Dear Parents,

Thank you to the parents who came along to the Maths Information Night last Tuesday. A large group of parents were present and they engaged very enthusiastically in the workshops designed to allow parents to participate first hand in the experiences enjoyed by students each day.

As mentioned in an earlier letter to parents the night was organised because parents requested information about the teaching of Mathematics.

Copies of information given out at the meeting last Monday are available at the school office.

My sincere thanks to Miss Prue Hall (Kindergarten teacher: Mathematics Coordinator) for organising the evening and to Dr Kerry Giumelli (Teaching Educator: Catholic Education Office: Parramatta), and all teachers from St Aidan’s for taking part in the evening and for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm with parents.

Attached to this newsletter is an article from the Sydney Morning Herald 3rd August 2014. The article discusses the impact of student absences on their learning.

It is alarming that so many students from St Aidan’s are taken out of school for extended holidays both overseas and within Australia. In some instances a student is missing more than 30 school days. In some cases the students are already experiencing difficulty with their learning. These learning difficulties are then exacerbated by prolonged planned absences from school.

As you are aware parents must seek permission from the school Principal for any absences other than sick leave. A permission form ‘Applying for extended holidays – students’, must be completed prior to the travel. (This form is available to download from the school’s website under ‘parent information / general’) or available at the school office.

Parents are asked to consult me before planning extended holidays. This provides an opportunity to discuss the student’s learning and the possible implications of the absence from school on the learning. A record of these meetings will be kept at the school for future reference.

Student’s half yearly and annual reports will also include the number of days absent due to extended holidays.

Please read this attached article carefully and remember seek advice from myself before any extended holidays are booked. Your child’s learning is of the utmost importance to the St Aidan’s Staff.

Congratulations to the students who represented St Aidan’s in the Blacktown Zone Athletics Carnival on Tuesday. The Senior Girls Relay Team and Yannis Clark have qualified for the Parramatta Diocesan Athletics Carnival. Well done children. Thank you to Mt Julius for preparing the squad.

As some of you are aware, sixty students from years four, five and six have been selected to perform in the Creative Arts Expo on 21st August. The year four students will be part of a combined choir and the years five and six students are performing a medley of song and dance from ‘the Wizard of Oz’. This expo was held three years ago and includes four other Catholic Primary schools from the Mt Druitt area. On your behalf I extend best wishes to the students representing St Aidan’s at the Expo.

A reminder that the school’s website can be found at staidans.parra.catholic.edu.au

Thank you for your continued support as we work in partnership in the learning and teaching of your children.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Elizabeth Ricketts
Principal.

Forgive from your heart anyone who has pained you.

Saint Mary MacKillop

In this issue…

• Reflection
• Explanation of syllabus
• Head Lice
• Numeracy news
• Fathers Day Stall
• Hall of Fame
• PRC meetings
• Meal Deal order form
REFLECTION
Matthew’s Gospel has been divided into narratives and discourses. The five discourses being: the Sermon on the Mount (chapters five to seven); Missionary Instruction (chapter ten); collection of Parables (chapter thirteen); Community Instruction (chapter eighteen) and Sermon on Eschatology (chapters twenty-three to twenty-five). These five discourses are directly related to Jesus speaking to the people.

Matthew’s followers consisted of Gentiles (people of other nations) as well as Christian-Jews who had left their Jewish roots to follow Christ. It was important for this community to remain linked with Jewish traditions and beliefs. A great deal of Matthew’s work, especially the discourses linked Jesus to Moses or the Old Testament.

In the first discourse (the Beatitudes), Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount linking him to Moses, who had received the law from God on Mount Sinai. The importance of the law being handed down on the Mount in both instances was to keep the Christian-Jews faithful to Jesus and their Jewish heritage. Judaism was a way of life not just a religion, so for Matthew’s followers, Jesus needed to remain linked to his Jewish roots.

Mrs. Silvana Murphy
Religious Education Coordinator.

EXPLANATION OF SYLLABUS
Mathematics
Students develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of learning experiences across:
- Number and Algebra, e.g. whole numbers and fractions and decimals
- Measurement and Geometry, e.g. length, area and time
- Statistics and Probability, e.g. data and chance.

They develop their problem-solving skills and mathematical reasoning and communication. Students in Stage Three develop a deeper understanding of Statistics and Probability.

Mrs. Christine Leahy
Assistant Principal.

LITERACY MATTERS
Talking and Listening
Children develop confidence using spoken language as they learn to talk and listen for different purposes.

Talking enables children to clarify their ideas, explore issues, solve problems and to develop understandings in all Key Learning Areas.

Mrs. Christine Leahy
Assistant Principal.

NUMERACY NEWS
Children’s experiences with measuring mass come from watching adults measure ingredients. Their understanding of mass is developed when they compare, measure and describe different objects.

Children need to experiment and explore measuring different materials with their hands before they begin to measure using formal units such as grams and kilograms.

What can you do at home to develop your child’s understanding of mass?
- Show your child how to use the kitchen scales to measure ingredients.
- Encourage your child to ‘feel’ different objects (balance two objects in their hands and decide which is heavier and lighter).
- Show your child where the weight of food or foods are recorded on the package.

When learning about mass children need to continue to notice, discuss and explore objects around them. This will challenge their thinking about mass and develop their visualisation skills.

In the next newsletter I will address how the home environment can develop deep mathematical thinking in relation to volume and capacity.

What Mathematics will you notice, discuss and explore with your child this week?

Mrs Prudence Hall
Lead Numeracy Teacher.

HEAD LICE
Some cases of head lice have been detected in classes. Just a reminder to check your child’s hair regularly for evidence of head lice/nits and use a preventative treatment as a matter of course.

SCHOOL FEES
Term three School fees are due on the 19th August 2014. If you are not up to date with your fees please contact Mrs Wakeling to discuss payment options/arrangements on (02) 9625 3181.

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