



Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School.

Welcome back to an exciting 2016 school year. Welcome back to all of our students from Year 1 to Year 6, and our families!

I extend a very warm welcome to the new children in grades other than Kinder, and their families.

A HUGE welcome to our 60 Kindergarten children and their families.

I would like to extend a special welcome back to our dedicated staff:

St Mary MacKillop 2016 Staff

Early Stage 1: Kindergarten Mrs Deb Aliberti (KA) and Mrs Claire Harman (KH)

Year 1: Mrs Margaret Rowan (1R) and Miss Nicole Jones (1J)

Year 2: Mrs Ashlea Milgate (2A) and Mr Darren McErlain (2M)

Year 3: Ms Connie Mulders (3M) and Ms Ros Wheaton (3W)

Year 4: Mrs Julie Brigden/Mrs Chris Laffan (4BL) and Mrs Leonie Mitchell (4M)

Year 5: Mrs Leesa Gillard (5G) and Mrs Kim Mathewson/Mrs Rachel Paine (5PM)

Year 6: Miss Maryanne McNally (6Mc) and Mrs Margaret Meehan (6M)

Leadership Team:

Principal: Mr Michael Siciliano

Assistant Principal: Mr Steve Cauchi

REC: Mrs Leesa Gillard

Stage Coordinators: Mrs Margaret Rowan - Early Stage 1/Stage 1

Mr Steve Cauchi - Stage 2

Mrs Kelly Gray - Stage 3

Teacher/Librarian: Mrs Maree Eisenhuth

Library Assistant: Mrs Marina Napoli

Learning Support: Mrs Kelly Gray, Mrs Niamh McDonald, Mrs Joanne Tadic, Mr Steve

Cauchi, Mrs Marina Napoli, Mrs Judy Inskip, Mrs Simone Breia, Miss Kristy Daines

RFF: Mrs Maree Eisenhuth and Mr Brad Carroll

Leadership Team: Mrs Rachel Paine and Mr Brad Carroll

Release:

Administration: Mrs Chris Capolupo and Mrs Nicole Brock (Term One), Mrs Judy Inskip (Fridays)

Schools Language Program: Mr Brad Carroll

Learning Technology Coordinator: Mrs Deb Aliberti

Learning Technology Trainee: Mr Jordan Greenhalgh

School Counsellor: Mrs Jeanne Appleton

Maintenance: Mr Meinardo Benitez

Our Motto-Together We Grow

As we commence 2016 I invite you to pray and reflect on the words of our school song.

TOGETHER WE GROW-Amanda McKenna

Like the tree on the hill
Planted deep –branching out into the world
Open each day to the sunshine and the rain
We are one- family
Growing strong as we learn to get along
Doing our best every step along the way.
Like Mother Mary
Together we touch people's lives
Love one another
And follow the footsteps of Christ
Together we grow
Together we grow
Doing our best- showing respect
Helping each other every day
With friends by our side –and Jesus our guide
Together we grow.

Expectations for the New Year

As we welcome back the new school it's a good time to consider what you *expect of your children*. Having expectations that are high—yet also realistic—is essential for school success. Think of a balloon. If there's no air (like no expectations), it's flat. If you put in too much air (expectations that are too high and impossible to meet), the balloon bursts. Finding the right balance of expectations will stretch children to grow without frustrating them.

Tips for primary school children:

- Help children develop predictable routines around waking up, getting ready for the day, eating nutritious meals, taking care of their bodies, going to bed at a regular time, and getting enough sleep. Children are more likely to be successful when their routines help them thrive.
- Build on your children's interests. They're more likely to meet high expectations when they're doing things they enjoy.
- Talk with your children about the goals you've set and achieved in your life. Explain how you overcame obstacles to meet your goals.
- Expect bumps along the way. Achieving high expectations is not like climbing a ladder where each step is a step up. Expect setbacks and doubts. They're all part of the process. The key is to work through the difficulties along the way.
- Encourage children to grow and develop at their own pace. Don't compare your child to other children. Some are early walkers. Some are late walkers. Both are acceptable for the individual child. Follow your child's lead.
- Watch out for pressures that you place on your child because of your preferences rather than your child's needs. For example, not all sports-passionate parents are going to have sports-passionate children.
- Have high expectations for homework and schoolwork.
- Help children break large, difficult tasks into smaller, more manageable tasks. This is called 'chunking' and can build confidence as they achieve each part.

Attendance Focus for 2016

At the Parramatta Diocesan Leaders Day we made a commitment to a collective attendance target for all students of 93% in 2016. As you would be aware, student absenteeism impacts on student achievement, wellbeing and efficiency. I invite parents and children to make this a focus in 2016.

