Dear Parents and Caregivers

What a great start we had last week despite the weather’s attempts to spoil things. Thank you for having the students so well-prepared; it goes a long way to getting the school year off to such a smooth start. Already our new Preps look like they are old hands at this school business and all other classes seem settled and ready to learn as I visit classrooms. We all understand that it is difficult for many parents to hand over little ones to school staff – especially when it’s your first child at school and it’s all new. How important it is to develop relationships characterised by trust, confidence, support and open communication.

As you are aware Renee Tamatea is expecting her second child in early March. Her last day at school is Friday 24 February. Lucia Chick will then move to teaching Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday each week, with Denise Heffernan replacing Renee in the job-share each Thursday and Friday for the remainder of the year. We are very fortunate that Denise is able to do this - one great partnership replacing another! Denise has been part of all planning to date, so the transition will be very smooth.

A surprise addition to the ‘impending parenthood’ list is Bettrys Lowe whose first child is due at the end of Term 2. We congratulate Bettrys and Adam on their exciting news. Shortly we will advertise for Bettrys’s replacement with 4/5D which will allow for a more lengthy and thorough transition time.

We also welcome three wonderful new teachers: Lauren Solomon (2C), Emily Kosior (2B) and Sophie Dimitronow (3B) and warmly welcome back Inez Durrer (Music) & Kim Hughes (6D).

Meetings Later in February
You are also invited to the first Parents’ and Friends’ Meeting of the year on Tuesday 14 Feb starting at 6.15pm in the Staffroom. The new Committee would love to see really healthy attendance numbers. For School Board members, the first meeting will take place on Thursday 23 February from 6.30 in Staffroom.

Thanks again everyone for such a smooth start. We look forward to a happy and successful year together. Have a great week. Glenda

Thank you to Sally Ludlow (Teacher of 7C) for the new newsletter design!

Over the holidays, a new adventure playground was to be erected for students from Years 3-7. At a cost of approximately $48,000, half the cost will be met by the P&F donation of the profits from last year’s Fair. Unfortunately the equipment was not manufactured in time but the company has let me know they will be on site on 13 February. This represents Stage One of a larger design plan to be completed as funding becomes available.

Staff News
After nine years of service to Stella Maris School as groundsman and many more as parent and bus driver in the early days, Kevin Church retires tomorrow. The week before school started, Kevin and his wife, Meryl, attended a special staff lunch in honour of Kevin’s wonderful contribution to this school over the years. We thank Kevin and wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement with Meryl. Kevin is one of the true ‘gentle-men’ of this world; he will be greatly missed.

Holiday Upgrades
Over the holidays, a number of maintenance matters and improvements were completed as usual. Quite a lot of concreting has improved trouble spots with new pathways enabling better access. Students and staff can now walk to the bus zone along a cement path which is preferable to trudging through the muddy, submerged grass of the past. The bus shelter is coming soon.

The roof of E block (where most of the Year 2 and 3 classes are located) was upgraded and we’ve fenced, and are in the process of roofing, the raised platform beside the steps in the Year 1 quadrangle. When finished this will become a more usable learning space and less dangerous, especially for younger siblings who frequent this area before pick-up.

Meeting 4/5D which will allow for a more lengthy and thorough transition time.

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Waiting for Dismissal
I’m sure teachers will raise this at Parent Teacher Meetings as well. While waiting for students to be dismissed, please help teachers by sitting or standing well away from classroom windows and doors please – especially in the younger grades. Your children love you and are understandably distracted by your presence while teachers are trying to establish routines in readiness for home-time. It is also helpful to be aware of the noise level around classrooms generally. I know this can be a problem outside the Year 7 rooms, especially with younger siblings. We love to see parents having a chat and getting to know each other and awareness of nearby classroom environments will also help students and teachers. Thank you for helping out.
Dear Parents/Caregivers,

Welcome to 2012! While it has been a very wet start to the year, it has been a very productive one and augurs well for the coming year. In my newsletters, I would like to keep you up to date with the current ‘Virtue of the Fortnight’, so that you can reinforce the concepts at home. Each one is chosen to develop capacities in the students that they may need at any particular time. The first of these for 2012 is ‘Trustworthiness’, chosen as the students are discussing with their teachers how they want to be together this year. Out of these conversations, the students and their teachers develop a Class Vision Statement to guide their choices during the year. This vision statement is celebrated in the context of individual class liturgies to which you will be invited.

Without trustworthiness, agreements and promises don’t mean anything. When people practise trustworthiness, others can trust them because they keep their word. They don’t have to doubt or check up on them to see if they are doing something they promised to do. When people are trustworthy, they can be trusted to tell the truth, to do their part, to give their best. A trustworthy person is someone in whom you can place your trust and rest assured that the trust will not be betrayed. In general, in order for trust to be confirmed, worth and integrity must be proven over time.

