



NEWSLETTER

ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

PO BOX 274 -32 FRANCIS STREET, RICHMOND 2753 P: (02) 4570 3700
E: stmonric@parra.catholic.edu.au

WEBSITE: WWW.STMONICASRICHMOND.CATHOLIC.EDU.AU

PRINCIPAL:	MRS MELISSA BEGGS
(ACTING) ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL:	MRS ANNEMARIE BOND
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR:	FR GAYAN THAMAL

Week 8 Term 3 Tuesday August 31, 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Week 8.

Much has been said about the effects of remote learning on families and children's schooling in the last weeks and I thought I would share with you some insights from Professor Jenny Gore and Pasi Sahlberg.

Prof Jenny Gore, is head of the Teachers and Teaching Research Centre at the University of Newcastle where they released a study earlier this year on the impact of the eight-week NSW lockdown of last year.

She states that "I find the term 'learning loss' really problematic because it suggests students lost learning. Well, they didn't lose. They didn't go backwards. What we found was that all students, at least on average, were learning and gaining new knowledge and so on throughout last year."

Professor Gore also says there is no evidence yet for the impacts of repeated lockdowns. "It is unknown," she says. "I think, based on the evidence so far, my best guess would be to say that student learning is going to be OK."

Pasi Sahlberg is the deputy director of UNSW's Gonski Institute for Education and like many parents is in lockdown with two primary school aged children. He states that "The kids just can't do this every day, It just cannot happen. My message to parents is to not feel guilty about it."

Sahlberg also says that it is the non-academic factors in children's lives that have more impact on later success: "Much more important powerful things that explain children's success and future are often not the academic skills, and those are exactly the things that children can learn outside the school," he says.

"The mistake adults and education systems make is that we are quick to ask about learning losses, but we forget to ask what these kids have learned during this disruption."

With this in mind I ask you to read the questions below and wonder what have your children learned? It is often when we flip the questions and concerns raised that we discover things that may have been overlooked.

Take care and stay safe

Melissa Beggs

Principal

"What is the secret of a blessed life, a happy life? Recognizing Jesus as the living God. For it is not important to know that Jesus was great in history. What matters is the place I give him in my life."

Pope Francis@Pontifex

What if instead of 'falling behind', this group of lockdown kids are actually ahead? Hear me out...

What if they have more empathy, enjoy family connection, can be more creative and entertain themselves, love to read, love to express themselves in writing?

What if they enjoy the simple things, like their own garden and sitting near a window in the quiet? What if they notice the birds and the dates the different flowers emerge, and the calming renewal of a gentle rain shower?

What if this generation are the ones to learn to cook, organise their space, do their laundry and keep a well-run home?

What if they learn to ride a bike, play a board game, do simple crafts, learn to bake, climb a tree, play without a screen?

What if they learn to understand the value of money, what's important and how to live with less? What if they learn to plan shopping trips and meals at home?

What if they learn the value of eating together as a family and finding the good to share in the small delights of the everyday?

What if they learn to just be: to be resilient, to be content?

What if they are the ones to place great value on our teachers and educational professionals, librarians, public servants and the previously invisible essential support workers?

What if, among these children, a great leader emerges who had the benefit of a slower pace and a simpler life to truly learn what really matters in this life?

What if they are AHEAD?

R U OK DAY?

R U OK?Day (**Thursday 9 September, 2021**) is the national day of action dedicated to reminding everyone that every day is the day to ask, "Are you OK?" and support those struggling with life's ups and downs.



R U OK? Is about inspiring and empowering people to meaningfully connect with others around them and to start a conversation with those in their world who may be struggling with everyday life.

You do not need to be an expert to reach out - just a great listener.

R U OK? DAY encourages people to reach out and engage in conversations with others, while raising awareness around mental health and wellbeing.

Some fun ways to participate include sharing affirmations or random acts of kindness.



Happy Birthday to the children who will be celebrating over the next 2 weeks	
<i>Jacinta Z – S2B</i>	<i>Beau S – S1B</i>
<i>Georgie S – S3B</i>	<i>Emily S – S3W</i>
<i>Shelby S – S1G</i>	<i>Joshua M – KB</i>
<i>Tomas B – S2W</i>	

THIS SUNDAY IS FATHER’S DAY.



Did you know that Father’s Day is celebrated in seventy two countries around the world and on many different days throughout the year.

In Catholic countries in Europe for example, such as Spain, Italy and Portugal, Father's Day Is celebrated on 19 March, which is the Feast of St. Joseph the patron saint of fathers.

The first Father’s Day was started in 1972 by the then President of the United States, Richard Nixon, who signed it into law.

The idea originally came from Sonora Dodd who, after listening to the pastor of her church talk about the virtues of mothers, felt inspired to propose that fathers receive equal recognition. Sonora lost her mother when she was fifteen and was looked after by her father whom she remembered as being a kind and loving parent who kept them together and happy.

Like many events again this year, COVID -19 will have an impact on Father’s Day celebrations.



This is such a shame, I know, and even at school we have not been able to have our usual Father’s Day stall, breakfast and Mass.

But I think in a year of sacrifice and patience we must not forget the power of small gestures of love and gratitude that can still be expressed to the special men in our lives.

On behalf of the staff of St Monica’s I would like to wish all our father and father figures a wonderful Father’s Day.

Melissa Beggs



Quotes on and about our Father’s

“I know what a good man is because I saw it in my own father” - Raymond Gaita

“My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person, he believed in me.” - Jim Valvano

“My father always taught me that when you help other people, then God will give you double. And that's what has really happened to me. When I have helped other people who are in need, God has helped me more.” Cristiano Ronaldo

“A father is someone who will play with you, even though he has his own age to play with” - Unknown



Prayer for Fathers

God our Father,

We give you thanks and praise for fathers young and old. We pray for young fathers, newly embracing their vocation; May they find courage and perseverance to balance work, family and faith in joy and sacrifice. We pray for all the Fathers around the world whose children are lost or suffering; May they know that the God of compassion walks with them in their sorrow. We pray for men who are not fathers but still mentor and guide us with fatherly love and advice. We remember fathers, grandfathers, and great grandfathers who are no longer with us, but who live forever in our memory and nourish us with their love. May the Almighty Father, bless them all. Amen.

National Child Protection Week 5TH- 12th September ***Every child, in every community, needs a fair go.***

To treat all of Australia's children fairly, we need to make sure every family and community has what kids need to thrive and be healthy.

The 2021 theme for National Child Protection Week is all about the importance of the 'bigger picture' in addressing child abuse and neglect.

Children can thrive and be healthy when they have what they need to develop well. Child protection is everyone's business.

At St Monica's we are mandatory reporters, and we have policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of all children at the school and we greatly value the support of parents and carers in providing a safe school environment.

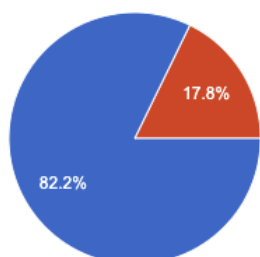
The National Association to Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect (NAPCAN) is an organisation dedicated to preventing Child Abuse and Neglect. Their website has lots of useful resources, contacts and information to inform, guide and assist parents in this important area. Check their website for more details at <https://www.napcan.org.au/>

REMOTE LEARNING SURVEY

Thank you to the many parents who responded to our online survey that we put out last week.

We very much value your feedback, comments and suggestions as we move forward to the end of this term and the first weeks of Term 4 before we are back at school.

We have already taken on board the need for a Wellbeing day (results below) and as you know we have our first "Wellbeing Wednesday" this week.



Would your child/family benefit from a 'Wellbeing day' with a variety of activities provided for student choice and interests?

● Yes
● No



Below are the results of the other questions that we asked in the survey.

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<i>My child benefits from zoom lessons</i>	<i>The quantity of tasks are:</i>	<i>The difficulty of the tasks are:</i>																						
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We also thank you for the many comments and suggestions put forward.

A number of parents mentioned that they thought that there was too much work and they felt that their children could not keep up or cope with the work. If you feel that the work is too much we ask that you monitor the time taken and prioritise some reading and maths for the day. If you feel your child needs a break then please take one and come back to the lessons when refreshed and ready to do so.

If you are concerned about the difficulty of the work please contact the teachers to discuss this.

Another concern from some parents was the frequency of the contact between school and home.

The teachers have endeavoured to make comments, give feedback and contact parents over the term, however where a parent responded through the survey they needed further information this has been passed on to the teachers concerned.

Below is a snapshot of some of the responses received. Again thank you for your thoughtful and honest reflection about remote learning at St Monica's.

Feedback

Platform has been utilised well and my son is excited every day to "go to school". Teachers are always available whenever needed.

I find the teachers are all amazing and so approachable and caring.

Videos are good, so the child can watch in their own time. Live zoom lessons are great as they can be interactive.

The teachers have been very understanding. We're trying our best to fit it all in around (.....) concentration, parents work and other family commitments. We appreciate no pressure has been given and Teacher's understanding. The reading groups are great as (....) is more engaged in that than reading with me.

Just want to say Mrs Duval and the kindergarten staff are doing an amazing job. We feel very supported.

The remote learning has been conducted really well. Easy to follow timetable and

Thank you for everything the teachers are doing during this difficult time.

You are doing great teachers!

Teachers are easily accessible when required.

More interaction from the teachers together with the videos to watch.

Thank you for all your work and help for the children in this challenging times. I understand how hard this is for everyone and that it is a massive adjustment too. Take care

Some feedback on how the kids are going would be great. Just so I know we're doing the right thing.

Short timed lessons feels best at this stages,

You guys are doing a fantastic job.

We find it very hard to complete all activities set every day. Juggling work and schoolwork has been difficult.

Home learning is extremely difficult. A weekly whole school wellness day would be very welcome and would benefit the mental health of my whole family.



2021 NSW PREMIER'S READING CHALLENGE



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The Premier's Reading Challenge

**finishes this week!
Friday September 3rd**

Hello readers,

The Premier's Reading Challenge for 2021 ends this week!

You can include up to 10 Choice Books on your reading records. All students are able to include books on their reading records that they read collaboratively as a class, in person or online with their teacher or at home with their parents/carers.

So hop on your reading record and make sure that all your books are recorded. We don't want anyone to miss out!



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Don't forget you can access books through the Storybox library and choose books online. Ask your teachers for the username and password if you can't remember it!

Hawkesbury library also has online access for books so jump online and see if you can find some books to keep reading.

The link is here [Hawkesbury Library E-Reading](#)

Of course, you can always access books through our own online library through our school website. Go to the heading Learning and then to school library.

Let's get to 100 readers this year completing the challenge!

Mrs Melissa Beggs
Enthusiastic Reader!

SCHOLASTIC  **Book Club**

HOME DELIVERY NOW AVAILABLE

**ISSUE 6
ONLINE NOW**



**Issue 6 is now available until
02/09/21. To view the online
brochure please click here:**

[Book Club Issue 6](#)

Congratulations to our Book Week Emoji Competition Winners.



We had a huge number of entries from each stage and some very creative emoji book titles sent in.

Thank you to everyone who entered.

As you know from our competition rules each person who correctly answered all the questions went into the winners draw and each person who submitted their own emoji creations also went into our Bonus draw.

All the winners have won a voucher to spend on some new books. These will be coming to them in the post very soon.

So don't forget to check your mailbox.

Winner - All correct

Winner - Own Emoji Creations

Kindergarten	Addison O'B	Natasha Y
Stage 1	Lucas W	James M
Stage 2	Indie S	Jack L.
Stage 3	Patrick C.	Charlotte H-H

If you are still wondering, the answers to the competition are below.

NB: Q15 Koala is not a Bear was also counted as correct and not all stages had all 20 questions.

Answers

1. Rainbow fish
2. Green eggs and ham
3. The very cranky bear
4. One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish
5. Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?
6. The very sleepy bear
7. Paper bag princess
8. Pig the pug
9. Where the wild things are
10. Cat in the hat

11. The three little pigs
12. Don't let the pigeon drive the bus
13. The tiger who came to tea
14. There's a hippopotamus on our roof eating cake
15. Don't call me bear
16. Goldilocks
17. Who sank the boat?
18. The peace book
19. Too many pears
20. Don't think about purple elephants

Reconciliation – Sacrament of Penance – Year 3+

September 4 & 5

Enrolment forms will become available.



Enrolment Forms for 2021 will be downloadable via the Parish website at www.parishofrichmond.org.au, under **Sacraments**, or can be directly emailed to you by contacting Irene Galea at sacraments@parishofrichmond.org.au. Enrolment forms will also become available in the foyers of St Monica's and St Gregory's and via the parish office, subject to covid-19 restrictions easing.

Friday October 8

Enrolments close and forms must be returned by this date. Enrolment forms and supporting attachments must be returned via the Parish Office or emailed to:

sacraments@parishofrichmond.org.au

Thursday, October 21

Parent night – **7pm** start at St Monica's, Richmond. **Sunday,**

October 24

Sacramental Groups begin for a **4 week** period

Wednesday, November 24:

Reconciliation Ceremonies at St Monica's Thursday, November 25: 3.30pm (First Rite) & 7.00pm (Second Rite)

Enquires: Contact Irene Galea at sacraments@parishofrichmond.org.au

STUDENT DATA VALIDATION

On Monday 16 August you should have received an email or SMS (for those parents without email) from the Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) asking you to review and, where necessary, update the key information they hold about your children currently enrolled in CEDP schools.

The purpose of this review is to ensure that CEDP has the right details to correctly identify and support students, including contacting families in an emergency or to share important updates.

Steps have been taken to ensure this process is as secure as possible to protect your information and your family's privacy. Your information is only accessed by authorised staff when it is necessary and in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

[The process is open until Friday 3 September](#) and I encourage you to complete the review/update as soon as possible to ensure that your family's correct details are on file. This is particularly important as Greater Sydney remains in lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

This short ["how to"](#) video may assist you with completing the process (use the closed caption icon to turn on subtitles). Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Only one person per family needs to complete the survey and it takes about 15 minutes to complete. If you have any questions or to seek help, please contact the CEDP Community Liaison Team on 9840 5796.

[If you have not received this email can you please let the office know.](#)