**FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

I was in attendance last week at a Principal's retreat in Dubbo conducted by Fr Michael Whelan, a Marist father. He asked the principals what we felt was one of the major changes we had seen in our teaching careers. My offering was that I thought the warmth and personality of the children was a wonderful feature of today's school culture and that they have many opportunities to display such characteristics.

Children since the dawn of time have always been warm and connecting however education in days of old did not allow children to display such personality as "one size and one opinion fits all" was often the norm. Children displaying personality and character were often deemed to be cheeky and disrespectful and were forced to feel the full force of the school law for such behaviour.

Students had to think and act and conform all in the same way. It was often the safest way for governing authorities.

In our school family I do love the fact that students from all grades are always happy to ask their teachers and fellow students about their weekend, comment on things happening in the school, praise their fellow students for their achievements and really enjoy the school environment as well as having a general chat. As well, I see the wonderful way students greet their parents and grandparents waiting for them after school. The warmth and care in these situations is on display for all to see. All of what I have mentioned begins in the home environment.

**Michael Croke**

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**NOTES OF THE WEEK**

- Science Note - Kindergarten
- Cake Stall - Yr 3 & 4
FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Student Of The Week: Congratulations to the following children who were awarded student of the week: Ryan Williams, Vi Nguyen, Tomma Tancred, Sonja Loecker, Molly Dunn, Charlotte Collins, Ryder Arden, Holley Dunn, Lachlan Newman, Alexander Hobbs, Jack Dean, Angus MacDouall, Laura Cooper, Nicholas Ryan, Lucy Stewart, Cooper Turner, Anaok Weill, Callan Arden, Zac Hazzard, Phoebe Showell & Eden Hoy.

Whole School Assembly: The next Whole School Assembly will be this Friday 29th August and will be organised by Year 3. Commencning at 12.00pm in Kenna Hall. Everyone is welcome.

Polding Representative: As reported last week Ella Robins in Year 6 represented Polding in a three day State Touch Competition in Wagga last week. Her Polding team were runners up in a very tough competition. Ella scored 12 tries over the three days and was named as the first reserve for the NSW Primary School team. This is an amazing achievement and as a school community we are very proud of Ella.

Excursions: From all reports the Year 3 excursion to Dubbo Zoo and the Year 1 excursion to the Dinosaur Museum in Bathurst were both a huge success. Excursions such as these are great learning experiences for the children. However they don’t happen without the dedication and hard work of the teachers. A lot of planning and extra work is involved in providing these opportunities for the children at McAuley.

Netball: Our Year 6 Netball team will compete in the Catholic Schools Netball Competition in Sydney next Tuesday 2nd September. We wish them and their coach Mrs Connor the best of luck.

Debating: The first round of the Year 6 Debating Competition between Catherine McAuley and St Mary’s Schools took place last week. Thank you to Mr Croke for adjudicating the two debates between the teams from McAuley. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Year 6 children to develop public speaking skills.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME: We have a large number of old single school desks under Kenna Hall. If anybody would like one they are FREE. Please contact or visit the school office if you would like to take a desk (or desks).

Personal Learning: Next Monday the executive will attend the next instalment of the Professional Learning Communities In-service in Bathurst. Tonia Flanagan will be in our school next Thursday to work with our teachers in developing the work of the Professional Learning Teams that has begun in the school.

Polding Athletics: Congratulations to the following children who will travel to Newcastle next Thursday for the Polding Athletics Carnival that will be held on Friday. Chloe Jaques, Mackenzie Innes, Liam Kennedy, Amelia Wilcox, Jack Ryan, Cara Seale & Nyibol Got. This is a fantastic achievement. Mr Gough and Mr Hudson will accompany the team as team managers. We wish them all the best of luck.

Steve Maguire

INTERESTING FACT OF THE WEEK

Three and a half Olympic swimming pools could hold all the gold ever mined in the world.
Who Do You Say I Am? In Matthew’s Gospel last week, Jesus poses the very important question to his disciples, “Who do you think I am?” It is Peter’s response “you are the Messiah” that gives Jesus the opening to identify St Peter as his successor, and the first head of our Church here on earth. Peter was not the typical person who would be expected to take on this important role. As a fisherman, he was a bit ‘rough around the edges’, and often struggled with the same human imperfections we do. But he was the perfect person to take on the role of heading our Church. Jesus is not looking for perfection in any of us, but rather a willingness to do our best in the same way Peter did.

Maybe this week we could reflect on this same question; “Who do you say I am?”

Fathers’ Day: Thank you to all who have sent in photos already for this year’s Fathers’ Day powerpoint. If you have not yet been able to send them in, there is still plenty of time, as I need them by next Thursday (4th September) at the latest. Please either email them to me or send them in on USB or as a hard copy and I will return hard copies and USB’s the same day. The children love to see photos of the special men in their lives, and this Liturgy is such a special event for the children. Email: r.petty@bth.catholic.edu.au

First Reconciliation: First Reconciliation is drawing closer! The children will be receiving this very special Sacrament on Monday 8th or Tuesday 9th of September. If you have a child in Year 2 or older who will be making their First Reconciliation, and you still need a registration form, please let me know as soon as possible. These forms need to be returned to the Parish House as soon as possible. Preparation for the Sacrament will take place in the classroom during daily Religion lessons. Please keep these children in your prayers as they prepare for this very special time in their lives.

