St Brendan’s School Newsletter

Newsletter Term 2, Week 3 – 13th May 2014

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From the Principal

One popular aquarium fish is the shark because sharks adapt to their environment. If you catch a small shark and confine it, it will stay a size proportionate to the aquarium in which it lives. Sharks can be six inches long yet not fully mature. But if you turn them loose in the ocean, they grow to their normal size. The same is true of the potential our children possess. As parents and educators we control the environment in which our children are nurtured to thrive. Thank you for your support and energy in working with us to encourage St Brendan’s children to thrive to their full size.

I share with you an email received last week following the Mothers’ Day celebrations:

Thank you for a lovely breakfast, liturgy and Hugs on Rugs. Precious time, my last year at St Brendan’s as a Mum and realised the kids are never too old to share reading time with their Mum’s. My children have come so far and I can’t thank St Brendan’s, the Teachers and Helpers for providing such a nurturing and caring environment for my children to grow and thrive.

Receiving this email made my day as I had watched how hard all members of the community worked to ensure that a great morning was had by all. I particularly thank all parents and carers, as the children’s behaviour on the morning showed just how much of a credit they are to you.

The Catholic Schools Office recently commissioned a survey which may have been sent to you via email. The survey is sent by a company called radii. I would greatly appreciate you completing this survey as soon as possible.

The Kindergarten enrolment period is currently open - please collect a package from the office.

Thank you for ensuring that your child/ren is dressed in full school uniform. I remind you that all children are expected to be in full winter uniform following the long weekend in June.

As you are aware, on Friday the community celebrates 25 years of Catholic education and you are warmly welcomed to join us for all or part of the day. For those who are only able to make lunch, it is intended that this begin at approximately 12.20pm.

Attached to this newsletter is some information about the National Collection of Data which is occurring at St Brendan’s this Term.

St Brendan’s has been fortunate to have secured the services of Ms Ashlee McConkey supporting both the Office and the Library one day per week. Ms McConkey started out as a volunteer and I am grateful for her initiative in pursuing work. Throughout this term both Mrs Grogan and Mrs Norris will take short periods of long service leave. Ms McConkey will fill in for the ladies during these times.

Luanna Fletcher
Principal
Message from the Assistant Principal

As our Newsletter goes to print our Year Three and Five students will be sitting the NAPLAN tests. This form of testing is just part of the picture we use to inform our teaching. At St Brendan’s we have a number of ways that help determine how we can help your children to achieve success. Depending on their year level, we have PAT Maths, PAT Comprehension, Reading Levels, Ob Survey, MAI, EMU and individual Class Assessments. Our Assessment of and for learning helps our teachers determine your child’s point-of-need.

As parents we naturally want our children to succeed and this success varies for all of us. Our teachers are continually examining the way your children are progressing. Please feel free to contact them and discuss your child’s work, and remember that one “test” is not the whole picture!

Craig McNeely
Assistant Principal

Religious Education News

FIRST EUCHARIST DATES

THURSDAY 15 MAY and 22 MAY: Parent classes from 4pm at St Brendan’s.
SATURDAY 17 MAY: Renewal of Baptismal promises at 5pm Mass.

ST BRENDAN’S DAY MASS - Our St Brendan’s Day Mass is being celebrated this Friday at 9am. It would be great to see many parents and other family members there to celebrate with us.

MOTHERS’ DAY LITURGY - A HUGE thank you to our Kindergarten children and their teachers for a truly moving Liturgy last Friday. It was a fitting tribute to the most important people in our lives.

FAMILY MASS - The St Brendan’s Family Mass for term 2 is being celebrated on Saturday 24 May. It would be great to see plenty of families attending this celebration. Invitations will be sent home soon. Children wishing to play special roles in the Mass should indicate on the reply slip on the invitation and return to Mr York by this Friday.

SUNDAY’S GOSPEL - The image presented to us in John’s Gospel this Sunday is a wonderful image of Jesus. The sheep follow the shepherd. They trust him. They know he cares for them and protects them. Jesus is our shepherd, we are his sheep. We should trust in him just as the sheep trust in the shepherd.

DATES TO REMEMBER

FRIDAY 16 MAY: St Brendan’s Day Mass
WEDNESDAY 21 MAY: Year 2 Class Mass
SATURDAY 24 MAY: St Brendan’s Family Mass

Kell York
Religious Education Coordinator
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From the Library: May is National Family Reading Month!

We hope everyone is enjoying National Family Reading Month. We have challenged our students to read for 15 minutes every day with a family member so share a story together and find out just how much fun reading can be!

There was a fantastic response to our "Reading, Rugs and Hugs" activity. What a great opportunity to share a story with your children.

In May we also celebrate Library and Information Week. This year Library and Information week takes place 19 to 25 May 2014 and the theme is "Join the Dots". We will be open on Thursday 22nd May from 1:30 - 2:30 for a guided tour of our new look library and our many resources.

National Simultaneous Storytime is an important annual campaign that aims to encourage more young Australians to read and enjoy books. It is a fun event that aims to promote the value of reading and literacy using an Australian children's book that explores age-appropriate themes. This year NSS takes place on Wednesday 21st May and we will be sharing Too Many Elephants in This House written by Ursula Dubosarsky and illustrated by Andrew Joyner. Look out for the large elephant sitting inside the library doors.

Thank you to those fabulous parents who have been assisting with covering new library books. Your help is always appreciated.