Key Facts About School Attendance

- Attendance affects academic achievement. Every day of attendance contributes towards a child's learning and enhances academic achievement.
- Attendance has a strong relationship with student outcomes as measured by NAPLAN scores. Each percentage point increase in attendance is related to higher student outcomes by an average of 2-3 NAPLAN scale score points in numeracy, reading, spelling, writing and grammar & punctuation.
- Absence from school is associated with academic achievement in the current year as well as future years
- If children do not attend school regularly they miss out on the chance to build a good attendance habit
- Being absent for one day of school each fortnight (2 days a month) adds up to missing more than a year of learning over 10 years.
- Sporadic absences affect academic achievement as much as consecutive days
- School attendance patterns are established early in Kindergarten and Year 1

Thankyou

Sincere thanks to Mrs Whallan and the P&F team for providing and serving Morning Tea for our kindergarten parents and the wonderful parents who helped make our swimming carnival a huge success.

Reminder

I'd like to draw your attention to a number of upcoming events:

- Our First Friday assembly tomorrow commencing at 2.20pm in the hall.
- Opening School mass at St Nicolas of Myra Church Friday 19 February at 9:45am. All members of our school community are invited to this special event.
- Meet the teacher sessions on Thursday, 11 February 3:30pm-5:30pm followed by the P & F Welcome BBQ from 5.30pm—7:00pm.

Catholic Care Clothing Bin

Catholic Care social services have provided us with a clothing bin for second hand clothing, which is located between the year 4 classes and the staff car park. Parents wishing to donate second hand clothing to Catholic Care are asked to bring the bagged clothing to the school office.

Thought for the Week

"Life's most treasured and inspired moments often come unannounced" -Anonymous

Michael Siciliano

PRINCIPAL

Just a reminder that all World Youth Day raffle tickets are now due, can you please return all unsold books to our office. All entries will be drawn on Sunday, 20th March 2016.

Religious Education News

Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy: 8th December 2015 – 20th November 2016
Pope Francis has proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy to take place from 8 December 2015 until 20 November 2016. The Year of Mercy is a special time for the whole people of God to remember the gift of mercy that comes to us from the Father and to consider the manner in which we are the face of God's mercy to those we come into contact with each day.

The Year of Mercy is an opportunity to experience mercy through the sacramental life of the Church. We are called to examine our lives and to hear Jesus' call to conversion of heart. The sacrament of reconciliation and participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice give us the strength to carry out the spiritual and corporal works of mercy that are so integral to a proper understanding of mercy in the universal life of the Church.

This Jubilee Year of Mercy will be a focus for all the students and staff of St Mary MacKillop in 2016 stay tuned for more details in the KIT.



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Class Prayer Bags

Prayer is an important part of the life of a Catholic school and this year the St Mary MacKillop School community will once again embrace the concept of a class Prayer Bag. This Prayer Bag offers a link between home and school through prayer. We hope that when your child brings home this bag for the period of seven nights (Friday - Thursday, please return to school on Friday), that you will gather together as a family, and use the contents of the prayer bag to pray together. We also invite you, as a family, with your child to write a prayer in the prayer journal.

The prayer written by your child will become part of the class prayer on the Friday afternoon.

The Prayer Bag consists of:

A cloth

St Mary MacKillop Prayer card

Prayer book

Student Prayer Journal

A battery operated tea light (please ensure that this is switched off)

Prayer card: Our Father and Hail Mary (Kinder only)

Prayer card: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and Angel of God (Yrs 1-4)

Rosary Beads and how to pray the rosary prayer card (Yrs 3-6 only)

A copy of The Angelus (Yrs 3-6 only)

God is With Us - A prayer book for Families (Yrs 4-6 only)

The Prayer Bag is a very special and sacred bag. We know that you, with your child will take care of it and see that it is completely and safely returned to school each Friday to ensure every child is given the same prayerful opportunity. Thank you for joining with the St Mary MacKillop Community in prayer.



