February 9, 2016

NEWSLETTER NO: 2 / TERM 1

Dear parents, students and friends of St. Brigid’s,

How quickly, we all adapt to the routines of school life once again - I am constantly in awe of children’s ability to quickly take in what’s happening around them and then adjust and respond accordingly. They have been very able to re-focus on their school activities and most importantly really immerse themselves in everything they have been offered. Well done and keep up the great work - a fantastic start to your school year.

Many thanks also to the parents who have taken on board our two key requests around safety for this early part of the year:

- To encourage entry to the classrooms via the external doors of the classroom rather than the internal entry, and
- Finding another place to park rather than Hudson’s Carpark. I know this has been challenging for some - staff included!!, But it is great that everyone is making such a conscious effort to find alternative parking.

One further area of safety that we probably all need a reminder about is our drop off zone at the side of the church. One key and important reminder for anyone using this zone is to remember that it is

- a drop off zone not a parking area, so the driver of the car should not get out of the car at any time.

FORMS, SURVEYS AND VOLUNTEERS

Last week’s newsletter contained the usual forms and notes that come with the beginning of each year, for example change of address or phone and permission for local excursions.

Additionally all families were asked to complete “The Treasure Card”, regarding the development of a new master plan for our school, and as well as a call for volunteers to assist at the Polo Tournament this Sunday 14th February.

Thank you to the 7 families who have to date volunteered some of their time or services to assist with the Polo Tournament next Sunday 14th February. It is interesting to note that this year we have a total of 86 families, so for anyone who is into statistics and percentages and so on, our volunteer rate for this event represents just 8% at this stage.

Similarly 10 families have returned their treasure cards. While we appreciate that everyone is incredibly busy getting back into routine, both of these forms are important for quite different but equally significant reasons.
We all have a responsibility to contribute actively to the life of our school; supporting each other and helping out are both some of the threads that bind us together as a community. We are not asking anyone to devote their whole day to the polo tournament, just an hour or so. If last year’s event is anything to go by it should be a great day out - there are activities for children and it really was an enjoyable day. So please think about giving just a little of your time.

Our treasure cards are another way you can contribute to the life of our school. As outlined last week, it will be through these treasure cards that we will develop our educational brief to be given to our architects who will then develop an appropriate master plan for St. Brigid’s.

Often we hear people say - “Why don’t we get the chance to have our say?” Well this is it!!! Once the master plan is developed it will be too late !! Now is the time to share your thoughts with us, don’t put it off and think there will be another time - there may not be!!

Included in this week’s newsletter are further copies of the Treasure cards and the note about the Polo Tournament - please take some time to fill them out and return them to school.

**CLASS TIMETABLES**
The teachers have now completed their timetables for this semester and details of the children’s library and sports day are outlined below. On their designated day, the children are to wear their sports uniform and bring their library bag.

- **Prep/One Anticaglia:** Sport and Library day - Wednesday.
- **Prep/One Macklin:** Sport and Library day - Monday
- **Year 2 Kerr:** Sport and Library day - Thursday
- **Year Three/Four Brennan:** Sport Day - Wednesday. Library Day - Monday.
- **Year Three/Four Robertson/Morris:** Sport Day - Wednesday. Library - Thursday
- **Year Five/Six Lafranchi:** Library Day - Monday.
- **Year Five/Six Stabek:** Sport Days - Wednesday and Friday.

**PARENT TEACHER CHATS.**
As in previous years, the classroom teachers are making themselves available for you to catch up and have a brief chat with them about your child. The intention of these chats is for you as family to share any details or information you believe is important for your teacher to know about your child. These chats will be held on:

- **Monday 15th February:** 3.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.
- **Tuesday 16th February:** 3.00 p.m - 6.00 p.m.

