FROM THE ACTING PRINCIPAL - Mrs Clara Bertoncello

Dear Parents

As advertised in the previous newsletter Mr McFarlane will be retiring at the end of the year and at the moment he is enjoying a well deserved break for 7 weeks which will include some overseas travel.

The beginning of the new term provides students to reflect on what they have achieved and to improve in areas that perhaps have let them down. This can only be done if they commit themselves to improve with the help of teachers, parents, siblings and people they come in contact with. We at Simonds Catholic College encourage students to take action but ultimately the decision is up to them. The power of dedication, persistence and time plays a very important part in achieving set goals. Remember you can achieve anything you set your mind to.

Teacher/Parent Interviews last week was held from 2.00pm – 8.30pm and I feel that this system worked well for both parents and teachers. If you missed out in seeing a teacher please feel free to phone and ask how your son is progressing in his school work or arrange a time to come in and speak with the teacher.

May 25 we are celebrating Simonds Day at the St. Brigid’s Campus. Boys from the St. Mary’s Campus will be bussed to St. Brigid’s at 9.15 am and will return by 3.00pm.

The day will begin by Mass at 10.00am followed by activities, lunch will be provided by the school, followed by further activities and return to St. Mary’s. You are warmly invited to attend the Mass.

Sunday, 13 May, we celebrate Mother’s Day. The day reminds us of the love, care, obedience, respect and appreciation we should show our mothers every day of the year. For those of us fortunate to have our mothers nearby, may we show our love by our actions and our words; to those whose mothers are no longer with them, may your hearts be filled with many loving memories.

Loving God,
We thank you for the love of the mothers you have given us,
whose love is so precious that it can never be measured, whose patience seems to have no end.
May we see your loving hand behind them and guiding them.
We pray for those mothers who fear they will run out of love or time, or patience.
We ask you to bless them with your own special love.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, our brother.
Amen.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs C Bertoncello

Parents are invited to celebrate the
SIMONDS DAY MASS
at St Brigid’s VCE Campus on Friday, 25 May @ 10am
NAPLAN (National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy)

NAPLAN is an assessment tool for governments, schools and parents to understand and improve the literacy and numeracy outcomes of students. All schools across Australia complete the tests on the same days.

NAPLAN tests for Years 7 & 9 students will be held as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Before Recess</th>
<th>After Recess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 15 May</td>
<td>Language Conventions (spelling, grammar &amp; punctuation)</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 16 May</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 17 May</td>
<td>Numeracy (calculator)</td>
<td>Numeracy (non-calculator)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reports on performance in literacy and numeracy against the national average will be provided. Schools and teachers use NAPLAN data to improve teaching and learning programs in the classroom. The VCAA will forward student reports directly to schools when they are available later in the year and these will be posted home to parents.

Test Content  The content of each test is informed by the National Statements of Learning in English and Mathematics which underpin learning frameworks. Questions are either multiple-choice or require a short written response. The Writing task requires students to write a persuasive piece.

Pencils, Erasers and Calculators  Students are required to use their own writing implements for the NAPLAN tests in 2012. HB or 2B pencils can be used for any of the tests and, if desired, a blue or black pen can be used for the Writing test. An eraser is also required for each test. In addition, students are required to use their own calculator for one of the Numeracy Tests.

More information on NAPLAN can be obtained by accessing the NAPLAN website (www.naplan.edu.au). Parent Information Pamphlets for parents of students in Year 7 and 9 accompany this newsletter.

Mrs H Koutoulogenis – Director of Teaching & Learning

Mid Year Exams - Year 9 & 10

Year 9 & 10 Exams will be held over four days from Friday, 8 June to Thursday, 14 June inclusive. These will be 1 ½ hours’ duration. Monday, 11 June is the Queen’s Birthday Holiday and Friday, 15 June is a Correction and Report Writing Day and there will be NO CLASSES.

Students should already be thinking ahead to these assessments and making arrangements for a study and revision program. A Study Guide to assist with the preparation for the exams will be provided to each student before the end of May.

Arrangements for Year 9  Normal classes will operate for students in Year 9 during Periods 1-4 on exam days and exams held during Periods 5 and 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friday 8 June</th>
<th>Tuesday 12 June</th>
<th>Wednesday 13 June</th>
<th>Thursday 14 June</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arrangements for Year 10  Year 10 students will be dismissed at lunch time on each exam day, and only those classes listed below on Friday and Wednesday will take place. Students who do not do LOTE will be dismissed at recess.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period/Date</th>
<th>Friday 8 June</th>
<th>Tuesday 12 June</th>
<th>Wednesday 13 June</th>
<th>Thursday 14 June</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>P1&amp;2 classes as normal</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>P1: as normal; LOTE/spLIT</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 &amp; 4</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>LOTE (Italian or Japanese)</td>
<td>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</td>
<td>Humanities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If students need to reschedule an exam due to unforeseen circumstances, this must be arranged with the Year 9 & 10 Level Coordinator, Mr Turner.

Mrs H Koutoulogenis – Director of Teaching & Learning
**ACC Sport Update**

For the first time Simonds has entered into weekly ACC competition. This term the College will have teams competing in Soccer and Football. Last week saw our **Year 9/10 Soccer** team debut at our home ground, JJ Holland Park to take on CBC St Kilda. The boys lead by Mr. Ramos, made a slow start but piled on 5 goals in the second half to just go down 5-6 in a thriller.

**Goal Scorers**  
Kelvin Thai – 2  
David Kawreya – 1  
Kristian Kis – 1

Travelling away against Emmanuel College on Tuesday the boys succumbed to early injuries to go 3-11 in a physical battle.

