



Welcome to Year 6 2019

18th February, 2019

Dear Parents and Students,

We warmly welcome you all to this very special year – the last of your child's primary education... What a significant and exciting milestone! We are thoroughly looking forward to a productive and rewarding year of working in partnership with you and your beautiful children. They have already begun to settle in and learn about the expectations of leadership within the school and have made a wonderful start by demonstrating great care in their roles as buddies to our new Kindergarten students. Our Leadership Camp to The Collaroy Centre was a great success and gave all of our Stage Three students a chance to get to know one another better, as we participated in team building activities and various personal challenges. Our Year 6 students were an absolute pleasure to take on camp – they were very well behaved and on the whole, demonstrated great maturity, independence and respect.

We have now completed all of our beginning of year assessments and we are prepared for a busy term ahead!

Uniform

Thank you **SO** much for the wonderful support you have given to our Year 6 students with their uniform so far. This does not go unnoticed! The way that students wear their uniform speaks volumes about their respect for themselves and their respect for their school. As leaders, it is vital that our Year 6 students set a high standard for other students in the school. This includes wearing our full St Joseph's school uniform. ***Please ensure that your child wears the correct uniform to school every day, even towards the end of the year.*** This includes proper black leather school shoes, correct socks and a proper, clean school hat (*please note that peak caps are not our proper school uniform*).

Home Learning

At St Joseph's we recognise that research states overwhelmingly that at primary school level, homework has little or no long term academic benefits, however we concede, together with many of our previous Stage Three parents, that home learning *can have the potential* to help prepare Year 6 students for the organisational demands of high school. We also acknowledge current research, which states that the skills of independent, self-directed learning can potentially be developed when students receive organisational and other support from their parents (Horsley and Walker, 2013).

In short, your child stands the best chance of success when you show that you value home learning, take an interest in what they are doing and support them by making a quiet space available for them to focus. Tips for supporting your children to become more organised for homework and school can be found at:

<http://www.schoolatoz.nsw.edu.au/homework:and:study/homework:tips/eight:great:ways:to:get:your:kids:organised:for:school>

Home learning will begin this week and will finish in Week 10. There will be no home learning in Week 7 (Wellbeing week). As a rule, it will be given out on **Mondays** and should be returned for marking on **Fridays** this term. There is no home learning book this year, rather, we will be using Google Suite to set and hand in home learning. Sometimes, home learning will be due in on different days of the week to help students prepare for transition to high school. Students now have school diaries to help them keep track of this. Please encourage your child to use their diary at home to add important dates for your family. **PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD READS AT LEAST 5 TIMES PER WEEK.**

Mobile phones

Parents are asked to avoid ringing or sending SMS messages to their children during school time. If necessary, messages can be passed on to students via the school office. We believe that students' use of mobile phones, especially when some are posting to social media or sending text messages, needs to be under the careful

supervision of their parents. This is logistically difficult to manage at school, therefore we expect that students will keep their phones in their school bags during school hours. The use of phones during school hours may result in phones being confiscated and passed onto the principal. Students will then need to meet with the principal to reclaim their phones. This protocol is consistent with most high schools' policies around the use of mobile phones at school.

Developing independence

Authentic independence is the key to self-esteem. It has been said that as parents, our primary function is to become redundant. Sometimes, in the enthusiasm for wanting our children to do well in life, we forget that **genuinely** doing well means doing well for themselves. Sometimes, it is the busyness and pace of life today that means we often do things for our children that they could be doing for themselves, in order to be on time for work, activities, etc. Self-esteem comes from building skills and mastering challenging tasks on their own. Habitually doing things for your child that he or she is capable of runs the risk of sending the message that you don't think he or she can do it. Every child needs to practise being independent, and every parent needs to practise letting their child **be** independent. Isn't that what each of us wants? For our child to become an adult who can make good decisions, who feels confident and knows him or herself?

