Diary

Wednesday, 17 August
7.00 p.m. Parent Fundraising Meeting

Monday, 22 August
Life Education Van here

Monday, 22 August—Friday, 26 August
BOOK WEEK

Head of Campus Message

I’m always fascinated by how seemingly random events coincide to reinforce a particular message and truth, and these last 2 weeks have provided exceptionally rich material to reflect upon.

The culmination of the Design 2 Shine project this term was spectacular! With over 120 people in attendance on that beautiful sunny Barbecue Presentation Day, we were all blessed to witness the friendship, creativity and goodwill that emerges when we create a structure that supports such shared compassion to grow together.

At one enrolment interview, the parents described how they were at the end of their tether, trying to toilet train their young son. They had done the toilet timing, taken him with his siblings, provided all the visuals and rewards, to seemingly no avail. They were becoming more and more anxious about it all when they decided that it just wasn’t doing anyone in the family any good. So they decided to let it go for a while and come back to it in the warmer weather. Within a week the child had ‘trained himself’! Somehow, in that space between having provided him with the skills and ‘giving the control away’ emerged a kind of miracle.

As our teachers continue to work with David and Kathy Jereb on our Quality Teaching project, a similar theme is surfacing. Communication with our students is often enhanced in the space between a question, a facial expression then a long pause – longer than we would wait in our daily conversations – and the child’s response. And there’s frequently a surprise: the quality of the child’s response is rich, inviting and deeply communicative. That pause - the space - supports the relationship positively, sustains the flow of communication and strengthens the relationship for future learning and trust, which is exactly what is beginning to happen in the classroom setting.

Learning to wait and to listen takes practice. But it’s also about faith. As the Psalm says, Be still and know that I am God … amazing things happen in that space!

Warm regards
Dianne

Welcome

To John Donnelly who has joined us to look after the grounds and maintenance at the school. It’s good to have you on board, John!
Children's Awards

The following Awards were presented at our School Assemblies:

Week 3, Term 3 2011 (Monday, 1st August—Friday, 5th August)

Class Awards
Junior N - Dominic for his great effort in counting and telling the time
Middle L - Jayden for great listening to the teachers and following instructions
Upper W - Joe for trying his best during singing and dancing

Do Your Best Award: Aaron T
Be Safe Award: Ryan
Care and Share Award: Scott
Uniform Award: Samir

Week 4, Term 3 2011 (Monday, 8th August—Friday, 12th August)

Student of the Week: Douglas for using his voice and iPad to communicate well

Class Awards
Junior N - Jack for great conversation skills
Middle L - Callum for improving in following the class rules
Upper W - Emma for excellent work with 3-digit and 4-digit numbers in maths

Do Your Best Award: Melanie
Be Safe Award: Kian
Care and Share Award: Aaron C
Uniform Award: Tom
St. Gabriel's School Prayer

At Assemblies, the children are learning to say our school prayer, which actually hails from the school's past but also speaks to who we are today. Attached to this newsletter is a copy of it for you to have at home.

Don’t Forget…..St Gabriel’s is now an Allergy Aware School

St. Gabriel’s is an Allergy Aware School. Please be aware of this when packing lunches for your children. Please do not send your child to school with nuts, or bread with nut spreads, e.g., peanut butter or Nutella. Foods that have stated on their packaging “that they may contain traces of nuts” are still able to be brought to school. Every care at meal times will be taken to ensure children do not share food with each other but as an extra preventative measure we ask that you help us to minimise any risk by sending food in that is nut-free. Also it would be appreciated if you could please remind your children about the importance of not sharing their food with other children.

Baulkham Hills Squash and Fitness

We would like to say a big thank you to James Ethan of the Baulkham Hills Squash and Fitness Club who kindly donated $1,000 to St Gabriel’s, being the proceeds of their recent State of Origin Squash Tournament. The tournament consisted of 26 matches being played by 44 players from NSW and ACT over one weekend.

Who’s Who at St Gabriel’s

Michelle McCann is one of our Learning Support Staff here at St Gabriel’s. In her early working career Michelle has worked as a Dental Technician and then as a bank officer for many years, in various roles. Michelle is married with two teenage children. Her son has mild cerebral palsy and her journey with her son has led her to work with children with special needs. Michelle has completed her Teacher’s Aide (Special) Certificate III in 2007 when she did her practical component of the course at St Gabriel’s and continued to work here first in a casual, then part time and now in a full time capacity. Michelle loves her work at St Gabriel’s as she feels she is contributing and doing something really worthwhile for our very beautiful and special children.
**Design 2Shine**

Monday and Tuesday, 1st and 2nd August were the project days for our Term 3 Design 2 Shine and once again students from both St Bernadette’s Primary School and Gilroy College joined us to complete the various creative arts projects in ceramics, drawing, craft, painting, photography etc. These were placed on display at our exhibition and presentation/sausage sizzle held on Tuesday and it was lovely to see so many parents from St Gabriel’s, St Bernadette’s and Gilroy join us for the afternoon and we certainly congratulate students on producing such wonderful pieces of work.

Students from Year 9 at Gilroy College did a wonderful job as Design 2 Shine leaders
Responding to the incredible phenomenon of iPads for Education, staff, students and parents at St. Gabriel’s are all learning to use the new technology to meet our specific purposes across curriculum, communication and personal development. Staff attended a workshop at the Apple shop in Castle Towers on Monday, learning some of the finer points with a very well informed and enthusiastic Alex, from the shop’s business team (below). Parents are sharing expertise and knowledge to help their children and at school we are developing a staged approach to using the iPads for communication and curriculum access.

It’s been delightful, too, to see them being used in some of the IEPs, to showcase work samples, examples of children working in classes and social play in the playground.
JEANS FOR GENES—Friday, 5th August
It was lovely seeing so many of our students and staff wearing their jeans on Friday and supporting this worthy cause for which we raised $91.00. Well done everyone!

To All Parents, Carers and Teachers
You are invited to an Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) Information Day to be held at Tallowood School on 18th August. Parents, carers and teachers of school age children with an Intellectual Disability are encouraged to attend this event. The Information Day will be facilitated by staff from Information, Referral and Intake, Case Management teams, Therapy teams and Recreational teams.

There will be many opportunities to speak to ADHC staff including therapists and case managers regarding the services ADHC can provide. There will also be information sessions held at various times during the day by ADHC staff (timetable available in school office). Tallowood is located at 44-68 Redden Drive, Kellyville 2155 and the day will run from 9.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. For further information please call 9841 9555 and request to speak with either Megan Carnegie or Michelle Jewell.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Coleman Greig Golf Day Monday, 19 September

Student term Dates for 2011

Term 3 - Spring Monday, 18 July - Friday, 23 September
Term 4 - Summer Monday, 10 October - Tuesday, 13 December

It is the policy of St Gabriel’s to distribute information when requested regarding activities and information concerning disability. This does not imply that St Gabriel’s endorses these activities or the information contained therein in any way.