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SFCC Newsletter Number 1 - 13 February 2019

Message from Mr Abernethy



Dear Parents & Friends of St Francis,

Welcome to 2019! For approximately 60% of parents and students, it's "welcome back" for the other 40% it's "welcome and thank you for joining our community". It has been a very busy but settled start to 2019. Systems were put in place to cater for the additional 300 students for this year and by and large they seemed to have worked very well. I would like to thank parents for their patience and support, adjusting to new procedures.

COLA - Covered Learning Area

Finally we have our new COLA (Covered Outdoor Learning Area). This will be the new assembly area for Junior Years students K - 4 and the area in which parents can pick up students from Years 1 - 9 each afternoon.

The Technology, Art & Science Centre is progressing quickly. The roof went on over the holidays and teams of bricklayers have been constructing internal and external walls. Currently our builders are lining internal walls.

Class Groupings Blue, Green, Red

I have been asked by several parents over recent weeks, "which class is the academically higher class?" Let me reassure parents that all K-6 classes are 'mixed ability' classes. This means that they are not grouped according to academic ability. Each class will have a mixture of academically stronger children who learn the basic curriculum quickly and need enrichment activities to deepen their understanding. Each class will have

some students who struggle to learn some aspects of the curriculum and require additional support. Research suggests that all young students benefit from having a mix of learners within a classroom. It allows for modelling of best learning and peer to peer learning which can deepen understanding. So, to answer the question: there is no top or bottom class. Kindergarten classes were grouped by teachers observing students at playgroup & at Orientation, examining the notes from student enrolment interviews and reflecting on 'Best Start' data.

The College engages in regular and routine academic assessments to provide feedback to students and parents and monitor your child's academic performance. We also keep a database on meritorious behaviour and behaviour that requires intervention. This data is used along with teacher professional dialogue each year to rearrange the class groupings for the following year and ensure a diverse mix of student abilities and personalities for each class.

Our adolescent cohorts for Year 7 - 12 remain mostly mixed ability classes. There is one high-performance class in each year group for Year 7 & 8, 2019 based on student's English and Mathematics results. Students can move in and out of the high-performance class depending on their ongoing academic performance. Again, all student results are closely monitored by the College and it is expected that all students be challenged in their learning regardless of whether they are in a mixed ability or high-performance classes. Students who make up the high-performance class however, typically learn faster and as such there is an expectation that they will develop a deeper understanding of course content. The majority of students remain in mixed ability classes which promote inclusive, engaged learning.

Homework Club

Homework Club will recommence next week on Tuesday afternoons from 2.45pm - 4.00pm. Homework Club is for Middle & Senior Years students (Years 5-9). It relies on the goodwill of teachers who volunteer to assist students if they require support to complete homework, classwork and assessments. Please note that it is not an after-school care

service. Students should only attend Homework Club if they have meaningful work they need assistance with. Parents should arrange to pick up students promptly at the end of Homework Club. Students who live within walking distance are permitted to walk home from Homework Club if they have parental permission. I thank the many teachers who have volunteered to run Homework Club. A note will go home this week with students from Years 5-9.

Independent Study

A limited number of places are also available in our College library on Wednesday afternoons from 2.45pm - 3.50pm for independent study. This is for students in Years 7-9, who wish to use the library's resources and take advantage of a quiet space to complete their work and/or study. Students using the library at this time are expected to be self-motivated and be able to study independently. These sessions are supervised by Mrs Forbutt, our SSO/Librarian. Students may borrow library resources but should not expect Mrs Forbutt to assist with the completion of their academic work. A note will go home this week with students from Years 7-9.

Car Park

The extension to our car park has worked beautifully. Carline remains a very popular way to drop off and collect students from school each day. Hundreds of students are moved through carline within 15 minutes. The extended car park has allowed us to stretch the carline each afternoon and avoid having as many cars queuing on Jardine Drive.

When using carline, please remember the following:-

- You must wait in line and move up in order. Please do not drive around cars if you see an empty space.
- Students are not permitted to go behind the car to the boot at any time. Bags must be kept with the student inside the car.
- Students must exit and enter the car on the kerb side only.
- Parents are not permitted to exit the car to assist their child at any time.
- Your school-allocated sign must be displayed on the passenger side sun visor so it is easy to read and highly visible.

The new bitumen in the car park extension has shed gravel and this was anticipated. A street sweeper has been to clean the gravel from the car park, and parents would have seen an improvement from this morning's drop off. Thank you for your patience.

