Dear St Paul’s Community,

What a great morning we had last Friday with the Musical Showcase. It was fantastic to see the looks on students and parents faces during the show. I was amazed by how far our students have progressed in three terms of instrument lessons. Congratulations and thank you to Andrew Arthurs and Raelene Dawson for all the hard work that has gone into the Music program this year.

As we draw closer to the end of the year we are getting closer to finalising the 2014 class structure. Due to ongoing enrolments, there is still a possibility that we will have yet another class, which may mean a slightly different structure.

At this stage our class structure is the following:

1. 5/6
2. 5/6
3. 5/6
4. 3/4
5. 3/4
6. 3/4
7. 1/2
8. 1/2
9. 1/2
10. T/1
11. Transition
12. Specialist—Music
13. Specialist —PE
14. Specialist-Indonesian

Similar combinations of classes assists greatly with planning and teaching. Teachers had a great session planning for next year last week and it was fantastic to hear the professional dialogue. Team planning gives teachers more time to discuss how they teach, so it is a really exciting time for the school and teachers as they look forward to 2014. I have included some information about Multi-Age Classrooms to assist your understanding of why schools use this model. We saw the success of this model this year with Miss Pollon’s, Miss Jo Knight’s and Ms Peyton and Miss Mohr’s class. It is about quality teaching and quality programs, not about what is written on the door.

### Multi Age Classrooms

**Learning and teaching in a multi-age classroom**

Throughout Australia there are many schools that have mixed-age classes. Multi-age grouping is just one of the ways used to organise classrooms and it is used very effectively at St Paul’s. It is the deliberate mixing of children from various age groups of more than one year in the one class. Multi-age groupings are also known by other terms, e.g. vertical, family and heterogeneous groupings. Multi-age classes at St Paul’s allow us to have flexibility with class groupings, enabling us to distribute students across classes, taking into consideration each child’s learning and behavioural needs, students who work well together, students’ strengths and areas for development.

**What are the benefits for teachers and children?**

For St Paul’s, the real benefit of our model for 2014 is the opportunities for teachers to plan together. The research is quite clear on this, when teacher’s talk about how they are going to teach, the program improves. Research also highlights the **benefits** for both teachers and children when learning and teaching in a multi-age classroom. Benefits include more holistic, child-responsive curriculum practices that consider the understandings, capabilities and dispositions that children need for future work, e.g. working in diverse environments that seek workers who are multi-skilled, literate, cooperative, creative, adaptable, independent and resourceful. Teachers program and cater for the range of student abilities in their class, extending those who are working at level and beyond and providing support for those who are still consolidating their knowledge and understandings of specific concepts.
In a multi-age setting, younger children benefit from the positive models of older children, often aspiring to their levels of capability. At the same time, older children often rise to the expectations of the younger children and teacher, being very responsible and having opportunities to lend and use their expertise.

At St Paul’s teachers work together across year levels to plan learning experiences that cater for the range of abilities and interests of students in their classes.

**What does the research say about multi-age learning and teaching?**

- Teachers concentrate on what children *can* do, rather than what they can’t do. There is never any fear of failure, which builds confidence.
- Competition is removed from the classroom. There is no comparison with other children and children are always ready to “have a go”.
- Children are allowed to make choices and express themselves in many ways. Creative activities are common.
- Children’s ideas are welcomed, and can be tried out. Children feel good about themselves, which makes an excellent environment for learning.
- There is freedom of choice and exploration of many ideas, which makes learning an exciting and real part of children’s lives.
- Children enter a class where there are older children, so settling in is much easier. Older children are provided with leadership opportunities, which develop their confidence and makes them feel very worthwhile and important.
- Children are not segregated into class year levels. They mix freely and are encouraged to work and play together, to cooperate and make connections with students across year levels.
- Schedules and routines are established that enhance student responsibility for their own learning and flexible use of time.
- Group learning experiences provide opportunities to extend students across and within year levels.
- Children are encouraged to have a high level of independence and efficiency in learning individually or in combination with others.
- Children serve as “teachers” to others within and across different year levels (peer tutoring).


Some things to draw to your attention:

**Staffing News.**

- **Fiona Coughlan** has accepted the 0.6 position for next year. Fiona previously taught at OLSH Alice Springs from 2006 to 2011. Fiona has received much professional development in Numeracy, literacy and the integration of ICT into the classroom. She is currently travelling in South Africa which has made some interesting phone calls.

- **Carols Night. 5:30pm December 5 at the school.** All Welcome. Given the time of year, Father Roy has said we can use the church for the performance. We realise this could be squashy, but it is difficult to find a place where we can all fit with seating allowing that it could be raining on the night. Students will be seated with their families.