2016 Sacramental Program - Reconciliation Parent Meeting, 7pm Tues 9th Feb

The Parish based Sacramental Program will begin this year with the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance). Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will commence with a parent only session on Tuesday, 9th February at 7pm. If you wish to enrol in this program it is compulsory that at least one parent/carer attend. This meeting will be held in the St Nicholas Church. This program is for all children in Year 3 or above who have been baptised and would like to enrol in our Sacramental Program. Please note that this date was advertised in the 2015 Term 4 KIT and a note was sent home to all children in Year 3 (and those eligible in Yrs 4-6) last week. All enquires to Lyn Olander (Parish Secretary) at St Nicholas Parish House 47212509.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday 10th of February is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The Season of Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter (Sundays are not included in the count) and is a time of preparation for the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. Ash Wednesday is the day for us to take stock of our spiritual lives and we are encouraged to attend Mass on this day in order to mark the beginning of the Lenten season. As Lent begins, we should set out specific spiritual goals we would like to reach before Easter and decide how we will pursue them—for instance receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To celebrate the beginning of Lent there will be an Ash Wednesday Liturgy at 9:15am on the 10th February in the hall. All parents and family members are warmly invited to attend this special prayer time. During the liturgy the ashes, which give Ash Wednesday its name, will be distributed. The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year. While the ashes symbolize penance and contrition, they are also a reminder that God is gracious and merciful to those who call on Him with repentant hearts.

The distribution of ashes, is a tangible reminder of our own need to focus on being better people. Through acts of penance comes a change of heart – a coming back to God. Our personal Lenten journey should be marked with reflection, prayer and penance. Throughout Lent we should strive to model the actions of Christ. As the prophet Joel wrote:

'Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks – come back to me with all your heart.'



Religious Education News—Continued

Project Compassion 2016 (Social Justice Initiative)

Next week the season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which also marks the beginning of the annual Caritas Australia Project Compassion appeal. The theme for Project Compassion 2016 is “Learning more, creating change”.

As Pope Francis says “Education is an act of hope”, so this year Project Compassion celebrates the power of learning, and the many ways in which Caritas Australia is working with local partners around the world to provide vital learning and renewed hope to children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice.


Throughout Project Compassion 2016, inspiring stories from Malawi, Laos, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Cambodia and India will show how education, training and sharing knowledge can empower individual communities to transform their futures and create lasting change.

“Together we can empower the world’s poorest people with the opportunity to learn, grow and create change.” Bishop Greg O’Kelly




Next week all classes will receive a Project Compassion box to place on their prayer space in their classroom. Over the next few weeks the students will be encouraged to give generously to those less fortunate than themselves. It would be appreciated if you could support your children in putting their compassion into action this Lent by supporting the 2016 Project Compassion Appeal. You can also donate online via the website www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion.

Project Compassion, Week 1, brings you the story of Doney and her family from Malawi Sunday 14th February, the 1st week of Lent:



First Sunday
of Lent

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF
PROJECT
COMPASSION



Like many families in her remote village, Doney and her family have often gone months without enough to eat. But with the support of Caritas Australia and local partner CADECOM, the people of Doney’s community have learned to harness their strengths. Today they are building new livelihoods, improving health and growing literacy to create paths towards a better future.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2016 and help people in remote areas of Malawi harness their strengths and pave the way towards a thriving future. You can donate through School boxes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.

Opening School Mass and Year Six Leadership Induction Ceremony

St Nicholas of Myra, 9:45am Friday 19th February

Please join us for our Opening School Mass at St Nicholas of Myra Church on Friday 19th February at 9:45am.

Please note that the children will be transported to and from school to the church by bus.

At our mass we will gather as a school community to pray for God’s blessing on the school year and welcome our Kindergarten students, new students across the grades and new teachers to St Mary MacKillop Primary School. We will also induct the Year 6 students into their 2016 leadership roles.

We Look forward to seeing you as we celebrate our Catholic Faith together.

Mrs Gillard
Religious Education Coordinator

From the Assistant Principal

Student Absenteeism

Catholic Education Office Parramatta has a firm policy about student attendance at school. Student absenteeism (and partial absenteeism) can and does have an adverse effect on student learning. This year, letters will be sent home to families at various times informing you that your child's attendance has dropped below 90%. (set CEO target). This will happen regardless of whether the absence is explained or not. Unless your child is unwell, the expectation is that he/she attends school every day, no exception. Please see the attached poster, 'every day counts' with further information. These posters are also on display within the school grounds.

School Hours

Parents are reminded that the school gates are opened at 8.15am and supervision for the children commences at 8.15am. We have noticed several children waiting outside the school gate unattended before 8.15am. Please ensure that no children are left unattended outside the front of the school prior to 8.15am.

Maths Assessment Interviews (MAI)

Thank you to the parents who have brought their children to school out of school hours to sit the MAI. Every child will have completed the MAI by the end of week 4. This data serves as a valuable teaching tool to enable targeted, personalised learning for every student.

Mr Steve Cauchi
Assistant Principal

Did you know....

All our newsletters will be distributed electronically for the remainder of the year. You can keep up to date via our Facebook page www.facebook.com/MacKillopPenrith via our SkoolBag App and our school website.

