

College

Newsletter



MacKillop  
St Mary MacKillop College Canberra



# Volume 3 2020

20 MARCH

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# Coming

# Up

THU 26 MAR

• Year 10 Immunisations

THU 09 APR

• Last day of Term 1

FRI 10 APR

• Good Friday Public Holiday

MON 27 APR

• ANZAC Day Public Holiday

TUE 28 APR

• Term 2 begins

TUE 12 MAY

• NAPLAN  
Please note that NAPLAN has now been cancelled.

FRI 22 MAY

• Enrolment Period Ends

# Contact Us

## Contact Details



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Mackinnon Street, **Wanniassa** (Years 7-9)  
Ellerston Avenue, **Isabella Plains** (Years 10-12)



### Absentee Phone Lines

Years 7-9: 02 6209 5240  
Years 10-12: 02 6209 0110

## Socials



www.facebook.com/  
**mackillop.act**



www.twitter.com/  
**mackillop\_act**



www.instagram.com/  
**mackillop\_act**



www.youtube.com/  
**stmarmackillop**

# Principal's

## Letter



Dear Parents, Teachers and Students,

### **NAPLAN CANCELLED (YEAR 9 DEVASTATED!)**

Please see at the end of the newsletter a notice that I only just received regarding the cancellation of NAPLAN across all year groups for students around Australia. Whilst the rich data NAPLAN provides to us will now be lost, this is an otherwise sensible decision that is understandable and wise. The NAPLAN Online trial scheduled for Monday 23 March has also been cancelled.

### **COVID-19**

I have communicated with families about where we are up to with COVID-19. I believe the College to be as safe as any school and we will continue to remain open unless directed to close for one of two reasons:

1. The appearance of COVID-19 in our midst
2. We are directed to close by Catholic Education on government advice

Thank you to the many families who have children who are unwell and are choosing to keep them home temporarily until they are well. I do recognise that circumstances vary from family to family and there is genuine anxiety about students using on public transport to and from school, potentially bringing risk to older family members or family members disposed to bronchial and respiratory issues. Campus Heads are happy to engage in a conversation with you about a way forward for your child's attendance. Other students who are fit and well should be at school, practising personal hygiene, social distancing, and engaging in the school day, exercising personal and community responsibility.

### **ENROLMENTS FOR YEAR 7 2021**

Applications for enrolment into Year 7 2021 are now being received and processed by the College. Application forms are available on the College website. At this stage, information night and Try MacKillop Day will not be taking place, however interviews and tours (out of school hours) can still be negotiated.

The College website will soon carry promotional information for those who are not part of our school community. You are most welcome to provide this information to potential MacKillop families.

### **DAVID SMITH, MEMBER FOR BEAN**

Thank you to Mr David Smith, Labor Member for Bean, who visited the College this morning to present an Australian flag, an Aboriginal flag, and a Torres Strait Islander flag to some student leaders. Some of our current flags are looking shop worn and may now be retired after a life of service representing the inclusive nature of the College and the diversity and indigeneity of the Australian people present in our school.

David gave me plenty of time to discuss strategies to keep the school open, basic provisions required by students for personal hygiene, and to show him our new STEM facility on the junior campus. I would like to thank David for his sincere interest in the College.

### **YEAR 11 RETREAT POSTPONED**

Postponing Year 11 Retreat was a particularly disappointing product of COVID-19. The decision was made after considerable reflection and advice. The developments of the past week have confirmed the wisdom of that decision. I would like to commend Year 11 for their forbearance and good humour in the face of this temporary disappointment. Their maturity is a source of real pride for the College.

Yours in St Mary of the Cross MacKillop,

MICHAEL LEE  
COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

*"I would like to commend Year 11 for their forbearance and good humour in the face of this temporary disappointment. Their maturity is a source of real pride for the College."*

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#### PRINCIPAL'S PRAYER

Lord,

*We pray for a calm strength to better enable us to look after each other.*

Amen



## College celebrates Opening Mass

St Mary MacKillop College celebrated the start of the 2020 school year with the Opening Mass on Thursday 12 March.

Students and staff of the College were joined in Eucharist at the Tuggeranong Basketball Stadium by College Chaplain Fr James Antony, representatives from several schools, former students, parents, politicians, Board members, and a number of past staff members.

The Mass introduced the 2020 College Theme, *"You were not made for comfort, you were made for greatness"* (Pope Benedict XVI). Over the course of the Mass, the message of the theme was repeated through prayers, readings, songs, the homily, and by our Principal, Mr Michael Lee. The College Theme provided particular motivation for the students of Year 7, who stood in front of the congregation and received a blessing as the rest of the school officially welcomed them to the start of their MacKillop journey.

As usual, the quality of the music and choir created a special atmosphere and helped transform the basketball stadium into a place of reflection and prayer.

Congratulations to Mr Jonathan Moyle and the large team who created such a deeply moving community celebration of Eucharist and congratulations to the students for the solemnity and willing participation they brought to the occasion.



