



Dear Parents and Friends of St Mary MacKillop Primary School,

### 2015 SMMK Implementation Plan Goals:

The St Mary MacKillop Implementation goals for 2015 are as follows:

- Religious Education - For all students to build a relationship with God by participating in, knowing and understanding at least 5-10 prayer forms.
- Literacy - All students improve their inferential comprehension skills evidenced in running record levels, PAT-R, NAPLAN and at least the expected growth in writing using the NSW DEC Literacy Continuum.
- Mathematics - All students to improve by at least one growth point and reach their stage appropriate growth point in all domains

### Children Setting Goals:

Exercise more. Eat a healthier diet. Get a new job. We are all familiar with some of the most common New Year's resolutions that adults set each year, but what about your kids? Have your children set any goals for the New Year? At St Mary MacKillop the teachers work with the children in setting goals for the year.

While resolutions are a way to help many adults stay on track, creating resolutions or goals is also a powerful skill that we can teach our children. Resolutions help them have a greater sense of self, of self-control, and confidence to last a lifetime.

If you feel that you cannot really change the outcome of your behaviour, you have a sense of low self-efficacy. And also, if you determine that you are in some way deficient and cannot reach your goal, you are more likely to make less resolutions and goals. If you fall into this category, you are one of those people who tend to give up rather than fight and push toward your efforts. On the other hand, if in fact, you feel your future is within your own making and that you have a sense of self-control over the completion of goals and resolutions, you are a person with high self-efficacy. This is the very situation that our children find themselves in when they attempt to set goals and resolutions. As a result, success or failure is seen as resting within the domain of his or her own control and therefore he or she is more likely to achieve his or her goals and resolutions. Thus, a high self-efficacy person can push past his or her effort, stick to the problem, and reach for his or her goals.

As we guide children towards their fullest potential, we teach them through bonding, observation, social learning and role modelling, how to reach goals and resolutions. A goal could be something as simple as improving in an area of their writing, reading or mathematics as derived from the 2015 Implementation Plan Goals above. Of course goals and resolutions must be personalised for each individual child. Goals and resolutions do differ for different stages of development and should be created appropriately for each child.

What you want to communicate while setting goals for children is a feeling of individual growth and development, rather than competition. It's about developing your personal best in learning. By doing this, your child is more likely to set a goal or resolution for him or herself if they feel that it is achievable. By teaching your child how to listen to his or her inner voice, you will find that they will set larger goals for that are achievable. This teaches your child to believe in his or her own capacity, sense of ability, self-efficacy, and self-control. Through the positive experience of goal setting, your child can learn about his or herself, by taking responsibility for their own behaviour. This will also teach your child the boundaries of their own capacity.

Guiding your child to appropriate goals and resolutions is the responsibility of teachers and parents. By knowing the child, we can create an environment that enhances their strengths and lowers the decibels of their weaknesses. Life is about choices. So teaching your child to consciously and deliberately overcome obstacles and accomplish their goals, you will enable them to deliberately make the right choices for themselves. Finally, goal setting is something we can do throughout our life. And if as a child they develop a sense of high self-efficacy, those goals will reward them throughout their entire lives.





### **Quality Catholic Schooling Survey:**

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta will be once again participating in the Quality Catholic Schooling (QCS) survey. The QCS survey provides information from students, staff and parents about our school's cultural behaviour, relationships and learning community, and assists us in our focus on continuous improvement. Between 9-20 March all staff and all year 5 & 6 students, and 60 randomly-selected parents will be asked to complete an online survey. Staff and students will complete the survey online at school. Parents will be sent home a paper survey but will also be able to complete the survey online if preferred. The survey will take about 20-30 minutes to complete.

This year we will be able to get even more information about the link between student wellbeing and learning outcomes. To do this we will need to include a student identifier in the student survey. The survey will still remain confidential and individual survey responses will not be accessible by the school or the Catholic Education Office. An independent survey consultant (Insight SRC) who manages the data collection will ensure the survey data is kept strictly confidential. Each school will receive a de-identified information report at the end of May to help them to develop strategies for further improvement. While this is a change from previous years it will definitely help us in working with all students to improve their learning. As a parent if you are randomly-selected to complete the survey, I would encourage your participation as this will help our school to identify our strengths and areas in which we can focus our improvement. If you have any questions please contact me or our survey facilitator, Mrs Gillard.