**Goal Scorers**  
Kristian Kis – 2  
Daniel Slupek – 1

Next week the boys will be back home to take on St. Bede’s.

Our Year 9/10 **Football** team took on Salesian College at JJ Holland Park in their first game on Tuesday. In what was a baptism of fire, our boys could not keep up with the speed and size of the Salesian team. Special mentions go to both Regan Gilbert and Isaac Montebello for their constant pressure and tenacity for the ball.

The boys will be hoping to bounce back next week against CBC St Kilda at Elwood Park

Mr C Veal – Sports Master

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**An amendment to Newsletter No. 4 in regards to Catholic Church Insurance**

Students at Simonds are only covered during school hours not as stated in Newsletter number 4 it should read as follows:

Every day there are accidents involving children. To assist parents with costs associated with those accidents, we have **School Care Accident insurance** provided by Catholic Church Insurances Limited. The **School Care Accident** policy provides protection to all students attending our school. Students at Simonds Catholic College are covered only during **school hours**, for non-medicare medical expenses and are only payable in relation to activities such as:

- attending school
- engaging in a sporting activity
- a secondary student undertaking a work experience program
- voluntary services to a religious, charitable, educational or benevolent organization
- youth activities organised by a voluntary association such as Guides or Scouts or travelling to or from the above activities.

Cover is worldwide. Your child may have an accident so please cut out this information and keep it on your fridge or in a handy place.

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**A Volunteer Host Family**

World Education Program (WEP) is inviting you to experience another culture in your own home by becoming a volunteer host family to an international student arriving in July 2012. Students from Italy, Belgium and The Netherlands are looking forward to experiencing life in Australia, making new friends and becoming a member of an Australian family.

**Find out more**! Don’t miss out on this wonderful opportunity and contact WEP today to receive a full information pack for your family.

Chantel Woods  Inbound Exchange Administrator  
Phone: 1300 884 733  Email: wep@wep.org.au  
Online: www.wep.org.au
Helping kids with homework

For many parents homework is that time of the day when they routinely harass, hassle and harangue their child to JUST DO YOUR HOMEWORK! Here are some ideas that may help.

Homework causes more headaches for parents than it does for children. Some parents worry because their children don’t seem to do enough while others are concerned because they do too much.

But for many parents homework is that time of the day when they routinely harass, hassle and harangue their child to JUST DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

Okay, what to do?

The first step is to know the homework policy of your children’s school and understand what is expected of you as a parent. Most schools have parent interviews and information sessions at the start of the year. Next year, make sure you get a good handle on how your children’s teacher expects you to assist your child.

It is also useful to find out what your child’s teacher will do if your child doesn’t complete set tasks. Homework is basically an agreement between a teacher and a child so it should be up to the teacher to ensure the homework is completed. That means the teacher becomes ‘the bad guy’ and puts some consequence in place if the homework is not completed. Your role as a parent is to support the school if a consequence is put in place, such as completing work in recess or whatever the school deems appropriate.

Here are practical homework tips:

1. Establish homework time and stick to it each day. If children tell you they don’t have any formal homework then they can read, revise or organise their work. My feedback tells me sticking to a routine even when no formal homework is set is extremely useful and helps avoid battles.

2. Put the onus back on your children to take responsibility for their work. Ask children at the start of a homework session to state how much homework they will do. At the end of the session check it to see if it matches with their intentions as well as yours. If you are more concerned about homework than them, your children are not the ones responsible for their homework.

3. Homework is as much a time management issue as anything else. Encourage children to work reasonably quickly and efficiently. Have a set time limit, which they should stick to. There is little point slogging away once they become frustrated or tired. Give them an egg-timer or use a clock and get them to work hard for small chunks of time. A little work each night is more productive than packing it into one weekly session.

4. Help children decide the best time to do homework and then encourage them to stick to those times. Maybe on some days homework is tackled after dinner for any number of reasons. If doing homework straight after school is important to you then consider feeding children ONLY after homework is completed. Food can be a huge motivator for some children! (As mentioned in point one, a homework routine is important but the timing can vary.)

5. Establish a good working environment for students. Make sure they have a quiet, well lit, well ventilated area away from distractions. A table or desk makes a good workspace, although don’t be surprised if they spread work all over the kitchen table. Some kids hate to be stuck away in their rooms and prefer to work at the kitchen table and can do so productively. Others are easily distracted and work in short bursts. Work out what is best for YOUR child.

6. Use the motivating factors of technology. The Internet and other forms of electronic learning are quick, convenient and give access to huge amounts of information. Nevertheless, children should still know how to access information from more traditional means such as books. Check with your child’s teacher as to their specific recommendations and preferences.

7. Encourage children to get organised. Help them think ahead to plan their homework around extra-curricular activities. A weekly planner or diary will help older students get organised. Assisting children to become organised is perhaps the best way parents can help at home.

8. If you are helping with a particular task, keep your explanation simple and practical. If you become frustrated or upset and the atmosphere becomes tense – stop helping.

9. Be realistic – don’t expect to solve all homework difficulties. When in doubt send a note to your child’s teacher letting him or her know the problem. The teacher will appreciate this good communication.

10. Communicate any concerns. If you have concerns about how much or the difficulty of homework your child is set, contact the teacher and arrange a time to discuss your worries. Such discussion is the basis of a true partnership between you and your child’s teacher.

The place of homework is routinely questioned by education authorities (now is currently one of those times in Australia) but my gut reaction is that children will always have homework. The name may change and the activities may vary but it will always be homework.

Schools generally try to make sure homework is varied, interesting, engaging and purposeful for children and parents.

Parents also need to be patient with both children (if they struggle) and schools that are trying to find a balance between too little and too much.