Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Unfortunately I need to write another newsletter addressing the poor response to payment of school fees. This is a situation which cannot continue if we wish to remain a viable, let alone well-resourced school. There is also a matter of justice that must be addressed.

Last week I sent a generic email/letter to all families who have not finalised fees for the year. Many have responded by paying immediately, while others have a regular payment plan in place which will see the debt met by the end of school or end of year. I thank those parents for their responsible attention to the matter and/or payment plan that was already in place.

I am yet to hear from very many others and this, of course, is the problem. Unfortunately ignoring the matter in the hope it will go away or that no-one will press for a resolution only compounds the problem. Others approach the payment of school fees by paying sporadically with no regular payment and months passing between inadequate instalments. The result is also one of compounded debt that carries from year to year. I think it is fair to say that many families can actually afford our very modest fees but have placed higher priority on living a certain lifestyle and/or providing children with every activity and/or every resource. Is it that some people believe school fees can wait; that somehow we can materialise the money necessary to offer a quality education and pay our bills?

Now I know that we have families who struggle – struggle, not because they have over-committed themselves or have not carefully thought out their priorities. For those parents who are in genuine financial hardship, the Application for Fee Concession is in place to assist and we are only too happy to assist and an arrangement organised that is satisfactory to all. Fees as usual. In this case, timely communication with us can temporarily in financial hardship and unable to pay full, or part, fees as usual. We also support a number of families in genuine financial hardship and unable to pay full, or part, fees as usual.

Occasionally, families may experience an event that puts them temporarily in financial hardship and unable to pay full, or part, fees as usual. In this case, timely communication with us can assist and an arrangement organised that is satisfactory to all. Communication is always the key.

What I have written may seem harsh to some and I, too, have agonised over this, however, without fees we have no school – full stop! Shortly I am speaking with others about where we go from here in an effort to improve our fee collection rate. What we really need, however, is the goodwill and commitment of all our families to putting in place a plan for timely and regular fee payment. This plan must then be honoured. Shortly I will communicate our plan for 2014 and I am anticipating some necessary changes.

And finally, thank you to those who pay by the due date – especially those parents who are not financially well-off. I appreciate the sacrifices you make to send your children to Stella Maris and hope that we, in turn, support your family with care and quality education.

Have a great week everyone.

Glenda
swimming

Each year the classes undertake a week of swimming lessons that help the students practise their swimming techniques. It also gets them to pay attention to how to save people’s lives if the situation allows. It is a fun activity that students enjoy, while it makes a big impact on their lives. Apart from the four basic strokes (freestyle, backstroke, butterfly and breaststroke) they also take part in two survival strokes. At the end of the year grades 4-7 participate in a swimming carnival to raise team spirit between house colours. The students are encouraged to cheer on each other, even if they aren’t in their house. This helps students to get to be the best they possibly can. Swimming is not just a single person competition; you need a whole team to support one another. After years of experience I now know that this time is looked forward to, all year, by student of all ages.

Rachel Hamilton (Public Relations Committee)

St John’s College, Nambour
Welcome to high school Year 7, 2015

Important Dates
• Year 7 2015 Information Night is Wednesday 12 March 2014
• Year 7 2015 interviews take place during the week beginning Monday 24 March 2014
• Enrolment packs will be distributed to St Joseph’s and Stella Maris in early March 2014
• Enrolment packs will be available early in 2014 from the St John’s College office

P & F CARPARK RAFFLE
Look out for raffle tickets in the first week of school next year. The winner of this prestigious Parking Space will be announced at Assembly on Thursday of week 2.
Tickets are $5.00 each or 3 for $10.00

Eco friendly book covers, order online www.ecover.net.au enter code ZFA186 and the school gets 10c per cover. $1.20 each any size, plus $3 postage per order.

ABSENTEE LINE: 54098989
All absentees to be notified by 9.30am

Dear Parents/Caregivers,
The following extract, adapted from 365 Daily Devotional Readings (Barbour Publishing 2010), I thought quite pertinent to our Virtue of the Week, Idealism, chosen in relation to Presentation Day which we will celebrate this Friday (the actual feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple being Thursday 21st November).