Grade Liturgies: Congratulations to Kinder on the lovely Grade Liturgy they celebrated today. It is always special to see little children being so confident in their prayers to their loving God. Next week Year 4 will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Wednesday, 3rd September during the Celebration of the Second Rite of Reconciliation, and on Friday we will have our Fathers’ Day Liturgy commencing at 12.30pm. It is always great to have family and friends join us for our celebrations, and we look forward to seeing you at our Liturgical celebrations.

Wishing you a wonderful week, God Bless,
Robyn Petty

MUSIC & DRAMA

This Friday 29th August, the School Band and Kindergarten are performing their eisteddfod items at the Year 3 whole school assembly. Please come along and listen to the children performing their pieces.
FROM THE PRIMARY COORDINATOR

This week has once again started with lots of activities including Eisteddfod, Netball, Liturgies and a Year 3 Assembly to look forward to on Friday. Our school is always a busy place with lots of learning and activities which can make students very tired by the end of the day. This is to be expected and most students cope very well with this.

Students who are encouraged to be organised helps with school and after school activities. Being organised is also a helpful skill to have all through life. Personal organisation refers to children’s ability to manage their time, their environment and their work tasks. For some children, personal organisation comes naturally, however, many children, need assistance in this area. A structured, orderly, uncluttered environment at home and at school makes it easier for children to be organised and in control. Here are some tips to help children become better organised.

- Establishing routines takes the worry out of remembering. Homework routines, morning routines, even after school unpacking routines help children to be organised. For instance, an after school routine may include unpacking a school bag, handing school notices to a parent and eating a snack.

- Have regular homework time. Establish a regular homework time and help your child to stick to it. If no formal work has been set, then use this time for reading. This one can be tricky with out of school activities however the regular routine may be set at different times to fit around these activities.

- Have morning ‘roundup’. Remind children of the day’s events each morning so they can plan accordingly.

- There are times when so much is going on in young people’s lives that they require structure and routine to help them get organised. Gentle reminders about the tasks of the day will help all involved.

- Make use of a checklist when it all seems too much. Place a list of routine morning activities by a child’s bed (or on the refrigerator) and insist that it is checked before he/she goes to school.

- Clear away the clutter. A regular clean up of desks and work areas can help children gain control of their environment.

- Use a diary/calendar to plan ahead. Encourage your child to place homework, social and school events in a diary or calendar.

Belinda Wilson

Catherine McAuley Day is on Wednesday 17th September 2014. Please come along and help us celebrate. The day will proceed as follows:

10:00am  Mass - including presentation of Catherine McAuley Awards
11:30am  Catherine’s Concert & Drawing of the Monster Raffle
12:45pm  BBQ - $1.00 payable on the day
2:00pm  Tug of War
Year 3 has been learning about Australia.

The children have been reflecting on what it means to be an ‘Aussie’.

**It’s great to be an Aussie because:**

...we are all free to make our own choices... the school we want to go to... where to live and where we want to work.  *Laura*

...we have deserts, oceans, seas, plains, beaches, rainforests, paddocks of green grass and nice shady trees, mountains and valleys.  *Annabelle*

...we are all free to make our own choices... the school we want to go to... where to live and where we want to work.  *Jeron*

...our hospital is very good because you don’t have to drive out very far and you only have to wait for three hours, when in other countries you have to walk for three days and the doctor might not be there.  *Jessica*

...we get clean water to drink and lots of healthy food to eat.  *Sophie*

...our hospital is very good because you don’t have to drive out very far and you only have to wait for three hours, when in other countries you have to walk for three days and the doctor might not be there.  *Jaxon*

...I love my free country because it’s where I belong.  *James*

CLASS OF THE WEEK - 2C Week 7

Konnichiwa from 2C!

We are enjoying learning about Japan in HSIE. Did you know that Japan can fit into Australia approximately 10 times, but has more than 5 times the population of Australia? We are looking forward to our excursion to the Japanese Gardens in Cowra on Thursday 18th September for the Sakuri Matsuri (Cherry Blossom Festival.)

The celebration of our First Reconciliation is coming soon on 8th and 9th September. Your child would enjoy telling you a story such as The Prodigal Son or The Lost Sheep. These stories help us in our understanding of God's love and forgiveness.

Sayonara from 2C.

Mount Fuji, located on Honshu Island, is the highest mountain in Japan.

The cherry blossom (Sakura) is the national flower of Japan.

Cooper, Sophie, Hayley and Myles put the finishing touches on our display board.
BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to the following children who have birthdays this week: Tyler Bartimote, Brendan Dwyer, Emily Irwin, Sherwin Hogg, Patrick Crump, Lachlan Crump, Harry Madigan, Lewis Budworth & Matthew Torres.

