



NEWSLETTER

No. 1 Date: 12/02/2016 Week 3 Term 1

Dear St Thomas Aquinas Families,

New Beginnings

The start of a new school year is so important as new relationships and routines are forged as well as the promise of new beginnings. Teachers are also mindful of the need to get to know each student as a unique learner as well as establishing the sense of their class as a team.

In a special way we welcome to this community our 84 new Kindergarten students and the 30 new students and their families who have joined the STA team in grades 1-6. We thank you for your trust as we commence our partnership in forming and nurturing your child. Ultimately our common goal is to help form resilient and empathetic young people who have a thirst for faith and knowledge and who have a sense of the greater good.

Our expectations for each student at STA are high. Our common work is to put aspirations into practice through our daily actions to ensure that each child sees themselves as passionate, engaged and successful learners.

One of the important influences of successful learning is consistent school attendance. As we commence the new school year we encourage all families to value regular and punctual attendance – remembering that each school day does count.

Welcome to STA

We also extend a warm welcome to the following staff who have joined our community:

- Megan Mann who will be teaching Kindergarten. Megan was formerly at St Nicholas of Myra, Penrith.
- Joan Noney who will be teaching 1N in partnership with Jeanette Noonan
- Nicole Pospichil who will be teaching 5RP in partnership with Jenny Robson
- Melinda Burness who will be teaching 1 day per week in the area of Learning Support
- Elaine Natter and Toni-Maree Costigan who will be working in supporting students in the early years.

We are grateful for the gifts and talents that each brings to the education of students in our care.

School Improvements

Over the holidays work and maintenance was carried out in learning spaces and grounds in readiness for the return of the students. All classrooms were cleaned, including the professional cleaning of carpet areas and all glass fixtures across the school. Furthermore our six Stage 3 (Year 5 & 6) classrooms were repainted and a new garden adjacent to the administration building was planted. Due to increased enrolments a new learning space has been installed to accommodate a new Stage 3 class group.

There is no doubt that positive aesthetics and cleanliness of a school make a difference to student learning and motivation. We are blessed at STA to have both a beautiful school and a unique natural environment for the children to learn in each day. Whilst this is important in assisting learning it is the relationships that count the most.

At our first two school assemblies we spoke with the students about approaching this year with optimism and being mindful of the importance of effort in both their learning and in their relationships. It is those who persevere with each of these that will achieve their best.

Until next time,

Sergio Rosato

Sergio Rosato
Principal

love one another

*new year
new beginnings*



We are called to be Ambassadors of Mercy

As well as reinforcing the need for everyone to make the most of their opportunities whilst at school, we also want to focus on the important aspects of community-building - good manners, hospitality, grooming and being mindful of safe behaviour around the school.

The Church has ordained 2016 as a Year of Mercy and a special year of Jubilee. A time to enact forgiveness, healing, joyful giving & celebration. We are all called to help make this a reality.



Ash Wednesday Liturgy

On Wednesday we began our Lenten journey for 2016 with a beautiful and meaningful liturgy. It was so gratifying to see so many parents, carers and family members in attendance. It was the first liturgy attended by our new students and we expect that many will come home and wish to talk about what they experienced at school. These are always wonderful opportunities for families to talk about faith. Often children are able to 'get' the essence of the message better than adults.

The ashes with which we were marked on Wednesday symbolise our beginning and our ending and challenge us to put into action our words as real deeds of love, faith and generosity.

In the Gospel reading of the day from Matthew, which the students helped to proclaim so reverently, Jesus said to his disciples:

"Be careful not to do good things for others just to be noticed so that others praise you. When you give something to others in need, don't boast about it to gain attention. Instead, be quiet about it. You know what you have done and God knows what you have done".

The lesson Jesus teaches us is that what is of real importance in doing all these things is ultimately that it strengthens our relationship with God. Therefore during the season of Lent our giving, praying, fasting should not be self-seeking, but rather motivated by a love of God and a love of our neighbour.

Playground Areas & Activities

Listed below are the play areas and designated activities for each of these zones. Each area is supervised by at least 1 staff member per area at 8.35am to 9.05am, recess: 11.05am - 11.35am and lunch: 1.35pm - 2.05pm. Supervising staff are visible to students as they each wear a fluorescent vest. The Assistant Principal and Principal are also regularly on the playground at these times as an extra presence.

Area 1 (Hard surface area in front of office)

- ✓ Handball
- ✓ Chess
- ✓ Chatting
- X **NO Running Ball Games**
- X **NO Chasing Games**

Area 2 (Under the Shelter)

- ✓ *Settle & Sit* area before school and on wet weather days
- ✓ *Walk & Talk* area after teachers start duty at 8.35am
- ✓ Catching & throwing ball games only at recess & lunch time
- ✓ Compulsory area for students who are temporarily without a hat

Area 3 (Picnic Tables)

- ✓ Picnic area at recess and lunchtime
- ✓ Catching and throwing ball games at recess and lunchtime
- ✓ Soft ball cricket
- X **NO ball game area before school**
- X **NO Touch Football & Soccer at any time**

Area 4 (Playing Fields)

- ✓ Touch Football & Soccer at recess & lunchtime
- ✓ Year 1 & 2 can play Touch Football or Soccer behind the main fields
- X **NO other play or walking allowed on Area 4 at any time.**

- ❖ **Walkways and Verandahs:** For safety reasons all students have been instructed to walk on verandahs and walkways around the school.

Afternoon Procedures

At 3.20pm students (K-4) are escorted to the pick-up area near the staff car park. Families are requested to wait on the right-hand side of the flagpole in order to keep the walkways clear. This is a safety issue for our students. If families need shade while they wait, there are seats under the trees near the school fence. Thank you for your cooperation in this regard.

Students catching buses sit on the appropriate bus line with students from K-2 sitting at the front in order that they can board the bus first. Teachers supervise the students getting on the buses.

Important Information for School Volunteers

Parents and other volunteers who wish to assist in school activities or be eligible to attend excursions are required to complete the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta online module via the following link:

<http://ceo-web.parra.catholic.edu.au/asp/volunteerscpmodule/index.asp>

love one another



Meet the Teacher 2016

These meetings will be held next
Wednesday 17 February, 3.30-8.00pm
and Thursday 18 February, 3.30-6.30pm.

Appointments must be made online via
<http://www.schoolinterviews.com.au>

Follow the prompts using the following:

Event Code: KHKZY

**Bookings will be open until 5.00pm,
Monday 15 February.**

Don't forget to book!

Student Awards

Congratulations to the following students, who received Merit Awards at our last School Assembly. Well done on your efforts everyone – keep up the good work!



Larissa An U	Emily Hall	Ella Laurent	Will Peake
Emanuel Borg	Lucy Hall	Melissa Lee	Kaelan Penney
Molly Boys	Zofia Hammond	Alex Lopez	Orion Pick
Anneliese Carroll	Nicholas Harrison	Aiden Machon	Olivia Prior
Luke Clunes	Amy Harvey	Ivan Mayorchak	Oliver Savage
Owen Croft	Loralei Heape-Wright	Lincoln McLoughlin	Isabelle Skofic
Amelia Crouch	Henry Hinchliff	Keyuri Naidoo	Benjamin Waters
Benjamin Giannakis	Evie Hodgins	Nicholas Neil	James Watson
Ziggy Green	Ashleigh Hurley	Sarah-Jane Noonan-Michels	Clare Williamson
Mia Grodzicki	Alexander Kirkham	Bethany Paul	Angus Young

Numeracy & Literacy Interviews

We thank all those who booked online for their children to undertake these interviews with their teachers recently. Students yet to undertake these will do so during school time over the next few weeks. These interviews enable teachers to gain valuable information about each child's conceptual understanding in these areas. This data is then used to inform specific future teaching.

Swimming Carnival

This was held last week at Glenbrook Pool for Grades 3-6. We were blessed with fine weather and a great day for our students to enjoy the activity of swimming. We thank the many families who were able to attend, and those who assisted with marshalling and time-keeping. Our gratitude also to the organising team consisting of James Costigan, Kate Mackenzie, Karen Bousfield, Robert Mullen and Deb Breytenbach for their expert work in coordinating the day. **Swimming Carnival awards will be presented at next Monday's School Assembly at 12.30pm in the hall.**

Book Club

The first Issue of Scholastic Book Club for 2016 has been given out to the students. All orders **must be placed by next Monday, 15 February**. Parents can now order online using the LOOP – a fast and convenient way to make your purchases. **Orders after the due date WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED so please make sure you send them in on time.** Please check that order forms are filled out correctly including both the child's name and class. Credit card payments must be made online first and the receipt number needs to be recorded on the order form.



Staff List 2016

School Leadership Team

Principal: Sergio Rosato **Assistant Principal:** Avril Llewellyn

Religious Education Coordinator: Joanne Toohey

Grade Reference Teachers

These staff members are responsible for supporting teachers, parents & students:

Kindergarten: Elizabeth Bamford	Year 5: Michelle Nightingale
Year 1 & 2: Shedden Duncliff	Year 6: Kate Mackenzie
Year 3 & 4: Avril Llewellyn	

Home Liaison: Sister Monica Armstrong S.G.S.