## Enrolling now for 2021

The College has had to cancel its usual enrolment information sessions in May due to restrictions and precautions around the COVID-19 outbreak.

We are now accepting enrolment applications for Year 7 2021. Should you wish to enrol a student for next year, please ensure your applications are submitted by Friday 22 May.

To enrol online, or for more information, please visit our website:

[www.mackillop.act.edu.au](http://www.mackillop.act.edu.au)



## Mathematics Award

Congratulations to Freia Huber in Year 9 and Natalie Beere in Year 10 on receiving the 2019 UNSW Canberra Prize for Best Female Student in Mathematics at Mackillop. This award recognises their performance as well as the incredible effort they made in their mathematics class last year.

Now in its third year, the UNSW Canberra Prize for Best Female Student in Mathematics is awarded to the highest achieving female students in mathematics in Years 8 and 9, 2019.

Freia and Natalie received a \$250 prize during the presentation of the award. They were invited with their parents to attend the UNSW Canberra Prize for Best Female Student in Mathematics Awards Ceremony that occurred at UNSW Canberra on Wednesday 4 March. In addition to their award, UNSW Canberra would also like to encourage both girls to continue with their studies in mathematics and other STEM disciplines. Freia and Natalie have been offered a \$5000 undergraduate scholarship if they plan to enrol in a Bachelor of Engineering as a civilian student at UNSW Canberra, within two years of completing Year 12.

UNSW Canberra is proud to continue their fifty-year tradition of teaching for the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) professions in Canberra. STEM jobs are growing faster than any other sector, but females represent only 16% of the STEM workforce.

**Anna Keppel & Jon Chandra • Maths Coordinators**



## Visit from David Smith

Member for Bean David Smith visited the College to present a set of new Australian, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander flags on Friday.



## Defence Program

On 25 February, 19 Defence students across Years 7 and 8 attended an excursion to Swing Into Life at B-Firm in Symonston. The excursion allowed students to develop a sense of community as they were involved in a series of obstacles and challenges with students from other schools. The students represented the College well, showing respect, enthusiasm and courage when facing a number of physically challenging obstacles. Some of the challenges included: wall climbing, a high ropes course, warped wall, mud obstacle course and spider web. The program was incredibly meaningful as it promoted positive communication, leadership and active lifestyles. A number of our MacKillop students adopted leadership roles and responsibilities throughout the day by leading group activities. Furthermore, the students showed confidence when overcoming adverse obstacles and used problem solving to experiment with strategies to build team cohesion. The day was a complete success and here's what one of our students had to say!

"The excursion was lots of fun, we got a taste of what our parents do out in the field. We worked together with our MacKillop peers and other students from Canberra Girls Grammar and Burgmann. A highlight was watching Miss Fielding do the obstacles with us and get dirty as well from the mud." - Felicity Silver (Year 7)

**Hayley Fielding • Defence Transition Mentor**



## World Challenge

As part of the preparation for World Challenge – Borneo later in the year, a group of intrepid adventurers headed into the wilderness near the tiny township of Wee Jasper. This group hiked, sang, complained, and hiked some more until such time as they reached their camp ground destination. Along the way, several World Challenge "modules" were addressed, including: personal safety, important documentation, food and stepping outside your comfort zone. At camp, the group discussed how to pack appropriately and also the collegial aspect of World Challenge – looking out for others, whether they were your friend or not. After a short hike back to the central collection point on day two, a definite bond had started to form amongst the participants that will translate to a bodacious adventure later in the year.

**Rohan Langford • Director of Student Wellbeing**



## Status Awards & Student Achievement

Congratulations to the following students who have been presented with Bronze Status Awards at Padua Campus this week: Mariska Bibrowicz 7E1, Alana Horsfall 7E1, Ashton Hayes 7E1, Liam Manderson 8A2, Emily Nguyen 8A2.

Ziyad Ghamrawi (Year 10) received a gold medal for winning the Javelin event at the ACT State Athletics Championships.

In Engarde Fencing News, Oliver Bryson (Year 12) won bronze in the Open Men's Foil at the ACT Open Fencing Championships held across the Canberra Day long weekend.



## COVID-19

School and classes continue in a traditional sense at MacKillop, amidst some uncertainty that schools may close under the direction of the Federal Government at some point in the future. While parents have been kept up to date with correspondence from Michael Lee, students have also been provided with the following information:

Our approach as a College in response to the evolving situation with COVID-19 continues to be one of taking a calm and responsible approach that is based on the advice of the Government along with health and educational authorities.