Happy reading in May
The Library Team

STORY TIME IN THE PARK – Free story time in the park. McCulloch Reserve, Colongra Bay Road, Lake Munmorah. Come along and join in the fun Wednesdays at 10am 14th, 21st & 28th May.
DATES TO REMEMBER

May
Wed 14th Naplan Yrs 3 & 5
Thu 15th Naplan Yrs 3 & 5
Fri 16th NO Assembly; Mass 9.00 am - St. Brendan’s Feast Day and 25 years Celebrations
Tue 20th ICAS Computer Skills; Broken Bay Cross Country; PPC at St. Mary’s
Wed 21st Spirituality Morning 8.30-10.30am; Maths Olympiad; 6.30 pm Enrichment Board Meeting
Thu 22nd Busways Education; Catholic Schools Rugby League Gala Day
Fri 23rd NO Assembly; Athletics Carnival at St. Brendan’s

Wed 28th 9.00 am Year 1 Mass
Thu 29th Higher Ability Learners Poetry Day
Fri 30th Assembly 8.20 am; Polding Touch Trials

Jun
Mon 2nd P and F meeting at 1:30pm
Tue 3rd Year 5 – CARES Excursion
Wed 4th ICAS – Science
Fri 6th Assembly 8.20 am
Mon 9th Public Holiday – Queen’s Birthday
Wed 11th Popup Playgroup (all pre-schoolers welcome); 9.00am Kindergarten Mass; Maths Olympiad
Fri 13th Assembly 8.20am; NSW CPS Cross Country Eastern Creek

Term 4

Nov Thu/Fri 20/21 Year 5 Camp

Joy: living the Gospel

Mrs Luanna Fletcher invites you to our parent & friends reflection morning: meditation, discussion, blessing and coffee.

All welcome

“I found the whole morning amazing.”
“Spread the word...I will, as this was too good to miss!”
“So relaxing...Fantastic, well done!”

When: Wednesday 21st May 8.30–10.30
Where: St Brendan’s Lake Munmorah
RSVP: School Office 43581501

*Child minding will be available
Nationally Consistent Collection of Data School Students with Disability

Information for Parents/Carers

Schools across Australia are taking part in a new national data collection on school students with disability. The data collection is being introduced in stages over three years, and started in 2013. From 2015, this information will be collected in every school across Australia, every year.

All Australian governments have agreed to this.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT FOR MY CHILD?

All Australian governments agree that every child in an Australian school should have a high quality education. It shouldn’t matter what the individual child’s circumstances are – every child should have the same opportunity to succeed at school.

The aim of this new data collection is to have better information about school students with disability in Australia.

Better information about school students with disability will help teachers, principals and education authorities to support students with disability to take part in school on the same basis as students without disability.

WHY IS THIS DATA BEING COLLECTED?

There is nothing new about schools collecting information about students with disability – in fact, schools have had to do this by law for some time. But the type of information currently collected varies between each state and territory.

With the new data collection, every school in Australia will use the same method to collect this information – that is, a government school in suburban Sydney will collect and report data in the same way as a Catholic school in country Victoria and an independent school in the Northern Territory.

The information provided through this new national data collection will enable all Australian governments to better target support and resources to benefit students with disability. It will help to put the right supports in place for students with disability so that they have the same opportunities for a high quality education as students without a disability.

WHAT ARE SCHOOLS REQUIRED TO DO?

Every school in Australia is likely to have a student with disability at some point. Schools need to be able to support students with disability by removing any obstacles for them to participate in their education.

By law, schools are required to make reasonable adjustments where needed to assist students with disability. These responsibilities are outlined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005. This means that schools need to talk to the student and/or their parent/carer about reasonable adjustments. These are things the schools do now and this won’t change.

The new data collection will record students who have been identified by a school team as meeting the definition of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and provided with an adjustment.

WHAT IS AN ADJUSTMENT?

An adjustment is a measure or action taken to help a student with disability participate in education on the same basis as other students. Adjustments can be made across the whole school setting (like ramps into classrooms), in the classroom and at an individual student level (like extra tuition for a student with a learning difficulty).
WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

Your child’s school will collect and report information every year about:

- the level of adjustment provided
- the number of students who receive each level of adjustment
- where known, the student’s broad type of disability.

Some students who are not provided with an adjustment at the time of the collection will meet the definition of disability under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and will be eligible to be included in the data collection.

WHO WILL COLLECT MY CHILD’S INFORMATION?

Teachers and other school staff from your child’s school will collect the above information based on:

- consultation with parents/carers
- the school team’s observations and professional judgements
- any medical diagnosis
- other relevant information.

School principals are responsible for making sure that the information collected about each student is accurate.

HOW WILL MY CHILD’S PRIVACY BE PROTECTED?

Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all children and their families is very important. With the new data collection, this will be done in the following ways:

- Personal or confidential information will not be given to anyone not authorised to see it.
- When the information is sent by your child’s school to the local or federal education authority for combination with information from other schools, it will be by school only – student names will not be recorded as part of the data collection.
- When the information is reported from 2016 onwards, it will be by school only – student names will not be recorded as part of the data collection.

WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE DATA BE AVAILABLE?

When all Australian schools are taking part in the new data collection, the information will be reported on the My School website from 2016 onwards. It will be by school only – no student names are recorded as part of the data collection.

CAN I DECIDE WHETHER MY CHILD’S INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION?

It’s your decision about whether you want your child’s information to be included in the national reporting or not.

Including every school child who is being provided with an adjustment because of disability in this new national data collection each year will help schools, education authorities and governments to better meet students’ needs.

Your school will tell you what you need to do if you don’t want to have your child’s information included in the national data collection.

Even if your child’s information is not included in the national data collection, your school is still required to provide support to your child with disability and any adjustments that may be needed to help him/her participate at school.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your child’s school if you have further questions about the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability and how it may affect your child.