On Presentation Day, we celebrate the work of Nano Nagle, the foundress of the Presentation Order of Sisters, who in eighteenth century Ireland, set up bush schools for Catholic children who were denied an education. In time, this order of Sisters emigrated to Australia to continue their work in education here. In 1980, Sr Margaret Conway, under the direction of Fr Harry Blas, the Parish Priest of the Maroochydore Parish at that time, prepared for the first enrolment in the school of ninety plus students. Today we have approximately 820 students, but we continue to develop a community focussed on the Catholic education of our young people. Do we walk in the steps of Nano Nagle and carry her ideal for the education in faith of our young people? I would say a resounding “Yes!” to that question.

“At some point in our lives, we each wonder, Why am I here? What did God make me to do? Too often we look for a big Hollywood blockbuster answer: I will find a cure for cancer. I will solve world hunger. While these things are possible, they’re unlikely to happen to most of us. Instead God wants us to be sensitive to the opportunities placed in our lives, sometimes on a daily basis, to make a difference for God’s kingdom. Do you see someone who needs a good meal or just someone to talk to? Could you help out a co-worker who is burdened with a heavy workload? Big or small, the choices we make to help others are just one part of the puzzle that is the meaning of life. We need to examine our daily lives and consider…maybe God brought us to this very place for such a time as this.”

It is important for each of us to have an ideal – something we are willing to work for and to make sacrifices in order to achieve it. Idealism is having a vision of what is possible and wanting to make a difference. It is caring passionately about what is meaningful in life. Idealists see things as they could be and have faith in the power of change. We put our principles into practice. We don’t just accept things the way they are. We dare to have big dreams and then act as though they were possible. Idealism doesn’t mean that we are idle dreamers who just wish things were better. Idealists do something to make things better. We make the ideal real.

In an ideal world, the upcoming Christmas holidays and the Christmas Season should be something special for families, especially for the children. However, for many, it is also a time of stress for some as money may be very limited even to provide the basic necessities of life. Once again we are supporting the Christmas Appeal in the form of “The Giving Place Donations” of food items and Christmas gifts to be distributed to families in the local area. Donations are gratefully accepted at school toward a gift basket from each classroom, which will be presented to a representative of the St Vincent de Paul Society at our last day Liturgy to be held in the School Hall on Friday 6th December at 11.00am.

If you wish to donate items towards these food hampers, the following suggestions may be of assistance:
- Meat: Tinned ham and tinned turkey;
- Fish: Tinned salmon and tuna;
- Vegetables: Tins of potatoes, carrots, corn, peas, beetroot, pineapple, asparagus and tomatoes;
- Groceries: Pasta, pasta sauce, potato bake, gravy mix, tinned biscuits, tinned dips, potato chips, chutneys and sauces;
- Desserts: Plum pudding, tinned fruit, steamed puddings, jelly, long life custard, and long life cream;
- Drinks: Soft drink, fruit juice, coffee, tea and cordial;
- Festive Fare: Christmas cake, fruit cake, puddings, nuts, lollies, fruit mince tarts, serviettes, bonbons and decorations.

If you prefer to give Christmas presents, please do not wrap them, but attach a label, e.g. Boy - 6 years; Girl - 8 years, etc. All donations will be gratefully received. I am sure that whatever you could provide would be gratefully received. God bless, Judith.
MUSIC NOTES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“They teach you there’s a boundary line to music. But, man, there’s no boundary line to art.”

~ Charlie Parker ~

CONGRATULATIONS to all students who performed at the piano, singing and percussion soirees and lunchtime concerts over the last two weeks. These are wonderful performance opportunities and experiences for students.

SPEECH & DRAMA SOIREE – students of Ms Beattie will be presenting a variety of Speech and Drama items on Tuesday 26 November from 6 to 7pm in the Hall. Students are asked to arrive 10 minutes early to ensure a 7pm finish. Family and friends are welcome to attend. We look forward to seeing you all on the 26th.

JUNIOR BAND PERFORMANCE will be at lunchtime on Monday 25 November at 11am in the Music Room. Students, parents, and staff are welcome to come along and support Ms Dean and our young musicians.

GAYNDAH MUSIC EXCURSION – best of luck to the String Ensemble, Concert Band, and SM Singers for an inspiring day of shared music with the students, staff, and parent community of St. Joseph’s, Gayndah this Thursday. We look forward to sharing the experiences with the students and staff of Stella Maris.

MUSICAL - Don’t forget to mark your diaries, as 2014 will be a musical year! This is especially important if your son/daughter wishes to be a part of the musical (eg. lead role, chorus, singer, dancer, props, musician, backstage). It is essential that all involved students are present at these times. If you are interested in assisting in any capacity, please let us know. We will have a planning meeting early in 2014.