Subscribe to the Online Newsletter:

A reminder to all parents that we will no longer be printing a paper copy of the newsletter.

Parents need to subscribe to receiving the newsletter online via the website.

You will need to go to www.mackillopenrith.catholic.edu.au select News & Events>Newsletter and click on Subscribe to our online newsletter, complete the form, you will then receive the newsletter each fortnight via email.

You can also view the newsletter on the website under current issue.

The screenshot shows the school's website with a navigation menu on the left (SCHOOL, PARENTS, LEARNING & TEACHING, NEWS & EVENTS, CONTACT US) and a search bar at the top. The main content area is titled 'Newsletters' and includes a description of the 'KIT (Keeping in Touch)' newsletter, which is sent every second week on Thursdays. It also features a 'Subscribe to our online newsletter' form with a checkbox for email delivery. On the right side, there are 'Related Links' (Latest News, Upcoming Events, Newsletters, Galleries, Notes From School) and an 'E-News Subscription' section with a 'Subscribe to our online newsletter (E-News)' button. Below the main content, there is a 'Current Issue' section for 'Term 3 Week 8 4 September 2014' and an 'Archive' section with links for the years 2014, 2013, 2012, and 2011. A 'Social Media' section with icons for YouTube, RSS, Twitter, and Facebook is also visible.

Swimming Carnival

The 2016 Swimming Carnival was held on Monday at Penrith Ripples and was a lot of fun! It was fantastic to see so many students having a go in the pool and swimming their hearts out. A very special thank you to our wonderful parent helpers, led by Nat Sibbald, Lee Anderton and Jacinta Selby, who gave up their day to time keep, and help with place judging. Of course a big thank you to our teachers who kept the students safe and cheering loudly throughout the day. Age champions, runner ups and the winning house colour will be announced at Friday's Assembly!

Miss McNally
Sports CoOrdinator

HAPPY NEW YEAR and WELCOME BACK

It is wonderful to see everyone back safe and sound, all grown up and ready for another wonderful year with our beautiful school. 2016 brings great things for St Mary MacKillop Primary School and it is going to be even better with everybody being part of our major event for the year.

WELCOME BBQ - THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2016 from 5:30pm at SCHOOL

Please join us for our yearly welcome BBQ taking place on THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY from 5:30pm. The sausage sizzle will be catered by the amazing Outback Steakhouse (Hicks family). There will also be raffle tickets on sale with some fun prizes. Meet our teachers, mingle with families and meet our current Parents & Friends Association. Please ensure to send back the CATERING NOTE with the relevant details back to the school by Monday, 7th February. Looking forward to seeing you all there.

SMMP FETE 2016 - SAVE THE DATE - SUNDAY, 1st May 2016

Our amazing Fete leaders Michelle Darwen, Erin Carroll and their fantastic team are working hard to bring together our major fundraiser for the year.

Currently the fete team are looking for families interested in setting up a Fete stall, for more information on the relevant paperwork please contact Michelle Darwen on michelle.darwen@outlook.com.au.

Do you own a business and wish to promote it during this huge event? Then why not donate a prize towards the Fete raffle or chocolate wheel. For more information please contact Erin Carroll on escarroll1@optusnet.com.au

Annual General Meeting (AGM)- Tuesday, 1st March 2016 @ 7PM in the School Hall.

ALL WELCOME

Come and join us for our Annual General Meeting where the next team of volunteers will be voted in for the current positions, which will be deemed open. President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraising Team x 4, Parent Representative Council x 2. At this meeting you will have the opportunity to meet the current P & F team who provide information and reports relating to special events, communications and fundraising items as well as the Principal's report. PLEASE JOIN US and become part of a dynamic team of parents.

Zooper Dooper Sales - STARTS ON FRIDAY

Zooper Doopers will be sold every Friday during recess from 1:30pm. Zooper Doopers are sold at 60c for a full size and 30c for a half size (please note: limit 2 per student). Volunteers are always appreciated for these sales, so if you are able to volunteer your time to sell Zoopers Doopers to our gorgeous students, please ensure give your name to and contact number at the office.

Thank you and God Bless.