At this time in your child's development as he or she prepares to transition to high school, it is critical for him or her to feel a sense of independence. **Now** is the perfect time to address this with your child. You might like to put it to your child like this: Now that you are getting older and preparing to move to high school, what things do you think you could do at home? These tasks might include:

- Getting clothes ready for school the following day, including ironing these clothes where necessary (of course, this will require training and supervision)
- Using the washing machine and dryer or learning to hang clothes on the clothesline
- Planning and preparing a simple meal
- Getting his or her own crunch and sip ready for school, or better still, lunch! Don't forget Nude Food Day!
- Organising notes, etc, that need to be returned to school
- Setting up a workspace where they can complete home learning
- Waking themselves up in the morning by setting their own alarm clock
- Polishing their own school shoes
- Mowing the lawn

It is perfectly reasonable to start with one or two things and master these, remembering that many of these tasks will require your guidance and teaching to begin with, before they move onto doing them completely independently (especially those that involve irons and other potentially dangerous household appliances!!).

Further reading: <http://www.todaysparent.com/kids/teaching-kids-to-be-more-independent/>

Social Media and Texting at Home

The jury is still out on the impact of digital devices on children and young people. Currently, there are studies being conducted on the effects of technology on children's brains, as well as studies on gaming addiction, social media addiction, attention-related issues, obesity, decision-making, hand-eye coordination, vision and sleep to name a few. It is a fine line between balancing the need for children to be technology-literate and the overuse of technology, particularly the unsupervised use of social media, as mentioned. Children need constant parent vigilance, a diligent, flexible approach and the ability to say a clear 'no, you can't use that right now'.

It is perfectly reasonable to insist that a device sits on a shelf somewhere whilst you eat dinner together. You can show children that social media isn't the only way to stay in touch with friends and talk to them about how photographs that are posted on social media are not always an accurate reflection of real, everyday life. You can also insist on 'charging time' for all devices throughout the night, so that children aren't taking i-pads, i-pods and i-phones to bed with them, a potentially dangerous practice which can impact disastrously on sleep, not to mention the potential dangers associated with unsupervised internet use. Problems caused by misunderstandings or inappropriate use of social media and texting usually tend to spill over into the classroom and playground, and take up valuable learning time as well as creating emotional stress for all the children (and somewhat helpless teachers) concerned.

(Adapted from Michael Grose's parentingideas.com.au 2017)

There has recently been a concerning increase in incidents regarding younger people's use of the Internet and the NSW Police and Australian Federal Police have responded by developing a presentation to both inform and caution young people about the risks associated with using the Internet, particularly social media.

Some of the key points to consider are:

- It is important to read the **terms and conditions** when signing up for social media accounts. These list the minimum age for users (even though entering your age is not part of the sign-up process). The **minimum age for Instagram is 13 years**. The **minimum age for Kik users is 15** and the **minimum age for Snapchat is 13 years**, though users between the ages of 15 and 18 require parental consent. It is important to **ALWAYS tell the truth** about your age when asked to on social media.
- Many young people these days have scores of friends or followers on their social media accounts. Ask yourself: *Do I actually know all these people who friend or follow me on social media? Would I feel safe meeting them at the park or would my parents be happy for me to meet any of these people at the park or somewhere else?* If not, delete them. React to strangers online in the same way that you would react to them in real life.
- Make sure your password is safe – ideally, passwords should be 8 characters (or more) long, containing at least one capital letter and one numeral.
- Don't post pictures of **anyone** online **without their consent**. If somebody asks you to send them pictures of private parts of your body, tell a trusted adult **immediately**. If someone sends you such photos of themselves, tell a trusted adult **immediately**. **Possession of such photos is a criminal offence.**
- Switch off your location services and don't use the 'check-in' function to say where you are.
- If you have a social media account, switch your settings to 'private'. Also, pass on your access details to your parents for your own safety.
- **Never** ever meet up with someone you've only met online.
- Pause and think before posting or sharing on social media. Even though it sometimes seems that these photos disappear (eg on Snapchat), they can still be easily retrieved. Always use the 'grandma test' as your rule of thumb – if your grandma wouldn't like it, don't post or share it!
- Balance your on-line/off-line activities. It is not healthy to be on the Internet too long, even if you are watching passively, eg youtube.

Weekly routine Term 1 and upcoming dates

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mrs Paul	Mrs Paul	Mrs Fogwell	Mrs Fogwell	Mrs Paul
Sports uniform		Library Nude Food Day		Sports uniform Music
		Assembly (even weeks)		

Coming events

- Northern Beaches Swimming Carnival 28th February
- Please refer to school newsletter for other upcoming dates

We genuinely value partnership with parents as a powerful vehicle for success in our students. If you have any questions, concerns, issues, etc. please don't hesitate to contact either one of us. Our email addresses are listed below – we ask that you please copy **both** of us in if you are emailing. If you would rather chat, please contact us by phone or make an appointment to chat in person. We are looking forward to a wonderful year ahead!