• Rehearsals – Wednesday 8, Thursday 9 & Friday 10 October (during school holidays)
• Performances – Thursday 16, Friday 17 & Saturday 18 October (Term 4, Week 2)
Watch this space in coming weeks for the announcement of the MUSICAL we will be presenting!

DATE CLAIMERS
Gayndah Excursion – Thursday 21 November Senior Concert Band, SM Singers, String Ensemble (notes have been emailed to parents and you are asked to return it ASAP)
Junior Band Presentation – Monday 25 November Junior Band students – Music Room @ 11am
Speech & Drama Soiree – Tuesday 26 November Ms Beattie’s students – Hall @ 6pm

FINAL CALL for any later re-enrolments and new enrolments. Please return your paperwork ASAP to assist with planning for 2014. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Mr Wynyard.

Remember, if you need to contact your child’s tutor, details are shown on the top left corner of the lesson timetable. 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.

Musically Yours,

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

Todd Wynyard Instrumental Music Coordinator
twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au

calendar of events

November 18-21 Yrs 4 & 5 Swimming Lessons
November 21 Gayndah Excursion - Snr Concert Band, SM Singers & String Ensemble
November 21 1C Assembly Item
November 22 Presentation Day Liturgy
November 28 Year 5’s to visit Siena College
November 29 Years 4-7 Swimming Carnival
December 3 Year 7 Graduation Dinner
December 4 Year 5’s to visit St John’s Nambour
December 4 Year 7 Graduation Liturgy
December 6 School end of year Liturgy 11.00am

2014
January 29 1st Day Term 1
April 4 Last Day Term 1
April 22 1st Day Term 2
June 27 Last Day Term 2
July 14 1st Day Term 3
September 19 Last Day Term 3
October 7 1st Day Term 4
December 5 School year ends

Tasting Success

Good luck to Caitlyn Teale (3D), Olivia MacDonald (4C) and Leylani Robinson (7D) who will be travelling to Melbourne to participate in the Australian All Star Cheerleading Federation (AASCF) Nationals Competition next weekend.

Football NEWS

Stella Football Club is still in need of office bearers for the 2014 season. We currently need a President, Vice President, Groundsman(or more than one), Publicity Officer and Canteen Convenor(s). If these positions are not filled unfortunately the club will have to cease operation. This club has been running for 32 years and it will be a shame if it has to come to this. If you are interested in any position or have a question please don't hesitate to contact me on 0411 283 065. Remember we are a family club and will help you with what position you choose.

Regards
Damien Faux (Interim President)

Tuckshop News

To all Tuckshop volunteers
Tuckshop helpers luncheon 28 November 12.00 at Phons Thai. Email with details to come.

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Ingredients Roster

NEEDED:- PICKLE MIX, MUFFIN MIX & CHOCOLATE CAKE MIX
There are so many valuable qualities we want to instill in our children -- why should we focus on gratitude? By learning gratitude, children become sensitive to the feelings of others, developing their innate capacities for empathy and altruism, whereas entitled kids end up feeling perpetually disappointed.

**What Gratitude Is Not** - Sometimes in our efforts to instill gratitude, we use approaches that look similar to gratitude but have unintended negative effects:

**Threats** - Lecturing your child about how spoiled they are or threatening to take away their toys because their room is too cluttered does not teach gratitude.

**Comparisons** - “Other children would give anything to have what you have” and other comments like these are really comparisons, not lessons in gratitude. This kind of “reverse envy” is more likely to inspire greed and guilt than gratitude.

**Indebtedness** - Feeling obligated to return a favour or do something nice to get out of another person’s debt is not gratitude. The feeling behind indebtedness is negative and focused on a specific person, whereas gratitude is positive and can be directed toward anyone.

**Flattery** - Lavishing gifts or compliments on someone isn’t necessarily an expression of gratitude. Thanking people in these ways produces resentment, guilt and a sense of obligation rather than appreciation.

**Manipulation** - Some people have questionable motives behind their expressions of gratitude. For example, kinds words may be used to manipulate someone into doing something, exert control or secure someone’s loyalty or good favour.

**The Recipe for Authentic Gratitude** - Most parents want their children to be happy, yet we shower them with gifts, protect them from the natural consequences of their actions and do all kinds of things that actually make them less happy. If we really want our kids to be happy, we need to instill an attitude of gratitude. It can be difficult but it is most necessary to persist to instill gratitude in children who are naturally self-centered and growing up in an entitlement-driven society.

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