- **BBQ** will be sausages only. Families are welcome to bring their own food and bring a picnic rug and sit on the grass. There are speakers in the outside areas.

- **Year Six Graduation** will take place on December 9 at Crocosaurus Cove.

- **End of Year Mass and Ceremony** – December 12.

- **FACEBOOK:** Official school Page St Paul’s Catholic Primary School Nightcliff NT

**God Bless**

Anthony

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**Advent Assembly times for Monday 9th December – Miss Jo’s class.**

Assembly commences at 8:15 and you are very welcome to join us.

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**St Paul’s Parish**

**Trower Rd, Nightcliff**

**Mass Times:**

- Saturday Mass 6.00pm (Vigil)
- Sunday Mass 8.30am and 6.00pm
- 1st Sunday of the month 10.00am
- Syro-Malabar Mass
- Last Sunday of month 8.30am Children’s mass
Parent Learning Tips

Parents and the Home Environment they create are the single most important factor in shaping their children’s achievements and prospects. Research has shown that in order to raise achievement, parents need to be both involved in schools and engaged in learning (Harris and Goodall, 2007)

Cooking is a great way to improve your child’s learning. Many skills of learning go into cooking. Reading the recipe, discussing what to do and reading the measurements. Things to help your child’s learning over the holidays.

Go for a bike ride
Visit a museum
Read a book together
Encourage them to have conversations
Cook together
Give them money to spend at the supermarket
Have a break, relax.

Thanks for all the hard work you have done with your child this year. It really helps with their learning.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5th Dec</td>
<td>Carols Evening 5.30—7pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Dec</td>
<td>Yr 6 Graduation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th Dec</td>
<td>Reports and Portfolios sent home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th Dec</td>
<td>End of Year Mass 9.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11am Awards Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st Jan</td>
<td>End of Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30th Jan</td>
<td>School uniform sales commence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Congratulations Kye Middleton who represented the Territory and St Paul’s in the Under 12/s athletics track and field event in Brisbane. He was involved in the 100m, 200m and 8x100m relay. Well done—we are very proud of you.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Last week at the weekly staff briefing, one of the items of business was ‘Candy Canes’ and whether we would allow the children to distribute candy canes to their classmates. The primary concern was that some children would end up with up to 28 candy canes if all students in the class took this option, but also, that we wanted to encourage the students to think beyond themselves and consider giving to those who are less fortunate. Further, we didn’t want any students to be in a difficult situation where they were the only students in a class to not distribute candy canes. The decision was made that we would leave it up to the children/families, but that we would reinforce the message that the students have received all year about considering those in more challenging circumstances to their own.

Earlier this week, I was surprised to witness the response of the group of students when one student produced a container of candy canes. I hadn’t realised candy canes were obviously such a rarity in Darwin!! The generosity which our students show to each other is beyond compare, however, this Advent we would ask that you encourage your children to consider the situation of children who are not as fortunate as they are, and perhaps save their loose change to make a donation to a worthy cause. This clip might be useful to stimulate conversation within your family http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FlOug8a8BZc&feature=related

If you think this might be something which your family might consider and you are looking for a cause, you can’t go wrong with the following:

https://www.vinnies.org.au/donate

Wishing you a safe and peaceful Advent and Christmas

Louise Peyton

SPORTS 2013

Students from St Paul’s have participated in many different sporting activities throughout the year. Congratulations to all those students who represented the school at different Cluster Events, Inter-School Competitions and Interstate Events. Thank-you to all the teachers, coaches and parent helpers who assisted in any way to ensure these activities and events ran smoothly.

CLUSTER SPORTING EVENTS FOR 2014

The first Cluster Event for 2014 is Cricket. This will be open to students in years 4-6 and is being held during Week 4 of Term 1. Due to the busy first term schedule, the trials for representing the Cluster will actually be held before this – in Week 3 of Term 1. Any interested students will need to be quick off the mark with permission notes in order to access both of these Cricket activities. Further information will be available when school begins next year.
CHRISTMAS AT ST PAUL’S

Thursday 19th Advent Reconciliation at 7.30 pm

CHRISTMAS EVE
6.30 PM Children’s Mass and Pageant
8.30 pm Syro-Malabar Mass
11.30 pm Carols and Midnight Mass

CHRISTMAS DAY
8.30am Mass of Christmas Morning
10.30 am Italian Mass
6.00 pm Vietnamese Mass

Minecraft Holiday Program

WHEN
1. Tuesday & Wednesday 17/18 Dec.

WHERE - Darwin Middle School

COST - $120 per person

For registration & more info go to http://minecraftcamps.net/events
Tim Wicks - 0400 040 3963 OR info@minecraftcamps.net

Year 3/4 Netball Team coached by Aimee Johns

Brochure in office bags today.
Dear Parent/Guardian

The Northern Territory Government is committed to supporting all Territory families in helping their children receive a quality education.