To book a time with your teacher please go to [www.schoolinterviews.com.au](http://www.schoolinterviews.com.au) and the Code is JBRN7. Again, if you would like some assistance to book a time, Lin is more than happy to assist.
IMPORTANT DATES:
Since last week’s newsletter we have a number of further events to add to the calendar. The Term’s calendar is now as follows:

Wednesday 10th Feb: Ash Wednesday. Mass at 11.00 a.m at St Brigid’s Rest Day for Preps.
Friday 12th Feb: Assembly 2.45 p.m.
Sunday 14th Feb: Polo Tournament
Monday 15th Feb: Parent/Teacher Chats.
Tuesday 16th Feb: Parent/Teacher Chats.
Wednesday 17th Feb: Prep Rest Day.
Thursday 18th Feb: Reconciliation Sacrament Meeting 7pm St Brigid’s
Wednesday 14th Feb: Prep Rest Day
Thursday 25th Feb: Twilight Sports and Welcome Barbeque
Tuesday 1st March: Annual General meeting for School Advisory Council 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday 2nd March Prep Rest Day
Tuesday 8th March: Program Support Group meetings.
Wednesday 9th March: Prep Rest Day
Thursday 10th March: Program Support Group meetings
Thursday 10th March: Sports Day at Masons Lane.
Monday 14th March: Public Holiday.
Tuesday 16th March: Preps attend school this day.
Thursday 17th March: St. Patrick’s Feast Day.
Opening of the year school mass - 10.30 a.m. and visit by St. Patrick’s Gordon, and St. Michael’s Springbank.

Sunday 20th March Ballan Autumn Festival
Thursday 24th March Last day of Term One.

Tomorrow marks the very early, but nonetheless beginning of the liturgical season of Lent and we will acknowledge this day by attending Mass at 11.00 a.m.

Lent lasts for six weeks. According to the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert, where he endured temptation. Lent originated as a mirroring of this, fasting for 40 days as preparation for Easter. Every Sunday was seen as a commemoration of the Sunday of Christ's resurrection and so as a feast day on which fasting was inappropriate. Accordingly, Christians fasted from Monday to Saturday (six days) during six weeks and from Wednesday to Saturday (four days) in the preceding week, thus making up the number of 40 days. Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of blessing ashes made from palm branches blessed on the previous year's Palm Sunday, and placing them on the heads of participants to the accompaniment of the words, 'Turn away from your sins, and believe in the gospel'.

2016 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM:
Children in grade three or above are able to enrol in this year’s Sacrament program which commences with the Reconciliation parent meeting on Thursday, February 18 at St Brigid’s Gathering Space commencing at 7pm. At this meeting Fr Gary Jones will explain the program which is home based. Cost of the program is $50 and enrolment forms will be available from St Brigid’s School Ballan or St Patrick’s School, Gordon. If you would like more details, please contact Mrs Therese Winter on 0417 518 187. It is compulsory for parents to attend this meeting so that their children can be enrolled in the program.
Parents are asked to bring a copy of their child’s Baptism certificate to the meeting. Children will be required to attend one of these weekend masses where they will be presented to the Parish community. Sunday, February 21 at 8.45am in Gordon or Sunday, February 28 at 10.30am in Ballan.

**FAMILY FEE ASSISTANCE SCHEME:**
Families with a current Health Care Card are able to apply for fee assistance through the Family Fee Assistance Scheme offered by the Catholic Education Diocese of Ballarat. If you would like more details, please contact the school office and bring your card.

**ST PATRICK’S COLLEGE, BALLARAT:**
- Enrolments for Year 7, 2017 close on Friday, February 12, 2016. Prospectus and Enrolment application forms are available from the college office of www.stpats.vic.edu.au
- Scholarships for St Patrick’s are also available. Saturday, February 20 at 9am.

To receive a 2017 Scholarship Package please contact the Registrar Ms Caitlin Bennett on 5331 1688 for more details.

**OFFICE HOURS:**
During Term 1 the office will be open from 8.30am to 4pm each day.

**SCHOOL HOURS:**
School commences at 8.55am and concludes at 3pm
Recess is from 10.55am to 11.15am
Lunch is from 12.50 pm to 1.30pm
Children should not be at school prior to 8.30am.
If there are exceptional circumstances, please let a staff member know

**SCHOOL BANK:**
Children can bring their Dollarmite Account Bank books each Tuesday. St Brigid’s receives a commission from the Commonwealth Bank for all deposits made through the school. Kits to open accounts are available from the school office.

