Dear Parents,

Across the Melbourne Archdiocese, next week we celebrate Catholic education. It is an opportunity not only to congratulate ourselves on the excellent system of which we are currently members, but also to consider all the work and effort of our forebears in establishing and developing the Catholic Education system in Victoria. Some of this was in very difficult times and very difficult circumstances.

I give thanks for all the people I have worked with, the parents who have supported the schools and the wonderful caring students with whom I have had the privilege of learning. I do believe it is how we live out our Catholic faith that creates the very special culture Catholic schools display. It is not about the statements on the wall (or computer), it is about enacting our beliefs and principles. I do work for, and hope, that all families in our school are also proud to be part of this wonderful community.

On Thursday 17th March, we celebrate Catholic Education Week at STM with an invite to all grandparents and special friends. For some families, the grandparents live nearby and they are able to visit the school; for other families, for all sorts of reasons, the grandparents are not able to attend. Therefore, we also invite a child’s special friend to come along and see the wonderful learning that is occurring.

Our visitors will start by joining us for Mass at 9:15am in the gymnasium. The children will then take their special visitors to their classroom for some activities leading up to the morning tea break at 11.30am. Grandparents and special friends are invited to morning tea in the gym. We do hope many families can join us on the day.

Parent Surveys

During this year, we will be asking families to complete 2 surveys. The first early in Term 2 is the Enhancing Catholic School Identity survey, and the second in Term 3 will be the Insight SRC survey. The data from these surveys provides important information towards our school review in 2017.

Children’s Health

There have been two reported cases of Impetigo (school sores) which is a highly contagious type of skin infection caused by the Staphylococcus or Streptococcus bacteria. The infection is characterised by inflamed blisters that pop, weep and form crusts. A child with impetigo should be kept home from school or day care until appropriate treatment has begun and the sores on exposed areas are covered with a waterproof dressing and where necessary a crepe bandage.

Several cases of Head lice have also been identified. Please ensure all children are checked regularly and treated. Periodic treatments help keep these problems at bay.

STM Playgroup

Several parents met last Monday, and the children had fun together while they chatted. As there is no one time that suits everyone, it was decided to hold playgroup on Mondays and Tuesdays on alternate weeks.

Since the end of this term is quite busy, playgroup will start at the beginning of next term on Tuesday 12th April with the second session on Monday 18th April. After that, odd weeks of term will be Tuesdays and even weeks will be Mondays. The playgroup will run from 9 - 11 am in the gym foyer, and each parent will provide food and drink for their own child.

End of Term

Term 1 finishes on Thursday 24th March at 3.30pm. Term 2 commences on Monday 11th April at 9am.

Have a wonderful week ahead.

Mrs. Pat McConvill
Principal
Deputy Principal Report

More Tips for Parents with Anxiety in Children

Teach your child to recognise how anxiety feels in their body

- Help them to identify where anxiety feels in their own body such as a jumpy tummy, feeling sick, heart racing, feeling dizzy etc. Share how anxiety feels in your body as well (to help normalise anxious feelings). Explain that this is the body’s way of letting them know there is danger so they can keep themselves safe.

- You can explain the body’s reaction like a smoke alarm going off in the house when there is fire. When we get worried an alarm system like a ‘smoke alarm’ goes off. Our bodies respond by having a racing heart, feeling a bit sick, dizzy, muscles tense up etc. This is really normal and helps to protect us.

- If children are old enough you can explain in these more scientific details: the smoke alarm is the part of the brain called the amygdala. When this is activated, this fires off the adrenal glands which then fires off the body’s response to prepare for danger – this is why we get the body reactions.

- It is important to explain that sometimes the smoke alarm goes off when it doesn’t need to. This is when we worry about something that is not dangerous to us (even though it feels like it is). Our bodies are still reacting to this danger even though it is not real. We can however calm down our bodies and stop the smoke alarm by calming ourselves down with a range of helpful strategies such as practising Mindfulness exercises.

- The pre-frontal cortex which is what we call our ‘noticing’ brain has the ability to switch off the smoke alarm (amygdala). Noticing in a particular way helps us to turn off our smoke alarm. That’s why we bring in our awareness to what is happening, rather than trying to fight what is happening or run away from it. Our awareness alone turns off the smoke alarm. If we try to problem solve by running away or fighting the response, then this will just generate thoughts and feelings which make us dwell on things and reflect on things. This just reinforces and strengthens the response. Just by noticing our body’s reaction, helps this whole process to switch off without ‘trying’ to switch things off as it uses a different part of the brain.

- Link this body recognition with using calming strategies so children can see the link between anxious thoughts and physical symptoms and that they have control to calm their body and also their mind when anxious.

