Dear Parents, Carers, Friends

Last week I attended the Mental Health in Schools Conference in Sydney. The conference was quite amazing for its plethora of statistics on children with mental health issues and the problem of diagnoses. It was certainly an eye opener in this regard and the many researches into youth mental health. There were a few presentations that suggested some ways in which schools can alleviate some of these problems.

The arts were targeted as a medium to help lessen the impact of anxieties and distress felt by young people. Music was a winner in some phases and conditions but also could have a negative effect on the young person dependent on the lyrics, topic and the mental health of the individual. This was not surprising. On the other hand, the use of creative arts, paintings, drawings and sculpting was a great therapy for those needing an outlet for their feelings of despair and anxiety and an added way to help diagnose issues.

The World Health Organisation estimates that half of all lifetime cases of mental disorders occur before age 14; and 75% by age 24. The good news that came out of the conference was that there is some useful data that could lead to identifying children at risk in this country. This data, the AEDI – Australian Early Development Index - is a national survey completed by each child’s teacher in government and private schools entering their first year of fulltime formal schooling (age ~5 years).

The AEDI domains include: Emotional maturity - Pro-social & helping, anxious/fearful, aggressive, hyperactive and inattentive behaviours; Social competence - Overall social competence, approaches to learning, readiness to explore new things, responsibility and respect; Physical health and wellbeing - Physical readiness for school, physical independence, gross and fine motor skills; Language and cognitive skills - Basic and advanced literacy and numeracy, interest in literacy/numeratorcy, and memory; Communication and general knowledge - Proficiency in understanding and listening.

This data is merged with other routinely collected data from Perinatal data collection; Admitted patient data collection; Emergency department data collection; Register of births, deaths, and marriages; Mental health ambulatory data collection; Best Start Kindergarten Assessment; FACs Child Protection data collection; FACs Out of Home Care data collection and ROD Criminal Re-offending Data. This data is confidential but can give a good picture of possible mental health issues due to early childhood infections and hospitalisation, maternal smoking impacts and child abuse.

I was assured by the passion of many medical personnel in this area that we can begin to identify and issues early, intervene early and hopefully achieve a higher rate of alleviation of mental health disorders or even cures in some cases. There is so much more we need to do to make life better for our young people.

Whilst in Sydney I had the opportunity to spend time with my 88 year old Mother. God love her, she nearly had a cardiac arrest when she saw me as she had forgotten about my visit. This was a humbling experience to be with her after about eighteen months since my last visit. As usual she had plenty of advice for me and despite her ailing memory and fitness she was up for a few hours of chat and a trip to the coffee shop. No mean feat as she is located in the Blue Mountains and it was about six degrees outside.

Congratulations to Bruce King and all the Vanuatu helpers who staged a great night of Trivia last Friday. I am sorry I missed the event but all reports were very positive and once again the Johnnies community dug deep with help and spirit.

Good luck to all who will help on the Show Gates this weekend. Thank you especially to Tracey Langford and Meg McNaught for their organisation and to Damien Quinn for rallying the troops. Good luck next week to our 15 years boys and girl’s soccer teams as they play for a premiership title at Noosa.

Congratulations to our Readers Cup team and to Anne Maree O’Brien for another outstanding performance. They gained second place this year by one point and nearly snatched victory for a second year in a row.

This is from the executive Director:

Next week is Refugee Week a week in which many events will be held around the country to raise awareness about the issues affecting refugees and celebrate the achievements of many refugees in Australian society. The theme for the week is Restoring Hope. The Refugee Week website has a number of resources for classroom use, particularly in commemorating World Refugee Day on 20 June.

A prayer Service for World Refugee Day will be held at the cathedral of St Stephen at 6.30pm on Friday 20 June.

All are welcome to join us to pray that God's Spirit will move the hearts of all Australians, including our national leaders so that asylum seekers and refugees will be treated with dignity, compassion and justice. Supper will be provided in the Francis Rush Centre following the service.