Reading Recovery: Keryne Rosato/Joanne Toohey

Teacher/Librarian: Karen Bousfield

Sport: Robert Mullen

Italian: Jenni Wurf

Music: Leigha Wills

Learning Support: Deborah Orford,
Melinda Burness

Numeracy Specialist: Kathryn Cefai

Counsellor: Jeanne Appleton

Teachers' Aides: Michelle Sadler, Paula Heil
Julie Sargent, Elaine Natter,
Toni-Maree Costigan

Class Teachers:

KB Elizabeth Bamford / Carolyn Edwards

KD Deborah Mitchell

KM Megan Mann

1C Belinda Carroll

1D Maria Dodd

1N Jeanette Noonan / Joan Noney

2C Elaine Collier

2D Shedden Duncliff

2W Kylie Williamson

3G Tanya Graham

3L Annabelle Leroy

3S Megan Strutt / Michelle Hinchliff

School Office: Lee-Anne Brown, Kathryn Wacher,
Deb Breytenbach

Finance: Deb Lawrence

4B Beth Carroll

4CH Christopher Chenoweth

4SB Bernadette Sierra / Amy Blom

5C David Conroy

5H Blanche Hortense

5N Michelle Nightingale

5RP Jennifer Robson / Nicole Pospischil

6C James Costigan

6F Virginia Fortunat

6M Kate Mackenzie

K6A Marie Gough, Alana Bell
Lisa Bartels (TA), Kerri Jones (TA)

Grounds/Maintenance: Gerry Walsh

Cleaners: Helen Hinley, Shelly Slender

New School Opal Card

Last week School Opal Cards were distributed to students at STA who were already on the School Student Transport System (SSTS) and were not required to reapply for 2016. **Parents of students entering into Kindergarten, Year 3 and students new to the school should have completed an online application and submitted it to the school.** School Opal Cards for these students will be delivered to the student's residential address shortly.

If you have not already completed an application please go to www.transportnsw.info/school-students. In the **concessions area of the website** you can complete the application; print, sign and submit the form to the school for endorsement. The application may take several weeks and the applicant's email address is required. To update student details, to report a lost, stolen or damaged School Opal Card or for further information visit the above website. **Please note:** due to the high volume of enquiries and late applications to Transport NSW across the education system the process may be quite slow.

PARISH NEWS

First Reconciliation 2016 – 2nd Parent Meeting

The **2nd Parent Meeting for First Reconciliation** will be held **next Monday, 15 February at 7.00pm** in the Church.

DIARY DATES

2015	Monday 15 February	School Band (most sessions) 12.30pm Assembly – Swimming Awards 3.40pm Leadership Meeting
	16	
TERM 1	17	School Band (5 sessions only) 12.00pm Opening School Mass in the Church 3.30 – 8.00pm Meet the Teacher
	18	3.30 – 6.30pm Meet the Teacher
Week 4	19	Mufti Day for World Youth Day (information to come)
	Monday 22 February	School Band (most sessions) 12.30pm Assembly – World Youth Day Krakow 2016 3.40pm Leadership Meeting
Week 5	23	Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival at Glenbrook Pool – selected students
	24	8.30am Staff Briefing 9.20am Parish Mass – Year 3 attending School Band (5 sessions only)
	25	8.30am Staff Prayer
	26	Diocesan Swimming Carnival – selected students Captivate Choir Rehearsal (Senior Choir)

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Springwood Uniting Kids Care – Enrol Now for 2016: Uniting Kids Care, located at 4 Lewin Street, Springwood, is a 'not for profit' long day care centre with a preschool program for 2-5 year olds. Opening hours are from 7.00am to 6.00pm and daily fee is \$80 (Childcare benefit and rebate available). Qualities include caring Christian environment, preschool education program based on the Early Years Learning Framework, Transition to School Program, individual portfolios, no payment for public holidays, nutritional freshly prepared meals provided and children in nappies welcome. For further information phone 4751 9314 or email admin@ukcspringwood.unitingchurch.org.au or see our website – www.ukcspringwood.unitingchurch.org.au.

Circle of Security Parenting Group: The relationship between children and their parents/caregivers plays a key role in promoting growth and development across all stages of their lives. This 7-week group supports parents as they learn how to be "bigger, stronger, wiser and kind" with their babies, toddlers and young children. Parents are provided with easy to understand information that will assist in the understanding of the benefits of secure attachments for children. **Held at Waratah Cottage, 27 Waratah Street, Katoomba every Monday from 15 February to 28 March 2016 from 10.00 – 12.00pm.** Childcare is available (must be booked). Cost: gold coin donation. To register phone 4782 5326.

Blue Mountains Youth Choir: New format for 2016; weekly sessions at two new venues. Involves singing technique, musicianship, sight-singing, improvisation, regular performances and workshops. Katoomba – Wednesdays 3.45-5.00pm; Springwood – Thursdays 3.45-5.00pm. Fees: \$100 per 10 week term. Contact via email to bmvc@academysingers.com.au or visit the website at <http://www.academysingers.com.au> or go to our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/bluemountainsyouthchoir>

Sent Home Recently:

- Year 6 Camp Note
- Year 6 Commemorative Shirt Note (pink)
- Opening School Mass Invitation (salmon)
- Kindergarten Class Information Notes: KB (Salmon), KD (yellow) and KM (lilac)
- Meet the Teacher notes Years 1-6 and Kindergarten (green)
- Nepean Zone Swimming Permission Note – selected students



Scan with your smartphone or tablet for more information.

www.staspringwood.catholic.edu.au