- After using calming strategies or exercise, discuss how they feel in their body and see if they notice a difference before and after using the strategies. This helps them to see the value in using the calming techniques and empowers them to have control of their mind and body when anxious. It teaches them that anxiety can lessen by managing it themselves.

News from our Year 6 Sustainability Leaders.

Earth Hour - This year Earth Hour will celebrate the places we love that make our outdoor lifestyle and Aussie way of life so great. Our beaches, rivers, reefs, snow-capped mountains, farmland and national parks uniquely distinguish Australia as the “lucky country”. You can become part of the movement and start your action on climate change by switching your lights off on Saturday 19th March 8.30-9.30pm. Our school will be promoting this action on Thursday 17th March to highlight how we need to value our environment and take action to preserve the beautiful spaces that surround us. 

Clean Up Australia Day - A great clean up day at S.T.M. is planned for tomorrow, Thursday 11th March at lunchtime. We will help to have our school looking tidy and rubbish free. Yippee!

Nude Food - Thank you for helping our school to reduce the waste by having yummy unpackaged items. Well done!! Please note that all waste such as plastic wrappings etc are to go home.

Bottled water...Did you know?

7 litres of water + 1 1 litre of oil to produce 1 litre of bottled water

In Australia, the average cost of a litre of bottled water in Australia is $2.83

Tap water is 0.001¢

HEEEEEELLPPP!!! From our Year 6 Art Leaders.

Have you any balls of wool or knitting needles that you don’t use anymore? The Art Leaders at S.T.M. would appreciate any donations of wool and needles as we are setting up some art sessions that require such items. In these sessions we will be making mobiles and teaching others to knit so we can brighten up our school. Please leave any of these items in the box provided in the office area. Thank you from the 2016 Art Leaders.
Dear Parents,

Since the “My Classes” page on our website is no longer, I have been working on a new “Google site” that has the facility to give students access from any terminal tablet or iPad, at school or at home. The site gives the students access to activities and links to assist or reinforce their learning.

The “Italiano” site will be regularly modified and updated to reflect the work we are doing at school. The children can access number sheets, song lyrics and some recordings of classes singing Italian songs. There are links to good educational websites where the students can practise Italian.

The Links to some excellent websites on this page provide access to hundreds of activities for the students who wish to consolidate the work we do at school.

Quizlet is a very useful app and website for learning vocabulary and phrases and has good Italian pronunciation.

The students can use it to practise their Italian using lists that I have created for each level.

It is available free at the app store. The icon on the left will help you find it.

Once the app is loaded, you need to register a username and password.

You can then search for appropriate lists for your child to use.

I have created lists using the prefix “STM313” for St Thomas More followed by a Grade level and description.

Examples: STM313 3-4 Come stai, STM313 1-2 Colours, STM313 1-2 La Gallinella Rossa

A search for “stm313” will list all the groups that I have created for our students.

The quizlet website provides more activities than the app and is a very useful practice tool. There is a link on the NEW website.

Feel free to contact me for assistance or more information. To access the new website click on this link https://sites.google.com/a/stmtlza.catholic.edu.au/italiano/

Buona Fortuna! Peter Brady (Italian Teacher)
MORNINGTON RACECOURSE MARKET -
CAR PARK DUTY

Please advise Daniel Ferlin on 0410 184 494 with your confirmed attendance via text (incl your name) ASAP.

Please find the car parking rosters for the coming markets here. Together, this small contribution of our time is raising approximately $14,000 annually for the continual improvement of our school and the programs provided to our children. If you are unavailable for your rostered month, please organise another family to take your place at least a week in advance of the market, and advise Daniel of the change ASAP.

All Markets:
• Arrive at 7:45am (all weather event); exception for Twilight market 1:45pm
• You will be told by the Market Leader when you can leave. This is typically around 12:30pm (6:30pm Twilight) but can alter depending on how busy the market is.
• Enter via the main gates of Racecourse on Racecourse Road, Mornington.
• Park in the designated area (Market Staff will be at the gate to assist you).
• Sign in with the Team Leader (for record keeping and Work Cover).

Team Leaders must collect a black folder from the school office the Friday prior to attending the market, and return it the following Monday.
• Receive your safety vest.
• Market staff will take you to your location in the car park where you will direct cars accordingly and finish at approximately noon. (On slower days Market Staff will advise if you can leave earlier).

Daniel Ferlin/Car Parking Coordinator
0410 184 494 / daniel_ferlin@hotmail.com

** Please Confirm Attendance ASAP^^ Re-rostered due to prior non-attendance