“All guests who present themselves should be welcomed as Christ” (Rule of benedict 53.1)

Chris Gold
Principal
From the Assistant Principal

Years 9 and 10 Elective Subject Choices for Semester 2:

Draft subject allocations have been distributed to all students this week. If students are happy with those allocations, they do not have to take any further action.

If a student wishes to request a change from these allocations, they need to follow the instructions on the form and return the form to me as soon as possible.

Some subjects are already full, and we will be processing requests for changes from here on in on a “first in” basis – so it is in the best interests of all students to get these back as soon as possible.

Years 11 and 12 Assessment Blocks:

The schedules for the Year 11 and 12 Assessment Blocks have been finalised and are available on the College Website under the School Life section – Assessments and Exams.

In this section there are also the detailed instructions for all students relating to these blocks. I have also written a very detailed e-mail explaining a number of our processes to students as this is the first block for Year 11 students.

We have worked hard to accommodate a number of requests, including those based on student feedback. In doing this, we try to put a “big jigsaw puzzle” together to accommodate things such as student needs, staff requests, QSA requirements and staffing and room limitations. There are a variety of assessment types which are running during this time. In addition to this, some subjects who are not conducting assessment will be holding Tutorials and Workshops for those students to enable to completion of course requirements.

These block sessions also provide important practice opportunities for students to be exposed to examination room conditions and procedures which we model on those used by the QSA for the QCS Tests in Year 12.

It is important to remember a couple of things in particular about these blocks:

a) Students are welcome to attend school when not in assessment, but must wear school uniform and be in an allocated study room (or alternative room) under teacher supervision at all times. Students are free to leave the College after assessment is completed for the day – they do not have to wait until 2:45pm to leave.

b) Due to the length of time requested for subjects to complete assessment, it is impossible for exams not to run during break times for other classes. We work hard to minimise disruptions at these times by using the quietest rooms possible and monitoring the behaviour of other students in the playground. An exam running during this time should not be seen as having a detrimental effect on student outcomes. In fact, these placements should be seen as providing students with excellent practice for the QCS Tests which require two tests to be sat on a day. Due to QSA restrictions, the morning ones will always run over our morning tea breaks, and the afternoon ones will always start in our lunch break.

c) We also run exams in both morning and afternoon sessions. Again, these placements on their own should not be seen as being detrimental to a student’s ability to achieve their best. A further requirement of the QCS Tests is that the afternoon sessions cannot have students entering the room before 12:30pm, so there will need to run those well into the afternoon. Block exams provide the opportunity to practice the concentration required during these times.

d) All subjects are treated as “equal” when determining the placements within these blocks. On any given day, at any given time, any subject may be the most important thing on any individual student’s mind! It is important that students feel comfortable in prioritising their work to best suit their individual needs. It is a central part of our ethos in catering for every individual as best we can. No single subject or type of assessment is more important than another for every single student at the same time - we need students to feel able to choose what suits their needs, and when.

e) Students can expect to have a maximum of three activities scheduled on any single day in these blocks. No more than two of these will be formal, written assessment items. In most cases, students will not have more than two activities per day. It is important to note that all of the Senior Maths Exams held in these blocks, according to the College's program which is accredited by the QSA, are counted as a single exam. The Maths Department implements these exams by allowing a short break in between the KAPS and MAPS sections, for a number of reasons – including student well-being issues, and this is allowed for in the Assessment Block Schedules. Whilst there may often be nothing else scheduled on the same day as Maths A and B exams, particularly in Year 12 this semester, all students and parents / carers need to be aware that this should not be seen as being guaranteed or something that will always be assured of happening.

f) Any absences during assessment times do require a medical certificate. The College should be contacted BEFORE the allocated time that the assessment was due to commence where possible. Students are expected to complete the missed assessment as soon as possible after that day – this may include coming in on additional days throughout this block to complete that task.

I would remind parents and carers that should an assessment issue arise, the first point of contact should be the Class Teacher. The procedures in place then require this teacher to liaise with the Learning Coordinator before any decisions are made. Should further assistance be required, Learning Coordinators or Parents / Carers can contact me as the final step in that process to make final decisions and recommendations.