I came across a couple of stories I wish to share with you about ‘Trustworthiness’. The first, a Jewish Fable, demonstrates the value of trustworthiness in a very unexpected manner:

A poor beggar found a purse containing 100 pieces of gold. At the same time a merchant, discovering his loss, called out, “Who lost this purse?” A bystander immediately replied, “A merchant lost this purse – to claim this lost purse.” With that, the judge gave the purse and the gold to the beggar! The following link is to a delightful story about Tommy the Trustworthy Turtle that may interest preschoolers about Trustworthiness:


Next Thursday, 9th February, at 8.50am through to 9.30am in the school hall, we will celebrate the new school year with a Liturgy during which our Year 7 Leaders will be commissioned. You are most welcome to join us. God bless,

Judith.

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BODHI KIDS YOGA
Starting at Buderim
Information flyers available at the School office

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Uniform Shop Hours
Monday 8.00am - 10.00am
Wednesday 10.15am - 3.15pm
Thursday 8.00am - 1.00pm
Keep smiling! Leanne Dowe Uniform Convenor
Welcome to 2012!

INTRODUCTION – Mrs. Inez Durrer

I am very excited to have the opportunity to return to Stella Maris as the Classroom Music Specialist. This year we welcome Mrs Inez Durrer back to Stella Maris as our Classroom Music Specialist as well as instrumental music on rotation to Years 6 – 8 at Holy Family School in Hanover, Ontario. For the 2008 and 2009 school years, I was the Classroom Music Specialist here at Stella Maris and the Classroom Music Specialist and Instrumental Music Co-ordinator at Our Lady of the Rosary School in Caloundra for the 2010 and 2011 school years. I have also worked at Siena since 2009 as an instrumental tutor and conductor of the Siena Primary Band. I am excited to be back teaching Music at Stella Maris. Please feel free to introduce yourself to me when you visit the school. I also look forward to a wonderful year of growth in all areas of Music and the Arts, sharing my excitement and love of Music with your children.

CLASSROOM MUSIC—We have a very busy year ahead and look forward to many wonderful musical experiences for all of our students. Students will be organizing their materials this week as we begin our lessons, ensuring a strong start to the 2012 school year. Your support and encouragement of the Music program is greatly appreciated, particularly with your child’s musical development. Should your child not have an Introducing Music textbook, these are available at Swan News Agency in the Sunshine Plaza. You will need to contact them ASAP so an order can be placed as needed from the publisher.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS—Welcome to 2012! Lessons begin this week! and timetables for students enrolled in instrumental, singing and speech lessons at school have been sent out via email. If you did not receive the email, please update your details via email to StellaMarisMusic@bne.catholic.edu.au. Parents are encouraged to print a copy of the timetable to stick into the music diary and one to leave in a handy place at home. All lesson timetables are also displayed on the notice board outside the music room for students to check.

This year we welcome Mrs Inez Durrer back to Stella Maris as our Classroom Music Specialist and Choral Coordinator and Ms Manta Schlink as an additional Woodwind and Brass tutor. I am also pleased to welcome back all our wonderful tutors from 2011. Currently, we have 225 students enrolled in the program and I send out a particular welcome to the 94 students who are starting in the program in 2012.

Tutors will hand out information and commitment letters this week for ensemble sessions, which will commence next week (week 3). Please keep an eye out for this and return the slip to your tutor, the music room or the office ASAP. We have many wonderful plans for the year and hope you will be able to support the Arts at Stella Maris as they come up.

If you have queries regarding anything musical – please feel free to catch up me before or after school, by contacting me in writing or via email.

Musically Yours,

Inez Durrer
Classroom Music Specialist
idurrer@bne.catholic.edu.au

Todd Wynyard
Instrumental Music Coordinator
twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au
WHEN “OK?” IS NOT OK

When asking a child to do something positive (like go to bed) or to stop doing something negative (like whining), some mums and dads routinely attach the word “OK?” to the end of their response. It sounds like this:

“It’s time for bed now, honey. OK?”
“I want you to stop whining and use your big girl voice, OK?”

Is this good or bad? It’s bad. Why?
1. there’s no need for the extra comment. Requests should be kept simple, short and straightforward.
2. the “OK?” is not a benign comment—it’s a troublemaker. The “OK?” communicates to the child that the parent is anxious about whether or not the youngster is going to cooperate. Children can sense this anxiety in their parent’s voice immediately, even though the child may be only two or three years old. The “OK?” tells the child right away that the parent is vulnerable and unsure of herself or himself.
3. the troublesome “OK?” implies that at this point the child has a choice in the matter. Now how many children like to go to bed at night or actually want to stop whining? Not very many. So combine the child’s natural aversion to cooperating with the parent’s uncertainty and what do you get? You get the potential for a bad scene complete with arguing, yelling and tantrums.

So next time you want a child to cooperate and you need to make a simple request, DO NOT put “OK?” on the end of it!

Christine Craig (Guidance Counsellor)