St Gabriel’s News
A school for students with hearing impairment
and other special needs
within Edmund Rice Special Education Services

Newsletter No: 11
Date: 23 September 2011

Diary

Wednesday, 12th October
Parents in our Community Meeting—Working Party for “Sunday Spin”

Sunday, 16th October
St Gabriel’s “Sunday Spin”

Tuesday—Thursday, 18th—20th October
Design 2 Shine (planning days)

Thursday, 20th October
Banking Day

Happy Holidays!

Term 4 resumes on Monday, 10th October

Principal’s Message

Dear Families and Friends

Monday this week was the 15th annual St. Gabriel’s Golf Day at beautiful Riverside Oaks. Coleman Greig have been the major sponsor for all those years! Weatherwise it was a glorious, perfect day for golf. Our children gave the most wonderful welcome performance – it reaffirmed for everyone why they were there. The sense of joy in what the children were doing was obvious to all. It was so impressive to see them using the microphone with such confidence. The golf on the day was obviously fun as was Mike Whitney who as MC of the dinner highlighted all that St. Gabriel’s offers; of course he managed a few in-house stories too from his cricketing days. The organising committee had been there from some dreadful hour ensuring the day’s organisation ran to plan.

A huge thank you must go to Liz and Amanda (Coleman Greig) and our own team headed up by Sarah. All good teams need a leader and Ray Millers (Hills Shire Council) has been exceptional in that role for the whole 15 years. Ray uses his charm and unfailing good will to rally the overwhelming support that is there for St. Gabriel’s. We also had some great support from our families – thank you. Thank you too to all the wonderful sponsors who made the commitment once again to helping St. Gabriel’s and to Clr Barbara Burton who was there representing the Mayor. As you can see we had all the necessary ingredients for a most successful day.

For me the highlight of the day was hearing Steve Rowe (Evi’s Dad) talk about their family and the joys and challenges that they face as parents of a child with a disability. Steve spoke with such honesty and very much from the heart. He was a truly remarkable advocate for not only our children but for all of you, the families, whose journey must to some extent mirror that of Evi’s family. For those of us who know and work with you and your children, hearing your stories first hand allows us some small insight into your experience. We can never walk your journey; my hope is that we are always sensitive to your particular circumstance, that we take every opportunity to learn from you and we continue to appreciate what it means to have your trust.

The term comes to an end! I wish you all a beautiful peaceful holiday with many days in the sun enjoying what it means to be a family without the rigid, intrusive routine that school can impose.

May God Bless you!

Kathy

Happy Birthday to
Evi who will be 8 on 3rd October
and Aaron C who will be 6 on 20th October
Children's Awards

The following Awards were presented at our School Assemblies on Friday, 16th September and Friday, 23rd September:

Week 9, Term 3 2011 (Monday, 12th September—Friday, 16th September)

Class Awards

Junior N - Miguel for listening and following instructions
Middle L - Kian for good counting up to 10 in Maths
Upper W - Excellent conversations! Ryan has been trying his best to talk with everyone in Upper W

Do Your Best Award: Jack
Be Safe Award: Dominic
Care and Share Award: Aaron T
Uniform Award: Emma

Week 10, Term 3 2011 (Monday, 19th September—Friday, 23rd September)

Student of the Week: Tom for trying his best to listen to the teachers and follow instructions in the classroom

Class Awards

Junior N - Samir for doing his best in dancing
Middle L - Melanie for remembering to put her hand up to speak
Upper W - Dion for being a good friend to his classmates. Dion is excellent at sharing and turn-taking in the classroom

Do Your Best Award: Dominic
Be Safe Award: Charlotte
Care and Share Award: Callum
Uniform Award: Corey

Don’t forget that....... Daylight saving begins on Sunday, 2nd October at 2.00 a.m.—make sure you put your clocks forward one hour
We come to the end of a very busy term in the life of St. Gabriel’s.

Staff have been commenting on how much all the children have learnt since the beginning of the year: improved language, expression, academic skills, enthusiasm and participation all point to greater overall learning and development.

As I write this, the children are playing ‘What’s the Time Mr Wolf’ together in the Assembly Area. Counting together, running, screaming as the ‘wolf’ yells ‘dinner time!’ – there is that warm sense of belonging and shared camaraderie that is part of childhood and friendships.

Can I encourage you to organise a ‘play date’ for your child at some stage through the holidays, whether for an hour or two, whether at your house or the local park, it all goes into growing confidence and play skills amongst the children – and the friendships forged might last for the rest of your days … wishing you a happy and restful break at this beautiful time of year!

Warmly
Dianne

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**HoC’s Corner**

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**Junior N on excursion to the Riverside Theatre to see “The Man the Sea Saw”**

On Thursday, 15th September Junior N went to the Riverside Theatre in Parramatta to see ‘The Man the Sea Saw’. We had been talking about our excursion for a week and everyone was very excited and well prepared for the adventure. All the boys were very safe and careful in the car and on the way to the theatre.

When we got there, we all had few minutes to admire the inside of the theatre with big chandeliers, red carpets and colorful chairs. Everything was new and exciting.