Warmest regards,

Brenda Paul and Kath Fogwell

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Year 6 2019

Curriculum Overview Term One

Religious Education

Discipleship – Leading in the Way of Jesus

As Catholic disciples we seek to live like Jesus in the way we are and the things we do; the goals we set and the values we hold as communities and as individuals. In this module, senior students reflect upon how they can be leaders in the way that Jesus showed us.

Lent to Easter

In this module students will explore the Paschal Mystery as they tap into an understanding of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as they journey through the Season of Lent to Holy Week, culminating in Jesus' resurrection and the joy of the Easter Season.

Through participation and involvement in the module as well as in whole school Lent and Easter activities and celebrations, students will gain an awareness of the stories, actions and symbols of Lent and Easter.

Science and Technology

Coding 3.0 - Stage 3 of the Digital Technologies strand focuses on understanding the role individual components of digital systems play in processing and representing data. Students design, modify and follow algorithms involving branching and iteration. Stage 3 of this strand further develops students' knowledge and understanding of project management, abstraction and the relationship between models and the real-world systems they represent.

Sustainable Management - Stage 3 of the Living World strand focuses on the growth and survival of living things and how their adaptations over time suit their environment. Students investigate how and why food and fibre are produced in sustainable, managed environments that enable people to grow and be healthy. This strand further develops students' knowledge and understanding of the environmental and biological sciences.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)

Students will participate in sports lessons led by our specialist **PE** teacher, Mrs Nicola Frost, on a Friday. They will also be involved in extra sport on a Monday, with Mrs Paul. The extra sport day may change after this, but we will let you know if it does. Our **Personal Development and Health** unit, entitled 'Fit for Life' where students examine key factors that contribute to a balanced lifestyle and keeping safe and healthy. They examine nutritional information, disease prevention and the effects of drugs on the body and they identify behaviours that impact on wellbeing. Students assess the safety of situations in home, school, water and road environments and identify appropriate responses. They describe and practice a range of personal safety strategies that could be used in threatening or abusive situations. They take responsibility for personal decisions, recognizing the effects that decisions have on self and others.

English

Reading & Viewing: Our class novel and also one of our Reader's Circle choices this term, is *Wonder, by RJ Palacio* – a novel rich in its lessons about friendship and courage, centred on a child who was born with a facial difference. Other class novels that groups will be reading are *Everything I've Never Said by Samantha Wheeler* – a powerful story about a 12 year girl with Rett Syndrome who has no way of communicating with others; *Thunderwith by Libby Hathorn* – a novel about hope and the human spirit's ability to finally win through and *Landslide by Colin Thiele* - an engrossing adventure with an environmental theme. These stories are all about children who are faced with challenges and hardship which they must overcome and who are of a similar age to our Year 6 class.. Our Reading and Viewing program takes place across a balance of activities such as shared reading, modelled reading and small group reading. We read, view, write, speak and listen every day.

Writing and Representing, Spelling and Grammar: Our Writing program is linked to a variety of other areas, including Reading and Viewing and Science and Technology. Lessons are structured in a variety of ways, including whole class lessons, as well as small group instruction. Weekly spelling activities are undertaken in the context of writing (as well as in separate spelling activities) and also connect to our reading. Spelling lists also incorporate students' personal words and new vocabulary. A high standard of handwriting is expected, with handwriting focus lessons held every week.

Speaking and Listening and Vocabulary: Students experience a variety of activities that develop their communication skills, including asking questions, discussion with peers, being an attentive listener, responding to information and stories.

Mathematics

Students will participate in the Mathematical strands individually, in groups and as a whole class through a variety of activities. We incorporate *open-ended tasks* and *hard thinking to challenge all students at their point of need*. Our studies this term will be centred on the following areas:

Whole Numbers
Multiplication and Division
Area

Angles
Volume and Capacity
3D Space

Creative Arts

Students will participate in Music and Drama lessons led by our specialist **Music**, teacher, Mr Warby, on a Friday. We will create a variety of artworks and activities integrated with our topics across the curriculum this term. Our artist studies will be centred on Dion Archibold.