Enrolments 2020

We have already received a large number of enquiries for enrolments for 2020. We will be offering enrolment packages shortly for Kindergarten – Year 10. Our College Open Day is on Saturday 9th March and all new prospective families are welcome to attend. Information on enrolment, application packages, tours of the College, food, drinks and displays occur on the day. If you have friends who are unfamiliar with the College, please ask them to set this day aside.

Parent Volunteers for Open Day

We are seeking volunteers from our current parent community to assist on Open Day. We have various jobs that parents will be able to assist with such as BBQ cooking, balloons/popcorn/fairy floss stalls.

If you are able to assist on the day between the hours of 10.00am and 2.00pm, please contact Ms Bernadette Manchester via College Reception (02) 4645 3400 by Wednesday 27 February 2019.

Exciting News

We are very pleased to announce that Mrs Katrina Borg and her husband Scott, are expecting their first child in the middle of 2019.

We are also very happy to announce that Mrs Kylie Jeymour and her husband Jey are also expecting their first child in August 2019.

This is a very exciting time and we pray for Mrs Borg, Mrs Jeymour and their families as they prepare to welcome their new little bundles of joy.

Looking forward to a very exciting and productive year.

Warm regards

Mr Simon Abernethy, College Principal

Morning and Afternoon Parent Pick up Update

MORNING and AFTERNOON PARENT PICK UP

Thank you parents/carers for your patience as we settle into new morning and afternoon routines. It has been a learning curve for us all and with the new COLA now up we've changed our procedures again to ensure the safety of all students.

Please note in the morning:

- Students from K-4 have been specifically taught where to put their bags upon arrival. *If your child arrives after the warning bell we ask that they keep their bag with them and go straight to morning lines.*
- After the warning bell sounds the students will stop and drop and the teacher on the microphone will ask ALL parents/carers to leave. This helps with some of the congestion on the playground, as well as, students focussing on routines they have been taught to get them ready for the start of each day.
- If you arrive after the warning bell we ask that you say goodbye to your child/ren at the gate and allow them to walk down to their lines. We will have a staff member assisting with this over the next week or so.

In the afternoon:

- Students from Years 1-4 will be seated in their class lines under the new COLA.
- Students from Years 5-9 will be seated towards the back of the new COLA.
- Kindergarten students will be seated in the shaded area outside their classroom for the first five minutes or until the majority of students are picked up. After

this the remaining Kindergarten students will join the rest of the College under the new COLA.

- At approximately 3.05pm any students still waiting to be picked up will be moved to the CARLINE MARQUEE.

Thanks in advance for your continued support. We ask that you please pass on this important information to any extended family, e.g. grandparents so they are aware of our procedures.

Mrs Melissa Vella, Assistant Principal, Teaching & Learning

2019 College Fees

By now you should have received your 2019 Fee Statement from the College.

It is an expectation that all fees are finalised by 28 February 2019 unless you have completed a "Diocesan School Fee Agreement" form and lodged it with our Finance Office.

This Fee Agreement Form outlines methods of payment and is an official agreement between your family and the Diocese of Wollongong that you agree to honour your commitment to pay your family school fees.

Please be advised that the College does not offer payment by Direct Debit. Payment can be made via Bpay, Cash, Cheque or Credit Card.

Families wishing to pay via Bpay are advised to use the Biller Code and Reference Number at the top right hand corner of your Fee Statement.

Please note at this stage we are unable to set up recurring credit card payments as we are unable to store credit card details. If families wish to pay via credit card, you will need to provide credit card payment details in person at the Finance Office when you would like the payment to be made.

If at any time families experience financial difficulties, please contact the Finance Office as soon as possible.

Kind regards

Mrs Elizabeth Rickard, College Finance Officer

Food Allergies and Anaphylaxis



St Francis has students with allergies and anaphylaxis. It is important that parents/carers keep the College up to date with current health information about their child.

We are an "allergy aware" school, and as such we ask that parents do not send your child to school with nuts, nut products or food labelled "may contain nuts".

When parents are providing treats for birthdays we ask that you provide safe snacks and treats to enable children with allergies to participate in the celebration.

If you choose to send your child to school with food that contains nuts, they will be directed to College Reception and asked to eat their food, wash their hands and rinse their mouth before going out to the playground.

This is not an ideal solution and we hope that parents understand the severity of Anaphylaxis - a life threatening allergic reaction - and hence not send nut products to school.

