Dear Parents and Caregivers

A topic that has been raised by parents and neighbours recently, is their frustration when it comes to the traffic and parking manners of some. There is a fair amount of angst around pick-up/drop-off and those parents who get out of their cars to get bags out of the boot or simply to kiss their children goodbye.

Parents, they have a point. The drop-off and pick-up zones are for speed and efficiency of movement within the school grounds. Students have their bags in the car with them, they jump out and parents drive off. That's how it works. Hugs and kisses take place when you leave home and a simple, ‘Goodbye. Have a great day,’ or a quick kiss, across the seat, suffices at school. If a prolonged farewell is absolutely necessary or if a parent needs to unpack the car for children, then drivers need to park, and avoid the drop-off zone altogether.

The other matter to be raised is moving as far along the zone as possible, rather than stopping early in the zone and holding up the flow of traffic. These are simple things that make the world of difference for everyone. They show common sense and consideration for others.

Further to these discussions, the Aragon Street pick-up is of concern due to parking along the yellow lines and inconveniencing neighbours. We will have to ask for police assistance should the situation fail to improve, as safety and peaceful co-existence with our neighbours are important.

In addition, apparently some parents are turning right immediately upon entering the school grounds (the bus only entry) to park in the car park or on the grass in the centre area. Parents, this is a dangerous practice for the want of driving a few extra metres. Please follow the prescribed route. And finally, in wet weather, when 4-7 pick-up is undercover, there is only one pick-up line which everyone joins.

People, of course, have different attitudes to rules, whether these rules are established in law or simply grounded in common sense, safety and consideration. Some take the attitude, ‘I’ll do what I want. If it’s convenient, suits me or meets my purpose then I don’t care what others think, want or need.’ It may be different if there is a fear of being caught, but sometimes, not even this makes a difference.

In total contrast, others become slaves to authority and are obedient to a fault. Of course we all must learn appropriate obedience (especially when young, when learning to be obedient lays the foundation for responsible decision-making later on); but, carried to its extreme, unwavering obedience to authority, can manifest a very dark side as evidenced in Nazi Germany. When one’s ethical and moral decision-making is relinquished to an authority figure and becomes invested in a group, then all manner of atrocities become possible. At his trial, Adolf Eichmann, who orchestrated the extinction of six million Jews, showed surprise at being an object of hatred by Jewish people, as, in his eyes, he had merely been following orders. He wrote, ‘The orders were, for me, the highest thing in my life and I had to obey them without question.’ Frighteningly, subsequent scientific experiments have shown greater than 60% of participants demonstrated an extreme obedience to authority, even when they knew that their actions would cause significant harm to another. That’s a concerning finding, isn’t it?

Obviously, neither response to the question of obedience is healthy; neither response is life-giving to individual and community development. In contrast, we are called to develop an informed conscience founded upon an uncompromising respect for life and care for each other and the environment. These matters are also integral to one’s faith.

Luckily, we are not talking about these extreme examples when it comes to decisions about parking and pick-up. These are not rules to be flaunted simply because you can get away with it, nor are they for observance purely because someone says so, although some are written in Law. To my mind they are practical, sensible responses to community safety, consideration and convenience. They are followed because we actually care about each other. And, on top of that, the children will learn from us, one way or the way.

Have a great week everyone. Glenda

NO ASSEMBLY this week due to Year 7 Retreat in the Hall.
Leading Learning
Last Monday to Thursday, I attended Leading Learning, a BCE course for those who are responsible for, as the name indicates, leading learning in school contexts. There are three more one-day sessions to follow over the remainder of the year. What a wonderful experience to be given the time to listen, share, read (15 books were given to each of us – more to come), discuss, present, analyse and synthesise one’s thinking and to plan for taking new learning into the future! I have returned with a full implementation plan for Visible Learning across all areas and feel very satisfied with this time away, and appreciative of the opportunity. I do thank Terry and everyone at school for carrying the extra load; four days can be a long time. Over the coming weeks, I’ll share aspects with you, I’m sure.

Year 7 to Secondary Planning
Information for parents will be forthcoming shortly, both from the secondary and primary planning perspectives. Be assured that Brisbane Catholic Education and schools, have been planning for this eventuality since 2011.

Mosquitoes
Last Friday, a Council worker sprayed around the school and bush for mosquitoes, targeting the breeding areas.