TUCKSHOP

Roster—Commencing Monday 1st September to Friday 5th September, 2014

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LIBRARY

Book Week
What a great day we had last Wednesday! The children looked wonderful in their costumes and it was great to see them parade across the stage. There were so many different characters present from Hairy Maclary to The Man from Snowy River. The Tooth Fairy was also there as was Grandma Poss from Possum Magic.

A big thank you to all parents, grandparents, relatives and friends who helped the children prepare their costumes. We appreciate the time and effort put into dressing the children.

We hope you all continue to Connect to Reading!

Catherine Bishenden   Elizabeth Sergeant
Three ways to help your child’s learning at home

The literacy and numeracy skills gained in early childhood set children up for life – so what can parents do at home to help their child get the best start? Marianne Stenger reports.

A home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than almost any other factor, but despite the importance of family involvement, few parents are aware of the impact they can have.

A recent study published in the Journal of Early Childhood Research showed a connection between children’s home literacy environment and their language skills, especially when it comes to understanding the structure and rules of written language.

So what can parents do to create a home environment that encourages the development of meaningful literacy skills from an early age?

Having reading material available, whether it is owned or borrowed from the library, is directly associated with children’s achievement in reading comprehension.

One of the most obvious ways to do this, of course, is to make an effort to read to and with kids at home, but Bridie Raban, professorial research fellow at the University of Melbourne who investigates early childhood education, notes that inviting parents to read with their babies and young children may be quite challenging for some families.

Fortunately, though, there are a few other things parents can do. “Even parents who have limited levels of literacy can be supported to interact with their babies and young children,” says Raban.

Based on the research available, here are three practical things parents can do to support their child’s learning at home.

1. Talk to and interact with your child whenever possible

Raban explains that talking with kids about what they are doing, what they are going to do, and what they have been doing, can help them to develop an understanding of the type of language used in books (e.g. Once upon a time).

“Children need a lot of experience of this kind of language in preparation for literacy,” she says. “I use the acronym TALK to remind myself how to address this with families.”

T = Take time to talk, making yourself available for interactions

A = Ask questions to which you do not always know the answer

L = Listen actively

K = Know your child and the language they use. Build on this.

Other research supports this approach, with one study from Utah State University showing that parents who regularly play with their toddler impact both reading and maths scores.

Another study on the power of “Talk” shows that the quantity of words spoken to a child in the first three years of life is associated with his or her language skills, vocabulary size and even IQ later in life.

Also, children who are engaged in more conversation by their caregivers have been shown to know more colours, letters and shapes by the age of three than children who aren’t engaged in as much conversation early on in life.

2. Don’t limit your child to “baby talk”

When around kids, it can be tempting to “dumb down” the way we talk, either to ensure that they understand what we mean, or simply because we find the way they talk cute and endearing.

However, research shows that the size of a child’s vocabulary in kindergarten predicts his or her ability to learn to read, so by using only “easy” words and simplified or even made up terms around your child, you are greatly limiting their ability to expand their vocabulary.

Aside from this, making up words or changing the way they sound (saying “wuv” instead of “love,” for instance) can be confusing for a child who is just learning to speak. Don’t be afraid to use a more sophisticated vocabulary around your child – they pick things up quicker than you might expect.

If you are using a new or complicated word around your child for the first time, take a moment to give details about the word and explain what it means.

Also, rather than going along with a child’s mispronunciation of something (as cute as it may be), try to correct them in a positive way. For example, if your child were to point at an avocado and say “acado,” rather than repeating it the wrong way, you could say “Yes, you’re right! It’s an avocado.”

continued next page ..
CAKE STALL

Year 6 will be organising a Cake Stall for this Thursday 28th August.

Children will be able to buy cakes, slices or biscuits at recess and lunch time. All items will be 50 cents.

This Cake Stall is to raise funds to supplement school resources.

We are asking Year 3 and Year 4 students to do the cooking for this stall.

There will be some gluten free cakes available however, if your child has food allergies and you are concerned, please advise them not to purchase cakes at the Stall and provide them with a treat from home if you wish.

We hope all children can come along and support this fundraiser.

3. Make reading materials readily available

Research shows that having reading material available, whether it is owned or borrowed from the library, is directly associated with children’s achievement in reading comprehension.

With this in mind, it’s important to create a home environment where reading is valued. Even if you don’t always have time to sit down and read one-on-one with your kids, you can still ensure that they are able to access a wide variety of age-appropriate reading material.

For babies, board books, cloth books, and touch and feel books can introduce them to the concept of “reading” early on, while toddlers and preschoolers will enjoy storybooks and rhyming books that contain plenty of pictures.

For older kids, include a variety of fiction and nonfiction books, comic books, and even informational reading materials like cook books, how-to books, an atlas or encyclopaedia, and magazines that are related to their hobbies, such as sports, fashion or music.

You could also consider creating a room or quiet area in the home that is specifically dedicated to reading. Here you can keep all your reading materials, and also set up a cosy reading nook with a comfy sofa or bean bag, pillows and blankets, and plenty of good lighting.

Just remember that creating a literacy-rich home environment doesn’t have to cost a lot of money; the most important thing is your support and involvement, whether that means playing and interacting with your child, reading to them, or taking the time to explain and discuss new words.