah and her hard-working team had most of them distributed by Friday, and the remaining boxes were sent home on Monday.

Now the hard work of consuming the contents begins!

Please return any unsold chocolates as soon as possible so that they can be distributed to people who want to sell more. All money and unsold chocolate must be returned by Friday, March 7.

MIKE JACOBSON
Secretary

OLMC Parramatta Open Day - Sunday March 2

Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta invites you to its 2014 Open Day on Sunday March 2, 2014.

Discover the College’s rich tradition and cutting edge education, enjoy a ‘comfortable cup of tea’ and join in the celebrations as we mark 125 years of Mercy Excellence at OLMC in 2014

Sunday, March 2 10am – 2.00pm. Principal’s welcome at 10.00am and 12.00 noon.

Reservations can be made by visiting www.olmc.nsw.edu.au or phone 8838 1263 to reserve your place or obtain further information.