Year 8 2014 Enrolment Interviews
St John’s College, Nambour

For your information:
- A Parent Information Evening will be held on Wednesday 13 March at 7pm at St John’s College in the Multi-Purpose Centre.
- Enrolment interviews will be held from Tuesday 16 April to Thursday 25 April.
- Year 6s will be interviewed in September for Year 8 2015 enrolment at St John’s College with a Parent Information Evening held on Wednesday 21 August at 7pm at St John’s College in the Multi-Purpose Centre.
- There will be an opportunity for prospective parents to visit the College on our “Back to School” morning on March 5th & 6th between 8.45am to 12.30pm. Please contact the College office if interested in attending.

At St John’s College, we provide quality education in an environment that nurtures children in their Catholic faith.

Siena Catholic College
Year 8 Enrolment for 2014

Last week, College Principal, Mr Graeme Hight, and the Siena College Captains spoke to the Year 7 class at Stella Maris and handed out Enrolment Application packs to students. Packs were also left for students who were absent. The contents outlined the necessary steps for parents to take if they wish their son / daughter to be considered for Year 8 at the College in 2014. Parents are reminded of the Information Sessions being held at the College on either Sunday 10 March or Monday 11 March. Please contact the College office either by email ssippydowns@bne.catholic.edu.au or phone 5476 6100 to register – this is for catering purposes. Enrolment interviews will commence late Term 1 and will extend into Term 2.

Year 8 2015. Because two cohorts (Year 7 and Year 8) begin at Siena in 2015, the enrolment process for Year 8 2015 will occur in Semester 2, 2013.

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

Have you ever had one of those weeks when there does not seem to be enough hours in the day to do all you have to do, not even considering those things you want to do? Well lately I have been feeling just that. For me these past few weeks have been hectic - I don’t know where the hours in the day have flown.

In speaking with my son last weekend about a situation that is draining his natural ‘get up and go’ attitude to life, I gave him the advice that he should just live life from his own heart and not worry about the lack of appreciation from others – it is through doing that to which your spirit calls you, that life takes on energy and new meaning. I should have taken my own advice. This morning I was reminded about the Virtue of Gratitude through my daily reading from ‘Jesus Calling’ by Sarah Young. I include it here as it does have relevance to this fortnight’s Virtue as well as the need to embrace problems rather than just cry over them. I hope you find the reading helpful too:

“MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE PROBLEMS IN YOUR LIFE.
Though many things feel random and wrong, remember that I am sovereign over everything, I can fit everything into a pattern for good, but only to the extent that you trust Me. Every problem can teach you something, transforming you little by little into the masterpiece I created you to be. The very same problem can become a stumbling block over which you fall. If you react with distrust and defiance. The choice is up to you, and you will have to choose many times each day whether to trust Me or defy Me.

The best way to befriend your problems is to thank Me for them. This simple act opens your mind to the possibility of benefits flowing from your difficulties. You can even give persistent problems nicknames, helping to approach them with familiarity rather than with dread. The next step is to introduce them to Me, enabling Me to embrace them in My loving Presence. I will not necessarily remove your problems, but My wisdom is sufficient to bring good out of every one of them.” (From JESUS CALLING (March 5) based on Romans 8:28 and 1Corinthians 1:23-24 by Sarah Young)

This reading today reminded me that life is not without its pressures and the only time it will be, is when we have let life slip by unnoticed or have opted out. I hope these thoughts are helpful for you too.

God bless, Judith.

P&F News

P&F meeting
Tuesday 12 March, commencing at 6.30pm in the staffroom.

All are most welcome with all contributions viewed as valuable.

DATE CLAIMERS

Stella Family Fun Day

A NEW flyer came home last week. Please fill in the tear-off slip and return to the office ASAP. Watch the P&F Facebook page in case of cancellation. Decision should be made late Friday.

Where: Stella Maris School (near the Soccer Shed)

When: Sunday 17 March 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Stella Chick Flick

Cost: $25.00

Where: Birch, Carroll & Coyle, Maroochydore

When: Friday 22 March 7.00pm

RSVP: 19 March Tickets available via tear-off slip sent home or at Front of School from 11 March.
MUSIC NOTES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Music isn’t just learning notes and playing them, you learn notes to play to the music of your soul.” ~ Kate Greenwood ~

TIP OF THE WEEK

Practice is most valuable when you are fresh, not worried about things and most importantly when you are not tired. This means fewer errors!!