Next week the College will be raising awareness of Anaphylaxis through age-appropriate picture books and stories during Library sessions.

Please contact your child's class/pastoral teacher or College Reception if you have any questions regarding the above.

Parent Information Sessions

Thank you to all the parents/carers who attended our Parent Informations Sessions last week.

If you were unable to attend, all Middle Years and Senior Years presentations have been uploaded onto the SFCC Website (www.sfccdown.catholic.edu.au), as well as the all classes K - 8 Curriculum Overviews. These overviews have already been sent home in hard copy for families who were unable to attend.

Kindergarten's First Days at School



On Thursday 7th February Kindergarten had their first day at St Francis!

The children had a wonderful day meeting their teachers, making new friends, playing and learning.

We are looking forward to all the wonderful adventures that we have ahead of us.

Sport Report

Week 3 MISA Sport Results - 12 February 2019

MISA Boys Volleyball

SFCC vs. Clancy Catholic College

Score: 3 - 0 LOSS

An exciting first game of the season. All sets were close with the boys showing a great effort for the first game of the season.

Player of the Match: Rayaan G for a consistent effort during the game.

MISA Girls Volleyball

SFCC vs. Clancy Catholic College

Score: 2 - 1 WIN

Firstly, thank you to all girls from Year 7-9 who trialled for the team last week and made for a competitive selection trial.

This week saw an amazing first round match by the girls to start the season. There were some excellent displays of skill from the Year 8 and Year 9 girls who built on the skills they developed by playing MISA Volleyball last year.

Well done to the new students in the team from Year 7 and Year 8 who show strong promise.

Player of the Match: Maya J for awesome serving, especially to close out the first and

third set and for almost orchestrating a comeback with her dominant serving in the second set where we were behind 24-14 and ended up only losing the second set 25-21. Maya and Jaide M demonstrated tremendous leadership as the Year 9 eldest students on the team.



Thank you for your help!!!



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Thank you to all our parents/carers
who helped cover the 500 new home readers.
We had an overwhelming offer of help from many parents/
carers and your effort in covering the readers was greatly
appreciated
as they are now ready for use.
Mrs Robyn Forbutt
SSO/Librarian

SFCC OPEN DAY

Save
the
Date

ST FRANCIS CATHOLIC COLLEGE

OPEN DAY

SATURDAY 9 MARCH 2019

11.00am to 2.00pm

For prospective and current St Francis Catholic College
families

wanting to enrol for Kindergarten to Year 10 at the College for
2020,

as well as Year 7 for 2021.

Please come along and have a look at our College and collect
your Enrolment Package.

Sausage Sizzle, Drinks, Popcorn, Fairy Floss, will be available
to be purchased.

College Tours, as well as a presentation by our College
Principal will occur throughout the day.

More information to follow soon.

Upcoming Parent Information Workshops

Dear Parents/Carers

Please take note of the following upcoming information
sessions/workshops available for parents/carers.

Further information will be provided to parents in the coming
weeks.

[Tuesday 19 March \(Week 8\)](#)

Location: College Hall

K - 9 Parent Helper Induction Sessions (2 sessions - 8.45am
and then the same session repeated at 6.30pm). Parents/
carers are only required to attend one of these sessions.

For any parent/carer who is interested in being a parent helper
throughout 2019 (eg. classroom helper/assist at excursions/
assist at sporting carnivals/coach at Gala Days).

Parents interested in helping in the College in any way during
2019 must attend at least one session on this day. This
induction session must be completed annually and therefore
parents/carers who have attended previously will be required to
attend again.

[Wednesday 27 March \(Week 9\)](#)

Location: College Hall

Optional K-4 Parent Numeracy Information Night

This is an optional workshop for parents/carers who would be interested in learning more about Numeracy in K-4 and the ways in which they can assist their child/ren.

[Wednesday 3 April \(Week 10\)](#)

Location: College Hall

Compulsory Kindergarten Reading Parent Information Night

This is a compulsory meeting for Kindergarten parents, to assist them in supporting their Kindergarten children in Literacy and find out more about the English learning session at St Francis Catholic College.

[Wednesday 8 May \(Term 2, Week 2\)](#)

Location: College Hall

Optional K - 4 Parent Literacy Information Night

This is an optional workshop for parents/carers who would be interested in learning more about Literacy in K-4 and the ways in which they can assist their child/ren.

Further information will be provided regarding these meetings in the coming weeks.

Mrs Kylie Jeymour, Junior Years Leader of Learning