Liz Whalen

President

on behalf of the P & F Executive Team

2016 Sport's Days

Monday - Year 1 and Year 2

Tuesday—Kindergarten

Wednesday—Year 5 and Year 6

Thursday—Year 4

Friday—Year 5

Dates for Your Diary Term 1 - 2016

<i>DAY</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>TIME</i>	<i>EVENT</i>
Friday	5 February	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly
Tuesday	9 February	7:00pm	Shrove Tuesday Reconciliation Parent Meeting
Wednesday	10 February	9:15am	Ash Wednesday 9.15am Liturgy K-6
Thursday	11 February	3:30pm-5.30pm 5:30pm-7.00pm	Meet the Teacher P & F Welcome BBQ
Friday	12 February	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly & 3M Assembly Item
Wednesday	17 February	9:00am	Stage 3 Excursion to Hyde Park Barracks Museum
Friday	19 February	TBA 2:20pm	Opening School Mass (Location and Time TBA) Whole School Assembly
Tuesday	23 February		Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival @ Glenbrook
Thursday	25 February	10:45am-11:30am	AFL to lead "Footy Frenzy"
Friday	26 February	2:20pm	AFL to join Whole School Assembly Diocesan Swimming @ Blacktown
Monday	29 February		2017 Kindergarten Enrollments Open Young Leaders Day Allphones Area
Tuesday	1 March	10:15am 7:30pm	Mr Michael Pate (Xavier College) visiting Year 6 P & F AGM Meeting
Friday	4 March	2:20pm	AFL to join Whole School Assembly
Monday	7 March	3:15pm-4:15pm	AFL Clinic
Friday	11 March	9:15am 2:20pm	Year 1 Liturgy Whole School Assembly
Monday	14 March	3:15pm-4:15pm	AFL Clinic
Tuesday	15 March	9:00am	Year 5 Graffiti Workshop
Thursday	17 March		St Patrick's Day School Cross Country
Friday	18 March	9:15am 2:20pm	Year 3 Mass Whole School Assembly
Sunday	20 March		Palm Sunday
Monday	21 March	3:15pm-4:15pm	AFL Clinic
Thursday	24 March		Holy Thursday
Friday	25 March		Good Friday
Saturday	26 March		Easter Saturday
Sunday	27 March		Easter Sunday
Monday	28 March		Easter Monday

Parents

Our school is using the Skoolbag App, you can install the app on your phone or tablet device by following these instructions:



For iPhone and iPad users:

1. Click the "App Store" icon on your Apple device.
2. Type your school name in the search, using suburb name will help.
3. You will see your school appear, click "Get" then "install".
4. The app is FREE to download.
5. When installed click "Open"
6. Select "OK" to receive push notifications, when asked.
7. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup".
8. Toggle on the Push Categories that are applicable for you by tapping the on/off switch.



For Android users:

You must first have signed up with a Google Account before installing the app.

1. Click the "Play Store" button on your Android Device
2. Click the magnifying glass icon at the top and type in your school name, using suburb name will help.
3. Click the school name when it appears in the search.
4. Click the "Install" button.
5. Click "Accept" for various permissions (please note, we do not modify any of your personal data on your device).
6. Click "Open" when installed.
7. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup".
8. Toggle on the Push Categories that are applicable for you by tapping the on/off switch.



Please Note: Some brands of Android phones need the setting in "Notification Manager" changed to "Allow" instead of "Notify" in order for the push notifications to work. The phone must also be running at least version 4 system software to run the app.

For Windows 8.1 Phone and Windows 8.1 or 10 device users:

1. Go to the Windows Store on your 8.1 Windows Phone or Windows 8.1/10 Device
2. Search for "Skoolbag" in the keyword app search
3. Install the Skoolbag app
4. Find your school either by using the keyword search or location service.
5. Click the "Pin" icon to pin the school tile to your Windows Phone home screen.
6. Click the "More" button on the bottom right of the App, then "Setup"
7. Toggle the Push Categories that are applicable to you by tapping the on/off switch.



Please Note: The Skoolbag Windows App is for 8.1 version Windows Phones, or Windows 8.1

St Nicholas Netball Club 2015 Registration

Tuesday 9th February 6-8 pm

Jamison Park Netball courts upstairs in Netball complex

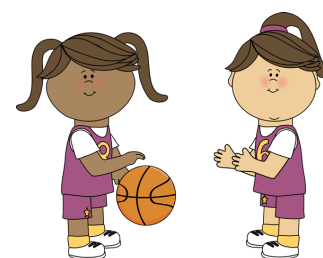
New players need Birth Certificate and two passport size photos

Information Ring 0427606605 or email stnicholasnetball@gmail.com

Check information on our website

Register online before attending the Registration Night

Registration Forms will be on website <http://stnicholasnc.nsw.netball.com.au/>



OLMC Parramatta Open Day

Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta warmly invites you to its 2016 Open Day on Sunday, February 28 from 10am – 2.00pm. Principal's welcome at 10.00am and 12.00 noon.

Discover why a Mercy Education is treasured for life.

Reservations can be made by visiting www.olmc.nsw.edu.au or phone 9683 3300 to obtain further information.



OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE PARRAMATTA