Finally the lights went out and the play started. It was an interesting one-man performance, full of light and sound effects. The atmosphere of the theatre and the play charmed everyone. The children all had their favorite bits and pieces. Miguel loved the iceberg, Samir and Dominic loved the fish hanging down from the ceiling. Asher and Scott couldn’t forget the polar bear and Aaron enjoyed the light effects.

It was a wonderful and unforgettable experience and we are all looking forward to doing it again.

**Ms Nowak—Junior N**
Thank you so much to all those Mums, Dads and children who spent time in their kitchens to bake some beautiful cakes for Mission Week. Four of our students from Upper W (Emma, Charlotte, Dion and Blake) went along to St Bernadette’s, put on their aprons and chefs hats, set up their display of cakes and sold them to the students and staff of St Bernadette’s, raising $90 for Mission Week which will be used to buy sports equipment and musical instruments for disadvantaged schools in East Timor.

Nicky Lopez has been a Learning Support Staff member at St Gabriel’s for almost 2 years now and prior to that worked casually in mainstream and special needs schools in the western and eastern suburbs.

Nicky initially qualified with a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Sydney and worked in accounting firms and her family business while raising her 4 children. When her youngest started primary school, she re-evaluated her career path for something she always really loved, which was being around children. After volunteering in some special needs schools, she decided to retrain and did the TAFE Certificate in Special Education.

Nicky loves working with the St Gabriel’s community and making a difference in the lives of our gorgeous children and says it never seems like “work” because she enjoys coming to school each day.

Arthritis NSW will be holding a special FREE Kidsflix film morning on Saturday, 22nd October at Event Cinema, Castle Towers Shopping Centre.

They are inviting all children with special needs, their mums, dads, sisters, brothers and/or carers to attend. There will be face painters and clowns to entertain the children from 9.15 a.m. and the film (“The Smurfs”) will commence at 10.00 a.m. There will be free refreshments for everyone (popcorn and Coke).

Tickets have been sponsored by small businesses and private residents within the local area.

If you would like tickets, please let Val know by Tuesday, 11th October (first week of next term) but please note that this offer is of course subject to availability.
The 15th Annual Coleman Greig Charity Golf Day was held at Riverside Oaks in Cattai on Monday, 19th September. With sunny skies overhead, panoramic views and fundraising events throughout the day, the 137 golfers rallied together in support of St Gabriel’s. The golfers, made up of local businesses from throughout the Parramatta/Hills region, were extremely generous with their time and wallets to raise much needed funds for our school.

During the opening proceedings some of our children performed two songs which enchanted the players before they tee’d off. The golfers then enjoyed 18 holes of golf followed by a fundraising dinner in the evening hosted by Mike Whitney as the MC.

The golf day was a truly wonderful event for our school and we are so lucky to have the continued support of so many people including Coleman Greig, Ray Millers from the Hills Shire Council and several parents of the school, particularly Steve Rowe, Fiona Harper, Selina and David Emanuel, Jackie de Silva and Annette and Colin Whitehorn, to all of whom we would like to say a big thank you.

St Gabriel’s Sunday Spin
Sunday, 16 October

Planning for this fun day is well under way and thank you to those families who have already sent in their Registration Forms.

We would like that all forms are in by Monday, 10th October and don’t forget to order your t-shirts as well (at $5.00 each). Both the registration form and t-shirt order form may be downloaded from the St Gabriel’s website at www.stgabriels.nsw.edu.au.

For those of you who like to plan ahead, here are the school term dates for 2012…..

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>Tues, 31 Jan—Wed, 4 April (Thurs, 5 April is a Staff Day)</td>
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<td>Term 2</td>
<td>Tues, 24 April—Fri, 22 June (Mon, 23 April is a Staff Day)</td>
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<td>Term 3</td>
<td>Mon, 16 July—Fri, 21 Sept</td>
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<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Mon, 8 Oct—Tues, 11 Dec</td>
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Woolworths “Earn and Learn” and Coles Sports for Schools Promotions are both still on and will end on 18th October. Thank you to everyone who has been sending in their docket and vouchers and please continue to do so until then so that St Gabriel’s can “earn” some great classroom resources and sports equipment.
Last Friday Middle L went on an excursion to Sydney Olympic Park. We travelled to Rydalmere Ferry wharf by car. We had to wait for the ferry to come. The ferry took us to Sydney Olympic Park. We then walked to Armony Wharf, where we had our lunch. There was also a big playground with slides, climbing walls and swings. After lunch we walked back to the wharf, caught the ferry and then went back to school by car. We all had a great time spotting different modes of transport, sitting on the ferry and playing in the park. It was a fun day!

**DATES FOR THE DIARY**

*St Gabriel’s “Sunday Spin”*  
Sunday, 16 October

*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.

**Free to a Good Home!**

(Second hand):

- Thomas the Tank Engine Rollerskates – Size 12-2
- Adidas Soccer Boots – Size US12K
- Diadora Soccer Boots – Size UK12

(Donated by a St. Gabriel’s Parent)—please speak to Jo in reception

**Staff Charity Lunch**

Well done and thank you to Belinda and Helen who hosted our Japanese themed Staff Charity Lunch on Wednesday, 21st September—$209 was raised for The Starlight Foundation which is a wonderful result!