TEN FACTS ABOUT SCHOOL MUSIC

Continuing from last week, the following is the second fact about music education.

2. Music students are more likely to be good citizens

A 10-year US study called ‘Champions of Change’ found that high school students who participate in arts programs, including in school bands, are less likely to be involved with drugs, crime or have behavioral problems.

GUITARS FOR SALE

We still have a small number of guitars for sale. These guitars are all in good or very good condition, will be sold as is, and will come with a hook for hanging the guitar on a wall. The cost is fixed at $50 per guitar. Proceeds from the sale of these guitars will assist with the funding of ukuleles (to be purchased in Semester 2) for use in classroom music for multiple year levels. If interested, please contact either Mrs Durrer or Mr Wynyard for more information.

CHOIR NEWS

Thank you to all parents and students who have returned their commitment form for each of our three choirs. This last week we were fortunate enough to have nearly 275 children participate in our choral program. If your son/daughter did not receive a permission form please see Mrs Durrer. Well done and happy singing!

PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

We are still looking for parent volunteers who would be available to assist with most of our ensembles – not a weekly commitment, but on an ‘as needed’ basis. If you are interested in helping with things such as sorting music or setting up for performances, please let either of us know as soon as possible. Please indicate which ensemble(s) you would like to assist with for this school year. Each of our ensemble leaders would be most grateful. Thank you to those parents who have already put up their hand to help.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC NEWS

Sincere thanks to those parents who advise tutors and ensemble leaders when their children will be absent. All students are essential and play an important role so please keep this up!

Parents are also to advise tutors directly (via email or text) if their child will not be present at a lesson due to sickness. A message on the school absentee line is not sufficient as this is often not cleared till later in the day and office staff are not responsible for advising tutors. Tutor email and phone contacts can be found on your lesson timetables or an email can also be sent to StellaMarisMusic@bne.catholic.edu.au.

Assembly performance - Thursday 21 March - SM Singers and Percussion Ensemble. Parents are most welcome!

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

Inez Durrer        Todd Wynyard
Classroom Music Specialist     Instrumental Music Coordinator
idurrer@bne.catholic.edu.au       twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au
Parenthood

Juggling the responsibilities of a nine-to-five job and parenthood can be a daunting task. And in some cases, it can often lead to parents feeling guilty, frustrated, and disconnected from their child. If this sounds all too familiar, About Kids Health suggests trying these six simple tips to help achieve a strong bond with your child. These tips are for everyone not just working parents. They are a great guide to making and maintaining connections with your children and vice versa.

1. **Talk and listen** - Take a few minutes out of your evening to sit down with your child and talk. This is especially important for parents raising a teenager. Begin by asking how their day was, or try engaging them in a discussion on current events. Keep lines of communication open and always listen to what they have to say. To enhance your listening abilities, first limit your distractions. This includes turning off the television or mobile phone and avoiding conversations when you’re feeling rushed. Parents need to be patient when talking to their children. If you are patiently listening, the conversation is more likely to move on to the subject that your child really wants to discuss.

2. **Make dinner a family affair** - If it’s not already a part of your daily routine, sitting down to eat as a family ought to be. The routines that mark a family’s day, week, and year serve not only to organize family life but also reinforce the emotional bonds that tie members together. The evening meal, however simple, is an important ritual, because often it is the only time of day when the family can sit down together to share not only a meal but their interest and concern for each other.

3. **Get involved** - Showing a genuine interest in your child’s hobbies is a great way to bring you closer together. It will also provide you with an opportunity to reminisce with your child about the fun things you enjoyed as a child. Remember to remain positive when engaging in your child’s interests. If they sense you’re not enjoying yourself they may quit the activity altogether.

4. **Date night** - One-on-one time is essential for strengthening the bond between you and your child. A date night can be as simple as grabbing some ice cream, going to the library, or heading to a nearby park for some playtime. The activity really doesn’t matter as long as your child has your undivided attention.

5. **Read together** - Whether it’s after dinner or just before bed, reading to, or with, your child provides them with a sense of intimacy. Snuggle up with your child and their favourite book and watch them develop their vocabulary, imagination, and willingness to open up to you.

6. **Say “I love you”** - At least once a day, every day, say these three little words to your child. Even if they roll their eyes and think it’s mushy, they will definitely appreciate it.

Christine Craig (Guidance Counsellor)
email: c craig@bne.catholic.edu.au

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