I am therefore pleased to advise that every enrolled school-aged child across the Northern Territory will again be entitled to $150 through the Back to School Payment Scheme in 2014. In accordance with our election commitment, this is twice the amount that was provided through this scheme under the previous government.

The Back to School Payment Scheme entitlement can be used during Term 1, 2014 to purchase essential school items through your child’s school. Essential school items may include uniforms, text books, stationery, resource hire schemes, subject material costs, student identification cards and costs for camps and excursions.

For preschool students, the Back to School Payment Scheme entitlement can be used during the term that the child first commences school.

Your school will record all eligible purchases made and can provide you with a record of payment on request to enable you to keep track of how much of your entitlement has been used.

I have attached a list of frequently asked questions about the Back to School Payment Scheme. If you would like further information about your entitlement, please contact your child’s school.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

PETER CHANDLER
Back to School Payment Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Back to School Payment Scheme?
The Back to School Payment Scheme was initiated by the Northern Territory Government to help families offset the beginning of year expenses for students.

How much is the entitlement worth?
The Back to School Payment Scheme is to the value of $150 per eligible student.

Who is eligible for the Back to School Payment Scheme?
Students enrolled and attending a Northern Territory (NT) school are eligible for the Back to School Payment Scheme. This includes students enrolled at NT government and non-government schools and NT home-educated students.

Where can the Back to School Payment Scheme entitlement be used?
The entitlement for students enrolled in NT schools can only be used through the school the student first attends at the beginning of the school year. The entitlement cannot be used at shopping centres, supermarkets, takeaway food outlets etc.

Schools provide the goods and services that enrolled students may purchase with their entitlement. Parents/students do not need to provide copies of a letter or any other item to access their entitlement.

What can the Back to School Payment Scheme be used for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entitlement may include Goods and Services such as:</th>
<th>Entitlement cannot be:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• textbooks</td>
<td>• used for voluntary parent contributions, including donations to the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• stationery, including calculators, flash drives, school diaries etc.</td>
<td>• used for canteen purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• uniforms, including hats, book bags etc.</td>
<td>• redeemed for cash, including refunds for purchased goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• resource hire schemes, excluding refundable deposits</td>
<td>• transferred between students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• elective subject/material fees</td>
<td>• transferred to another school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student ID card</td>
<td>• returned to parents after Term one if they authorised the funds to be used for activities/items to be purchased in Terms 2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• school camps</td>
<td>• used to purchase goods and services from suppliers other than the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• excursions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• elective activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• student photocopying</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Year Book</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

School Councils can decide the appropriate goods and services to offer to their school community. The goods and services must provide value-for-money and parents/students should be able to take...
possession of goods up to the value of $150 or access the equivalent value of services. Schools cannot use the payment scheme for classroom supplies on behalf of parents/students.

It should be noted that a refund will not be granted, where the entitlement is used for goods or services which are not available until after Term one (e.g. a Year Book in Term four or a school camp in Term three) if the student leaves the school in Term two, or the camp is cancelled.

Is there a Back to School Payment Scheme voucher?
No. It is not necessary for families to produce any documentation in order to use the entitlement.

Does the entitlement have an expiry date?
The Back to School Payment must be used by the following timeframes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Payment Scheme must be used by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool students</td>
<td>The end of the term that the student commenced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition to Year 12 students</td>
<td>End of Term One</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can the Back to School Payment Scheme entitlement be used for the following school year if it has a remaining balance?
No. The Back to School entitlements expire as set out in the table above.

Does the entitlement have to be used all at once or, for example, can it be used for something worth $20 in February and then for something else in March?
The entitlement can be used multiple times and at different times to the total value of $150 as set out in the table above.

Can students use the entitlement?
While it is preferable that a parent/guardian uses the entitlement, it is acceptable for older students to use the entitlement for school items with the permission of parents/guardians. However, neither DoE nor the school accepts responsibility if the student uses the entitlement without the parent’s permission.

What happens if the student changes school and the full entitlement has not been used?
The entitlement or the balance remaining of it – is not transferrable to other schools. The $150 entitlement must be used at the school where the student first enrolled and attended in Term one.

What happens if the student already has a school uniform, books or stationery? What else can the entitlement be used for?
The entitlement can be used for any essential school item available at the student’s school. The school should be contacted to discuss the options available.

What is the School Record of Payment form?
Schools must keep a record of the goods and services used by each parent/student. Schools may use the School Record of Payment form or schools can choose another preferred method of record keeping. School’s must provide a record of goods and services used by parents/students on request.

Is the entitlement taxable? Does it have to be claimed as income?
No. The Back to School Payment Scheme is not taxable and does not need to be included on an income tax statement.