**REAL FRUIT DAY:**
We encourage the children to have “real” fruit each day for morning snack. You would be very aware of the media reports about the poor nutrition in chips/biscuits and processed foods. Eating snacks other than “real” fruit is discouraged at recess time. Also, only water should be in the children’s drink bottles.

**STUDENT DETAILS:**
If any details have changed over the holidays, (ie change of address, phone numbers, emergency numbers or names) can you please advise the office. It is vital that our records are up to date. If there are any changes, please complete the tear-off slip below and return to school. Also, if your child has an allergy to bandaides / peanuts, or on Asthma medication, we need to know. A medication certificate must be completed if your child is taking any medicine.

**EXCURSION PERMISSION:**
From time to time, the children, under the supervision of their teacher, will have a “mini excursion” within the township of Ballan.

This might be a walk to the local shops, to the hall for a concert practice or a visit to the hospital or hostel. Also, the local newspaper on occasion will wish to take photographs of children in class, participating in sporting events, etc. As always, these activities are under the supervision and discretion of the teaching staff of St Brigid’s. Please complete the permission tear-off slip and return to school by Friday, February 12

**ABSENCES OF CHILDREN:**
If your child is absent for a day, the school would appreciate a phone call first thing in the morning. For any length of time, a short note is required.
SCHOOL ACCOUNTS:
Accounts will be sent home next week. Just a reminder of the fees for this school year:

- Tuition Fee: $890.00 per family
- Capital Fee: $85.00 per family
- Book/Stationery Fee: $165.00 per child
- Fundraising Levy: $120.00 per family

We would ask that the Book Stationery Fee be paid by February 26, so that we can meet our commitments to the suppliers. Please note that the school does not have EFTPOS facility.

DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT FOR SCHOOL FEES:
We are able to offer this facility for payment of school fees. If you would like a form or some more information, please complete the tear off slip below and return to school by this Friday or contact Lin at the school office. The first Direct Debit is scheduled for Friday, February 19.

SCHOOL ENTRY IMMUNIZATION STATUS:
An immunization status certificate is still required for a child’s enrolment into primary school. If you have not already provided one for the school, parents are asked to please attend to this matter immediately.

PARENTS & FRIENDS NEWS:
HOT LUNCHES:
We plan to again have hot lunch orders available for the children, but as in the past, we just cannot do this without YOUR help. If you are able to assist, then please complete the tear off slip below and return to the school office before the end of this week. Lunch orders will commence as soon as we can get enough helpers and a roster is organised. There will be notification when they are due to begin.

Again we are grateful to Gyorgyi Gorman who is willing to coordinate the ordering of food, etc but she will need help with this role. If you would like more information, please have a chat to Lin in the school office.

To the new mums, if you are able to help, then we would team you up with an “experienced” mum who can show you the ropes, so please, don’t let that stop you for putting your hand up.

I would like to assist with the Yaloak Polo Tournament on Sunday, February 14.

Name ......................... Contact Number ......................

My child/children........................ have permission to participate in “mini excursions” within the local area of St Brigid’s School for the 2016 school year.

I also give permission for my child to be photographed during a school activity with the possibility of being displayed in the local newspaper.

Signed ........................................ Date .....................

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Please list any changes that you would like to make:

Child’s Name ........................................

Address ..........................................................

Emergency Contact Name & Number ......................

Telephone – Home......................Mobile .............

Other ............................................................

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I am interested in Direct Debit for payment of School Fees. Please send me some information.

Name ........................................ Contact Number .............

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My child ......................has an allergy to bandaides Yes / No

Any allergies we need to be aware of

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I would like to receive the newsletter each week via email. My address is:

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(please print clearly)

I would like to assist with lunches on a Friday.

Name ........................................ Contact Number .............

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**MASS TIMES:** 1st Sunday of Lent

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<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>February 13</td>
<td>Springbank</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
<td>February 7</td>
<td>Bungaree</td>
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<td>Ballan</td>
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**FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT**