Dear Parents and Caregivers,

It has been interesting reading in the media over the past few weeks about Year 12 and NAPLAN results. While St John’s currently enjoys good results, these are just a small story of St John’s success. The results tend to only carry part of the truth. They are taken at face value and hold up to very little scrutiny. They tell of success in one area, but they don’t tell the great stories of real success. The stories of the students who aren’t academic, who work their hearts out to get the best possible results they can, the students who have overcome incredible physical (including those whose first language is not English) and psychological odds to achieve what the NAPLAN would see as a benchmark score or a Year 12 result that will get them into university, or a trade, or an apprenticeship and on their way to a life full of amazing possibilities. What about the success of students who complete an alternative curriculum, non OP based? Those students who are gifted with their hands, or artistic in a variety of ways and don’t have the opportunity to show outstanding results in the areas in which they are most talented and gifted.

One of the key ingredients for success is about relationships. High profile researchers such as Lyn Worsley, tell us that these relationships are among the key factors in determining the success of a student. Teachers know this and so do students! So, what should a GREAT school look like? This depends on the child. No school is perfect for everyone, but these questions may help.

1) Will your child thrive in the school environment?
2) Which school will nurture your child’s passions?
3) Does your child need extra support because they are struggling or should they be able to be pushed in the areas in which they are particularly strong? (In some schools, the term ‘extension’ classes means – less behaviour problems - not about extending the child’s gifts!)
4) Does the school provide VALUE based education and service learning, a sense of helping others, giving the same moral values the parents wish for their child or family?
5) A school needs to feel right, a sense of safety, a sense of pride (including school uniform and staff dress), building positive relationships, learning resilience and a sense of order in the classroom.

These are just a few of the strengths schools should have that are not measurable by NAPLAN or OP results.

At the moment, St John’s has a number of initiatives: the extra Prep teacher (full time), an extra teacher for Year One (three days a week) and an extra Year Two teacher (two days a week). These extra staff are there to help students achieve. They give valuable support for those who struggle and those who are advanced. This is in addition to the normal School Officer time and the two intervention teachers (who work with small groups in these classes).
Current NEWS!

St John’s App - News

You can now select which groups from whom you would like to receive messages. Here’s how:
• Ensure you have updated the St John’s App.
• When you next open the App, go into Messages and on the top right hand corner click the cog icon 🔄.
• From here, you can choose and save the groups from whom you would like to receive notifications.
• As groups will be added throughout the year, it would be wise to check the groups and update your choice every month or so.
• For example, if you have a son in Year Eleven who is in Confraternity but not The Wizard of Oz, you would select to receive Year Twelve and Confraternity messages only, leaving The Wizard of Oz unchecked so you don’t receive these alerts.
• Please note: You will still receive messages that apply to the whole school.

IMMUNISATIONS
The new dates for the Years 7/8 vaccinations are March 1, May 17, October 11.

We have also have Mrs Bernie Makim as our Coordinator of Positive Education, working with our School Psychologist/Counsellor Cathy Perkins to help our students be resilient, to work on safe behaviours and anti-bullying messages. More will be said on these topics in the coming weeks.

Reflection

God, the Book of Kings says, was not in the whirlwind. God was in the whisper. Silence is where we go to hear the deep, clear voice of God within us. Silence is what gets our attention.

Yours sincerely
Nicholas Lynch

Year Two

This year in Year Two, students have been developing their understanding of number and place value by investigating numbers beyond 100. They have been using the twos, fives and tens counting sequence in order to identify missing elements in patterns. Students will continue to practise addition and subtraction facts, using many different mental and written strategies. In the next few weeks, Year Two will be working with fractions such as halves, quarters and eighths, focusing on dividing shapes and collections into equal parts. They will also use units of measurement to compare and order objects and measure length and area. They will recall the days of the week and months of the year, and use calendars to record and plan significant events and connect seasons to the months of the year. We will gather data to create different displays and interpret them.
Counselling at St John’s

I would like to take the opportunity to introduce myself. I am the full-time counsellor at St John’s this year. Some of you may have met me over the past two years while I have been doing a visiting role where I came out from Toowoomba on a semi-regular basis. I am now based in Roma and enjoying being part of the St John’s community. I have worked in the Toowoomba Diocese in various schools for over 10 years. I am a psychologist and will give you a bit of an outline of my role at St John’s.

What does a school counsellor do?

School counsellors work at many levels in schools. They support whole school practice by implementing programs to address bullying, violence, personal safety or behaviour. I will work alongside Mrs Bernadette Makim, who is the Coordinator of Positive Education, in order to do this. We have already started a regular visiting schedule to all P-6 classes to engage in “Circle Time”, which is an activity-based lesson for developing a range of social and emotional skills. They work indirectly with groups within the school by providing advice and support to teachers. They work directly with children or young people and offer counselling and support for problematic life events that can affect all students, such as:

- grief and loss
- bullying
- trauma
- family breakdown, and
- relationship issues.

They also can assist in identifying issues that may impact on a student’s learning. This can involve assessment of learning or behaviour, or assessment of a child or young person’s coping skills.

How do students access the school counsellor?

If your child is in Years P-6, a referral to the school counsellor will be discussed with you and you must sign a consent form agreeing to the service. In Years 7-12, the requirement for parent consent varies depending on the issue and the ability of the student to provide informed consent. Often young people can self-refer to the school counsellor. If you feel your child would benefit from visiting the school counsellor, you can make a time to talk to me about this. Just call at the front office and you will be directed through to me.

What happens with information that is shared?

As a psychologist, I am registered with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulatory Authority and a member of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and therefore regulated by the APS Code of Ethics. This means I have an ethical and legal responsibility to protect the rights to confidentiality and privacy of your child. However, there are occasions when psychologists are legally obliged to disclose information, for example, if they believe that the child, or someone else in the community, is at risk of harm. All confidential psychology files are required to be securely stored either in password protected electronic files or locked filing cabinets. Only the psychologist can access these files.

If you have any questions about the service, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Cathy Perkins
School Counsellor

In 2016, St John’s has 10 first or second year teachers. Research has proven that by schools providing additional support for beginning teachers, it can help them cope with the pressures of starting a new career and ultimately retain them in the teaching profession. In my role this year, I have started to spend time in the classrooms of each of the beginning teachers, providing support and advice for any challenges they face. We also meet regularly, in an environment that is understanding and non-judgmental, to discuss teaching practice and specific needs they have. Over the next couple of weeks, I will feature each of the new teachers to school, in a short profile for your information. I’m sure you will join me in welcoming them to the St John’s community!

Positive Education at St John’s

In 2016, the social and emotional health of our staff and students will be made a priority with the formal introduction of Positive Education at St John's School. Based upon the principles of Positive Psychology (which ask, “What is going right and how can we enhance it?”), Positive Education combines many elements of wellbeing to create a learning and teaching environment in which students and staff have the opportunity to thrive. Through Pastoral Care lessons in secondary and Circle Time in the primary, as well as within the day to day interactions of the school, we will strive to enhance and enrich the positive relationships, engagement, emotions, health, meaning and accomplishments of the school community. Keep a look out for further information on parent information sessions.

Bernadette Makim
Coordinator of Positive Education (COPE)

Mentor Program News

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Trish Parker
Mentor Teacher

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Bernadette Makim
Coordinator of Positive Education (COPE)
Year Four

Geography and Science

What a great start to the year it has been in Year Four! We started our term in Geography by finding out what students knew about the question “How does Earth Sustain life?” The fantastic conversation that came from this question showed that Year Four is ready to take on the challenge of some higher order thinking.

This term, we will be exploring the systems that occur naturally on earth and help to sustain life. We will look at some of the human impacts on these systems and design an investigation that compares the animals, plants and human life in South America and Australia.

We will be tying our Geography and Science together to investigate the life cycles of plants and we will grow our own beans in the classroom. It should cap off a fairytale start to Year Four.

Patrick Herrod

Senior Geography

During Term One, Senior Geography students will be studying the unit of work “Living with climate Change”. In this unit, students will investigate a number of world biomes scrutinising the influences of the biome on how people live and where they live, the industries that exist there, and the types of agriculture practised.

Students will go on to research the causes and results of Acid Rain in Europe, the Greenhouse Effect, as well as rising sea levels and drought. Later in the term, students will be visiting a local property as part of an investigation into how a number of rural properties have endeavoured to “drought proof” themselves by developing a second income stream.

Steve Swires
Welcome to all our new students of St Johns, embarking on their very first year of school at St John’s. The first week of school was all about learning routines and expectations of our Agile Learning Space. We had a range of parent emotions this year with some sending off their very first child to school and others their last. Students have already begun learning letters, numbers and how to take care of their belongings and school environment. Prep is one of the most vital school years, setting students up with the foundation knowledge and thirst for learning, which is needed for the rest of their school journey. Preps will have opportunities to learn in many different ways. These include active learning such as play-based and enquiry-based approaches. They make decisions, solve problems, develop thinking skills, collaborate, communicate and develop a positive sense of self.

Miss Keleher, Miss Croaker and Miss Cochran along with our school officers, Miss Jackie and Mrs Martyn have thoroughly enjoyed the last few weeks of guiding and learning about all our new Prep Students. Last week, Preps experienced many ‘firsts’: meeting their Year Eleven buddies, attending their first whole school assembly, having their first music sessions and taking home their first books from the library.

Miss Kirsten Cochran
Prep Teacher
This year, 34 Years 11 and 12 students along with five teachers headed to Canada for what would be the first Ski Trip to this country, usually St John’s heads to New Zealand for the ski trip, but with an influx of influential Canadian teachers (Miss Topic, Mr Hurl, Miss Barrett, Mrs Free, Miss Fuller) heading to the land of Justin Bieber, Ice Hockey and Maple Syrup seemed like a great option.

Late on Friday night 15th January, we jumped on a bus, and headed to Brisbane to start the first part of our international journey. The final route taken was Roma-Brisbane-Sydney-Los Angeles-Chicago-Toronto-Collingwood, for a total of 46 hours of travel from Roma to our hotel at Blue Mountain Ski Resort. It was all worth it when we woke up the following morning to mountains covered in snow.

Each day, the students had a lesson with an instructor and the skills of our Snowboarders and Skiers improved dramatically. By Friday, some of the students were even showing up the teachers!

On Wednesday, we had a rest day from the snow and headed to Blessed Trinity Catholic High School in Grimsby, about 2 hours' drive from Blue Mountain. As this was Miss Topic's High School, it was a bit of a homecoming as we had the Thunderstruck mentoring crew meet us at the door to rapturous applause. It was a great experience for the students to see how the school day runs in Canada, a genuine highlight was meeting Father Rico and sharing in a liturgy in the schools chapel.

After our time at Blue Mountain finished we headed into Toronto where we saw the CN Tower, Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada, Eaton Centre and Ontario Science Centre. We were also lucky to head to the Air Canada Centre to see the Toronto Raptors Basketball team defeat the Los Angeles Clippers.

Our final destination was Niagara Falls, staying right next to the falls was a great experience and to see the water in full flight was truly breathtaking.

Although we had the small drama of being stuck in Los Angeles for four days after an aircraft mechanical failure, nothing could taint the great two weeks had by all involved. A special thank you must go to Miss Topic who helped me organise the trip along with Mr Hurl and Miss Barrett who gave up valuable job hunting time in Canada to assist us. Thanks also to Miss Jones, Mr Amiss and Miss Kynoch who also attended the trip.

Our next Ski Trip is scheduled for 2018 for the current Year Nine and Ten students. More information will be out later in the year for those students.

Mr Moore
Beginning Teacher Profile

Ashleigh Baker

What are you most excited about in 2016 at St John's?

I am really excited about the opportunity of being part of a school that is heavily involved in the local community. I am really looking forward to being able to connect with students, parents and the community at a variety of events including Easter in the Country, the Wizard of Oz and the Moonlight Fair.

Shalindi Jayasuriya

Tell us a little about your background prior to coming to St John's.

Prior to St John's School, I lived and studied in Melbourne. I initially studied Biomedical Science at Deakin University in Melbourne. I then did a Graduate Diploma of Teaching and Learning at Charles Darwin University.

Why did you want to become a teacher?

I am passionate about Science and continuously learning about developments in the field. I also like sharing this knowledge with other learners as well as encouraging them to understand and explore how Science has shaped our lives.

How did you feel about your first day of teaching?

Compared to my first day at school (before the students arrived), I felt fairly calm about my first day teaching students. As soon as I met my first class of the day, I forgot all about the new and sudden changes that come with starting at a new school and new town and remembered why I love my job.

Tell us a little about your background prior to coming to St John's.

Last year, I graduated from the University of the Sunshine Coast. Prior to moving to Roma, my fiancé and I lived on the north side of Brisbane. For the last 10 years, I have worked in both administration and sales roles as well as running my own small business.

Why did you want to become a teacher?

When you combine a passion for business and the economy with a fascination with how the human mind works – the profession of a teacher, especially a secondary year level teacher became the natural path for me to take my career.

How did you feel about your first day of teaching?

I was nervous and excited to meet my students for the first time.