### **Catholic Schools Week: "Educating for today and tomorrow": 9-13 March 2015**

Catholic Schools Week (CSW) is an annual event and involves the communities of all 615 Catholic primary and secondary schools across NSW and the ACT. First and foremost, Catholic Schools Week is about celebration. The main aim of CSW is to raise awareness and celebrate the strength and distinctiveness of Catholic schools across the State. CSW will provide an opportunity for Catholic schools to showcase what is done every day in our schools and invite the community in to experience teaching and learning at its best. Catholic Schools Week is about strengthening relationships between all those that have a stake in our schools – students, staff, families, priests, parishioners, and members of the wider community. I would like to draw your attention to a number of upcoming events during Catholic Week by checking the 'Dates for your diary' section of this newsletter.

#### **Prayer for Catholic Schools Week**

*Dear Lord,*

*Catholic Schools Week is a special time in the year when we celebrate  
the extraordinary achievements of our Catholic schools.*

*It is a time to give thanks for the wonderful teaching and learning  
that takes place each day in every classroom.*

*We acknowledge and thank all who work in the service of Catholic education to create  
the opportunities for students that allow them to grow and thrive.*

*We thank you for the wisdom and understanding of teachers  
the enthusiasm and energy of students the leadership of school Principals and executive staff  
the skill, care and commitment of administrative and support staff the guidance of our pastors and religious  
leaders the support and partnership of parents, carers and local communities.*

*We pray that each student's learning journey be inspired by a search for your wisdom and truth.  
We pray that we never take for granted the learning opportunities that we have all been given, and that we  
use the gifts of learning wisely and responsibly.*

*We ask that we use what we have learnt to create a better world for all people, particularly the most  
vulnerable and disadvantaged.*

*We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one  
God, for ever and ever.*

*Amen*

#### **Thought for the Week**

*"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly,  
but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."*

*Maya Angelou*

Have a Blessed Week  
Michael Siciliano  
PRINCIPAL

## Religious Education News

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### The Season of Lent:

The season of Lent is a liturgical season consisting of forty days beginning at Ash Wednesday and concluding at sundown on Holy Thursday. The 40 days of Lent, which precedes Easter is based on two Biblical accounts: the 40 years of wilderness wandering by the Israelites and our Lord's 40 days in the wilderness at which point He was tempted by Satan. Lent officially ends on Holy Thursday. That is when the 'Triduum', the great three Days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday occur leading to Easter. Easter is not only a day but an Octave (eight day) celebration leading to the, Easter Season, which ends on Pentecost.

Each year the Church observes Lent where we, like Israel and our Lord, are tested. We participate in the three traditional forms of Lenten observance:

- Fasting (self denial)
- Prayer and confession
- Almsgiving (acts of kindness and mercy)

The goal of every Christian is to leave Lent a stronger and more vital person of faith than when we entered. Our Lenten journey it is the opportune time to reflect on our personal preparation for the resurrection of Christ at Easter. We ask ourselves: Are we growing in our relationship with God through regular prayer and works of love? We acknowledge that we are human and make wrong choices, but are comforted by the knowledge that God unconditionally loves us. No matter how busy you are this Lenten Season make time for HIM through your daily encounters with others.



### Project Compassion:

**Project Compassion**, Week 3, brings you the story of Karen from Australia. Choosing Food For Life: The Centacare Wilcannia-Forbes 'Manage Your Income, Manage Your Life' program (supported by Caritas Australia) is helping First Australians, like Karen, to take control of their money, and choose and prepare nutritious food to ensure a healthier future for their families. Your donation to Project Compassion 2015 helps First Australians in remote communities gain the skills to make healthier food choices, building a better future for their families.



**Project Compassion**, Week 4, brings you the story of Sarita from Nepal. Sharing Food For Life: Mother of three, Sarita, could barely grow enough food for her family on her tiny farm plot. In 2007, she joined a program, run by Caritas Nepal, that gave a community group the training and support they needed to start a fish-raising business. Thanks to their hard work, Sarita and the group now have a thriving enterprise and a life-long source of food and income. Your donation to Project Compassion 2015 helps people in rural Nepal create a life-long source of food and income to benefit entire communities.