Mark O'Connor—Assistant Principal
Date Claimers:

- Wednesday, June 25, 2014 – 7pm Start - Information Evening for Year 10 students and parents / carers about the SET Planning processes for the Transition to Senior Schooling.
- Monday, July 21, 2014 – 3:15pm – 9:00pm – Parent / Teacher Interviews (students are encouraged and welcome to attend)
- Wednesday, July 23, 2014 – Wednesday, August 6, 2014 – Year 10 SET Plan Interviews

Reminders:

(a) Parents are reminded that the term dates for the Academic years of 2014 and 2015 are now available on the Brisbane Catholic Education website at: [http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au/students-parents/Pages/TermDates.aspx](http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au/students-parents/Pages/TermDates.aspx)
Please ensure that you have checked these before making any bookings as early departures and late returns can have a negative impact on student workloads and achievement. **Year 11 and 12 students will always have the bulk of their assessment due in the final two weeks of EVERY term.**

Mark O’Connor – Assistant Principal

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**Term 2 School Fees**

An important reminder:

All term 2 school fees should now be finalized or a payment plan in place.

The School Fees are our major source of funding for your children’s education. Unpaid fees impacts directly on the provision of services, programs and upgrades to facilities for your students.

We therefore ask if you have not settled your account or do not have a payment plan in place, please contact Danielle Twomey or Kim Harrison at the College urgently to make arrangements. (5441 5666)

Remember, communication is the key.

Regards

Kim Harrison
Business Manager
Trivia Night (Vanuatu fundraiser) “Remember the days in the old school yard”

What a great night it was, with the majority of those present in some sort of school uniform, food (terrific platters of donated goodies) and drink to feed the mind, prizes and questions to tease the mind and lot of laughs along the way. Firstly there was the naming of each team by the team members, some had names that did not quiet reflect the team’s ability at the end of the questions, but it was a worth the thought. Trivia questions were about everything with special rounds of questions on Movies and schools in them, May 2014 what events happened and SJC, what do you know about the school. The winning team (whose team name was something about mangoes) were thrilled (and somewhat surprised) by their 1 point victory. Well done to the team members.

The contribution made by parents, students, staff and local business to help raise funds was fantastic. Those at the night were treated to random door prizes, Mega raffle with 10 prizes, 40 silent auctions plus prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd teams on the night and a couple of who am I questions between rounds. Entertainment from the McKinney’s was a treat between rounds. The guitar raffle was also drawn on the night and won by a parent from Stella Maris who is very pleased with her win. With all prizes being donated from local parents and business’s it was fantastic to witness the support for this fund raiser.

On the night we raised $5,000. This money will be used to help out schools, kindergartens, church youth groups, communities and churches in Vanuatu. We are planning to purchase 30-40 ukuleles, 5-10 guitars, paint to be purchased in Vanuatu for a school mural and painting a church, 200-300 soccer balls plus other sporting and educational equipment that will be donated to help the youth of Vanuatu.

The students are very excited about the trip that leaves on the 19th September for 11 days. During the trip we will be involved in many social justice ventures plus enjoy the beauty of the people, sights and experiences of Vanuatu.

My Sincere Thanks to All Involved  Bruce King
Interschool Readers’ Cup Year 9 2014

Interschool Readers’ Cups may not have the media appeal and excitement of the State of Origin, but for the parents and staff in the audience on Tuesday night the nerves and excitement were palpable.

Four teams out of originally twenty went on to battle it out in the final to represent the Sunshine Coast at upcoming state titles. Up until the 3rd last question St John’s was in the lead and then only lost the lead by one point to Mountain Creek State High School, who won the competition by just one point.

Our team were gracious in defeat and I’ll let the photographs of Braden Fritz, Tigi Johnson, Tiannah Maltman and Bailey Gray capture how much our Johnnies team enjoyed the night and the experience.

Anne Maree O’Brien
UNIFORM SHOP and TEXT HIRE

PLEASE NOTE NEW OPENING HOURS

WEDNESDAY 8.00am - 3.45pm
and
THURSDAY 8.00am - 3.45pm

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