What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job as a teacher is watching students reach that level of excitement and increased self-esteem when they succeed at a task for the first time – no matter how small or trivial that task may look to anyone else.

What interests do you have outside of school?

I do play two musical instruments which I try and practise on a regular basis. My fiancé and I also like to travel and we are looking forward to exploring the western part of Queensland whilst we are here in Roma.
What is the best part of your job?
Conducting practicals with my students. It’s rewarding to see them engaged in hands on activities whilst learning.

What interests do you have outside of school?
I play badminton in my spare time and although I do not play cricket, I do like to follow it.

What are you most excited about in 2016 at St John’s?
I am excited to be out here teaching the subjects that I am most passionate about.

What interests do you have outside of school?
I do however play two musical instruments which I try a practice on a regular basis. My fiancé and I also like to travel and we are looking forward to exploring the western part of Queensland whilst we are here in Roma.

What are you most excited about in 2016 at St John’s?
I am really excited about the opportunity of being part of a school that is heavily involved in the local community. I am really looking forward to being able to connect with students, parents and the community at a variety of events including Easter in the Country, the Wizard of Oz and the Moonlight Fair.

Tell us a little about your background prior to coming to St John’s?
Prior to St John’s, I completed a graduate degree at the Australian Catholic University. During this time, I spent my practicum at St Columban’s College. Over the years before this, I represented the University of Queensland at various international locations including the University of Glasgow and the National University of Singapore.

Why did you want to become a teacher?
Studying abroad, and in Australia, fostered my passion for learning. After spending so much time nurturing my own knowledge and life skills, I felt it was an appropriate time to shift into the other side of education, and share what I have gained.

How did you feel about your first day of teaching?
On the first day of teaching I felt ready; ready for a fresh challenge, ready to start developing my teaching signature and ready to build rapport and nurture knowledge.

What is the best part of your job?
The best part of teaching is the unexpected wins. When a student with their eyes glazed over can recall all the information from the lesson. When a student you thought hated being part of the class compliments the lesson. When the atmosphere of the room shifts from new and unfamiliar to one of enjoyment and productivity.

What interests do you have outside of school?
Outside of school, I have a keen interest in the theatre. I’ve been fortunate to perform both on and off stage in various roles. I continue my connection with theatre by assisting with freelance graphic design and digital branding for several companies in Brisbane.

What are you most excited about in 2016 at St John’s?
I’m really excited for The Wizard of Oz! I’m certain it will be a highlight for 2016 and a great experience for all the students involved. I’m so excited to see one of my Year Sevens in a leading role, and some of my other students helping out backstage. It’ll be a blast.
We acknowledge the original inhabitants of this land, the Mandandanji people, and show our respect for their ancestors and traditions.
St John’s Interschool Equestrian Raffle 2015

At the end of 2015, the St John’s Interschool Equestrian Team ran a Multi-draw Raffle. It was made possible, by generous contributions from a number of community businesses and the fabulous support of the families within the St John’s School Community. Thank you all very much.

Below is a list of the winners for each section, who were contacted by phone after the draw. Congratulations to all of you!

We are pleased to announce that the raffle raised in excess of $1900. These monies will be used to plan for crucial training opportunities for all of the students on the Interschool Team.

Our first meeting was held on Thursday the 11th of February at 5pm, in the VB Room. We are excited to announce to that we are expecting a number of new members for 2016!

### Multi-draw Raffle results 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prize</th>
<th>Winner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Prize – ½ a beast butchered</td>
<td>Robyn Douglas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Prize – 1 leg of ham</td>
<td>Mark Foster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Prize – $100 Woolworths Voucher</td>
<td>Joshua Andrews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Prize – $100 Woolworths Voucher</td>
<td>Zara Andrews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Prize – $50 Voucher from Rogues Cafe</td>
<td>Waugh Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sixth Prize – Gift Basket from Floral Nook</td>
<td>Emma Haaijer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seventh Prize – Christmas Decorations from Gifts at Teacup</td>
<td>Kate Martyn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eighth Prize – Lions Cake and Pudding</td>
<td>Hugh Hayward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Sellers Prize – Organic Fruit and Veg from Mind, Body, Soul.</td>
<td>Petrie Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonus Draw – $100 Meat Voucher</td>
<td>Toni Justins</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thank You!!

“Farmleigh Pastoral Company”, Rogues Cafe, Queensland Country Meats, Watkins and Co, Elliot Agribusiness, IGA Roma, CBM Management Solutions, Woolworths, Floral Nook, Gifts at Teacup, Mind, Body and Soul