[www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion) 1800 024 413

### 2015 Religious Education Implementation Plan:

One of our 2015 school goals will be to explore and use a variety of prayer forms to continue to develop the students, staff and parents relationship with God.

As an educational institution we are instructed by the Board of Studies to devote a certain amount of time each week to teaching each Key Learning Area (Mathematics, English, Creative Arts, Personal Development and Health, Science; and Human Society and its Environment. Alongside of that directive is that as a Catholic School we are required to teach Religious Education through the program entitled: *Sharing Our Story*.

In addition to formal Religious Education lessons the children regularly attend mass, liturgies and participate in prayer experiences. Throughout the year all the students will be explicitly taught what prayer is, the purpose of prayer and the variety of forms prayer can take. It is anticipated that through this whole school focus the students will become more aware of the power of prayer and strengthen their relationship with God.



### **The Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

Many of our students are currently preparing to receive the Sacrament of First Reconciliation. I ask that during their time of preparation, you keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

### **Catholic Schools Week:**

As part of our celebration for Catholic Schools Week (9-13 March) we will have a whole school liturgy in the Multi Purpose Centre at 9:15am on Thursday 12 March. This liturgy will be facilitated by Year 6 and all parents are warmly invited to attend this celebration of faith and learning.

### **Social Justice Initiatives:**

Throughout the school year the St Mary MacKillop community is involved in many Social Justice initiatives. These initiatives compliment the Religious Education Programs taught in each grade and aim to foster in the students a deep desire to help others less fortunate than themselves. The Social Justice activities that we will be involved in this year are:

- Project Compassion
- DWF (Diocesan Development Fund)
- St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal
- Penrith Community Kitchen
- The Mary MacKillop Institute
- Catholic Mission
- St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal

Social Justice programs allows Christians to reach out in compassion and unity to those who are most in need - it is truly living the message of Jesus.

*Mrs Leesa Gillard*

Religious Education Coordinator

### **Numeracy Workshop**

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A numeracy workshop will be held next Tuesday 10 March in the Multi Purpose Centre from 1:00pm – 3:00pm. This will be a great opportunity to understand how numeracy is taught at St Mary MacKillop and the philosophies and research underpinning classroom practice. During the two hour session, you will have the opportunity to participate in many hands-on interactive activities that your children do in the day to day numeracy block at St Mary MacKillop. We are also putting together a resource pack for you to take home to enable you to work with your children.

For catering purposes, and so that we ensure enough resources have been prepared, we require you to complete the attached slip on the flyer that was sent out yesterday and return to the school office by Monday 9 March. I am sure that you will find this a worthwhile presentation. Looking forward to seeing as many parents there as possible.

<b>McCARTHY CATHOLIC COLLEGE</b> <b>Academic and Trade Training Centre</b> <b>(TTC)</b>  <b>Enrolling now for 2016</b> <b>Open Morning:</b> Sunday 22 March 2015 <b>Time:</b> 9.00am to 11.30am  Meet the Principal, staff and students Tours of the College facilities TTC information for senior study Enrolment packages available  Enquiries: 4735 3211 Address: 75 Mackellar Street, Emu Plains Email: mccarthy@parra.catholic.edu.au	<b>Caroline Chisholm College,</b> <b>Glenmore Park</b> provides Catholic Education  for girls in Years 7 – 12  Enrolling now for 2016  Applications close 2 April 2015  For further information contact the College on 4737 5506.	<b>XAVIER COLLEGE</b>  <b>LLANDILO</b>  Open Night  Tuesday 10 March  From 5:00pm-6:30pm  For prospective families for 2016  For further information contact the college on 4777 0900
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## Sport News

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Week 5 was a very busy week for our swimmers! On Tuesday, 24 February, 29 students met Mrs Paine at Glenbrook Swimming Pool for the Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival. The day was a huge success, with all MacKillop relay teams qualifying for the Diocesan Carnival! As well as the really teams, there were several individual swimmers who achieved outstanding results on the day and had the opportunity to again represent the school and the Nepean District at the Diocesan Carnival. A big thank you to Mr Baker who brought the MacKillop shade shelter to the pool on the day.

The Diocesan Carnival was held on Friday, 27 February at Blacktown Swimming Pool. A big thank you to Mrs Paine who again supervised the representative swimmers and ensured the day ran smoothly. The day was great fun for everybody, especially Xavier X, Jarrod H and the junior boys relay team who have achieved amazing results and now move through to the NSWCPSS Swimming Trials, to be held on 20 March in Homebush.

Congratulations to all our swimmers and well done on your fantastic efforts.

## P & F News

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### **P & F Executive Team 2015:**

As you would be aware the AGM for 2015 took place on Tuesday, 3 March from 7:30pm. And as highlighted all positions of the P & F Executive Team were declared open. Upon concluding the meeting voting took place and it gives me great pleasure to announce the St Mary MacKillop P & F Executive Team for 2015 as follows:

President: Liz Whalen, Vice President: Michelle Darwen, Secretary: Jenny Inskip, Treasurer: Fiona Bryant, Fundraising Team: Wendy Attard and Cecily Ellston, PRC Rep: Rebecca Moxey and Tracey McGuinness. Thank you to all the parents that attended the meeting and we look forward to a wonderful year ahead.

### **Fundraising Teams for 2015:**

Throughout the year we organise fundraising events for our school and this is a job that can't be done by 2 people alone. Next week a form will be sent out asking for volunteers who want to help during fundraising events and become part of a nominated team for these events throughout the year. It would be wonderful to see new parents involved to establish friendships and be part of a group of people with a positive goal in mind. We appreciate any help that you can offer and even if you are part of 1 event for the year, it will make a huge difference with the workload.

### **Zooper Dooper Sales:**

Zooper Doopers sales will be taking place every Wednesday and Friday till the end of Term 1. Prices for Zooper Doopers are 60c for a full/30c for a half. Thank you to all the parent helpers, your assistance is always appreciated.

### **PRC News - 25 May 2015, 7:00pm:**

#### **Patrician Brothers College, 100 Flushcombe Rd, Blacktown**

Do you want to know more about Personalised Learning Plans and how they support students with a disability? Shane Morris, Project Leader - System Learning, Student Services, Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta will highlight why personalised plans need to be in place for students with a disability. He hopes to answer questions like:

Whether your child with a disability requires a personalised plan?

Do you want to find out more about the collaboration process and how it informs the plan?

What makes a personalised plan successful? **Contact:** Parents, Representative Council, Parramatta Diocese. **Email:** [prcparrasecretary@gmail.com](mailto:prcparrasecretary@gmail.com)

**Next school uniform sale** will take place in the last week of Term 1 (week 10). Date to be advised via Facebook and our LED sign.

God Bless

Liz Whalen - President on behalf of the P & F Executive Team



## Dates for Your Diary Term 1 - 2015

<i>DAY</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>TIME</i>	<i>EVENT</i>
Friday	6 March	9:15am 2:20pm	Year 1 Grade Liturgy Whole School Assembly & 2M Assembly Item
Monday-Friday	9-13 March		Catholic Schools Week
Tuesday	10 March	1:00pm	Numeracy Parent Workshop
Thursday	12 March	9:15am	Catholic Schools Week Liturgy in MPC
Friday	13 March	9:00am 2:20pm 3:45pm	School Cross Country Whole School Assembly & 3W Assembly Item Reconciliation Practice @ St Nicholas
Tuesday	17 March	4:00pm	First Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Wednesday	18 March	4:00pm	First Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Saturday	21 March	11:00am	First Reconciliation @ St Nicholas
Friday	20 March	9:15am 2:20pm	Year 2 Grade Liturgy NSWCPS Swimming Trials @ Homebush Whole School Assembly & 6PM Assembly Item
Monday	23 March	7:00pm	Year 6 Young Leaders Day 2016 Kindergarten Parent Information Evening
Friday	27 March	9:15 2:20pm	Year 3 Grade Liturgy Whole School Assembly & 5M Item
Monday	30 March	TBA	Easter Celebration: Stations of the Cross
Thursday	2 April		<b>Staff Development Day—Pupil Free Day</b> Holy Thursday - End of Term 1
Friday	3 April		Good Friday

## Dates for Your Diary Term 2 - 2015

<i>DAY</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>TIME</i>	<i>EVENT</i>
Monday	20 April		Term 2 Commences
Tuesday	5 May	7:00pm	Diocesan Cross Country @ Eastern Creek First Communion Parent Meeting @ St Nicholas
Tuesday	12 May	7:30pm	Year 4 Old Government House Excursion NAPLAN Years 3 & 5 P&F Executive Meeting
Wednesday	13 May		NAPLAN Years 3 & 5
Thursday	14 May		NAPLAN Years 3 & 5
Tuesday	26 May	7:30pm	School Photos—Full Winter School Uniform P&F General Meeting
<b>Friday</b>	<b>5 June</b>		<b>Staff Development Day—Pupil Free Day</b>
Monday	8 June		Queen's Birthday Long Weekend
Friday	12 June		NSWCPA & CCC Cross Country @ Eastern Creek

March 2015

**An Open Letter to all Catholic School Parents in Diocese of Parramatta**

Dear Parents and Carers

On Friday last week, Rev Fr Peter Williams (Administrator of the Diocese of Parramatta), Rev Fr Chris De Souza (Priest Responsible for Education), Greg Whitby (Executive Director of Schools), and I met with MPs and candidates from both the Labor and Coalition parties. Our aim was to ensure that both sides of politics were aware of the key issues affecting Catholic schools and families particularly:

1. To ensure future legislation did not prevent our schools maintaining their Catholic identity and ethos
2. To ensure a commitment to ongoing funding of Catholic schools (the state government contributes about 25% of all government funding to Catholic schools)
3. To seek a commitment to a coherent educational policy (pre to post school)
4. To seek a commitment to an increase in capital works funding and a decrease in local council charges to support the growth of Catholic schooling in western Sydney.

**Are you concerned that there is no guaranteed government funding to build new schools or expand and improve existing schools in western Sydney?**

At present, neither the NSW Coalition or Labor parties has made a long term commitment to fund capital works programs for new and expanding Catholic schools in western Sydney.

**The Facts**

- Across NSW Catholic schools educate 21% of the state's students, yet receive just 2% of the capital funding currently provided by the NSW Government to schools for new projects. Expressed another way, Catholic schools receive \$30 per student in capital funding from the NSW Government while government schools receive \$524 per student.
- To keep up with demand, the Diocese of Parramatta will need at least \$19.3 million in 2015-17 to build new schools and learning spaces in the north west sector to respond to growth. The Diocese will need an additional \$7.1 million to upgrade schools in Holroyd and Blacktown.
- Local Council infrastructure charges are placing an unfair burden on Catholic schools, incurring substantial additional costs.
- Over the past three years, the metropolitan-based dioceses paid \$18.5 million in levies and bonds - almost cancelling out the entire capital funding provided by the NSW Government for all Catholic schools.





## PARENTS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL Partners in learning

### The Facts (continued)

- Local council infrastructure charges for developments at Westmead have been quoted at \$464,000. This is money that could have been invested in the schools themselves e.g. the cost of nearly five teachers.

**This issue goes beyond party lines - this is about equality and fairness and our rights as parents to be supported in our choice of Catholic schooling.**

In the meeting, one MP noted he hadn't received any indication from any parent in his electorate that they needed a new Catholic school or that their school would require expansion

Catholic school parents were INSTRUMENTAL in major changes to proposed cuts to NSW state funding a couple of years ago.

**DON'T LET YOUR VOICE AS A CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENT GO UNHEARD.**

### What can you do?

Contact your school principal about inviting local MPs and Candidates to your school prior to the election.

Even if you think that your school requires no assistance at this time, it is the collective voice of Catholic school parents that can make the difference, so write or contact your local MP and candidates.

If you want to some assistance in what to say or write to your sitting MP or candidate or just want to stay in touch about proposed MP visits near you, please email: [prcparrapresident@gmail.com](mailto:prcparrapresident@gmail.com).

The election is just a few weeks away on 28 March 2015. Don't let the opportunity slip past!

I look forward to hearing from you.

*Kind Regards,*

*Selina Calleia  
President, PRC  
Parramatta Diocese*

Website: [www.prc.catholic.edu.au](http://www.prc.catholic.edu.au)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PRCParra](https://www.facebook.com/PRCParra)  
Twitter: @PRCParra

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