The following points are important to note:

1. Good hygiene remains the best protective measure against the spread of the virus:
  - Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water or hand sanitiser (for 20 seconds).
  - Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue (dispose tissue into the bin) and then wash hands thoroughly
  - MacKillop has a hand-off rule and this has always encompassed a broad range of situations. It is particularly important that this is adhered to in the current situation.
  - Use social distancing precautions - maintain at least one metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing
  - If you are ill, you are advised to stay at home until the symptoms resolve or until cleared to attend school by a health professional
2. There is the potential for MacKillop, or all schools in the ACT, to close for a period of time in the near future. Were this to be the case, the College will do its best to continue to provide learning and engagement for students who are fit to do so.
  - With this in mind, students should only have essential items stored in lockers. Please remove non-essential items, including rubbish, consider what may be better stored at home and ensure that at the end of each day you take home;
    - ▶ your laptop/device and chargers
    - ▶ any resources that may be needed to complete work from home

The Parenting Ideas article later in this Newsletter contains information to assist parents/carers in leading way to keep kids safe and anxiety-free during these unprecedented times of the Corona virus pandemic.

**Lachlan McNicol • Assistant Principal Pastoral Care**

## Bicycle Security

The College provides a facility at both campuses for students to lock and protect their bikes. Despite the provision of this facility, the College is unable to guarantee its complete security in all eventualities. The College strongly advises students to consider the type of bike locks they use in order to further secure their bikes in these areas at school. Parents and guardians are encouraged to view the attached link related to locking bikes and give consideration to purchasing a secure lock in order to compliment the College's efforts in providing a safe facility for students' bikes. In addition, the College advises that students do not ride expensive bikes to school as a way to further protect their property.

<https://police.act.gov.au/safety-and-security/bike-security-0>

**Paul Durham & Rohan Langford • Directors of Student Wellbeing**

## Science Excursion

On Thursday 6 March, students from the senior Earth and Environmental science class went to the Woodlawn Bioreactor and Wind Farm just outside of Canberra.

The first stop was the Wind farm. Despite the rainy and windy conditions, we all jumped off the bus with our rain jackets, reflective vests and hard hats to get an up-close look at the turbines - without crossing the thirty metre 'drop zone', of course. At the farm, we heard from Infigen Energy on how the turbines work to power approximately 23,000 homes in Canberra. We also learnt about how renewable energy not only benefits the planet, but also how it creates many job opportunities and contributes to the local economy.

After the Wind Farm, we all got back on the bus to drive to the Woodlawn bioreactor. At first glance the bioreactor may look like a giant hole in the ground, but it is actually responsible for managing 20% of Sydney's putrescible waste. The emissions from the process are captured and used to generate clean energy that then goes on to power up to 30,000 homes.

Much to our surprise, the Woodlawn Bioreactor also runs a barramundi farm. Excess waste heat from energy production is captured and utilised to maintain the farm as well as hydroponic horticulture. Most of these fish are then sold to markets and restaurants around Canberra.

Once the rain picked up, we ventured back to shelter, where we were greeted by guests from Heron Resources. Heron Resources Limited is engaged in the production and development of base and precious metals in Australia, including zinc, copper and lead, and shared valuable information about mining in Australia.

Overall, the excursion was a very rewarding, yet wet, experience. The trip allowed students to gain a deeper understanding of renewable energy sources and how important the industry is to Australia's future. Apart from the learning experience, the biggest takeaway from the day was definitely the giant sample of copper ore from the crew at Heron resources.

Harry Virtue • Year 12



## Pi Day

Pi Day is a holiday which is celebrated on 14 March every year. This day was created to celebrate the mathematical constant  $\pi$ . It falls on 3/14 since three, one and four are the first three digits of Pi. It is a holiday that has been celebrated large-scale since 1988 and by millions upon millions of math students and teachers since. The Maths Department on the Padua Campus celebrated Pi Day on the 16th of March with classroom activities and a lunchtime competition.

The lunchtime competition, where students had to recite the most numbers of Pi, was won by the following students in each year level who received a \$20 movie voucher each:

- Year 7- Ava Nielsen, 46 numbers
- Year 8-Freia Stanford, 63 numbers  
3.14159265358979323846264338327950288419716939937510582097494459...
- Year 9- Eliza Stiles, 40 numbers

Thank you to the support of the Maths Team on the day who ran the activities and handed out Pi stickers and prizes.

Anna Keppel • Maths Coordinator

On Pi Day, we made bracelets, necklaces and crowns (which consisted of the pi numbers shown with beads). We learnt about how the digits in the number pi go into thousands and thousands! We also completed a jigsaw puzzle that made up the pi symbol and got lollies in the end. It was a lot of fun!!

Emily Couper & Grace Taylor • Year 7



## English News

"You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them." Maya Angelou.

Events over the last few months are no doubt going to have a lasting effect on us. We have had months of being inundated by images of bushfire and drought, news coverage and social media talking about who is to blame, climate change, government policy and charities seeking donations. Many students and teachers returned to school having experienced firsthand the consequences of these bushfires, from fighting fires, escaping fires or spending months choking on smoke and being on high alert. Now we have COVID-19 pandemic and all the coverage associated with this. As it comes closer to home, the immediate repercussions are becoming more apparent. If ever there was a time for talking and listening with our students, our children, it is now.

As English teachers we are in the fortunate position to use literature as a tool to help students talk about their fears or concerns in a safe environment, allowing everyone to have a voice. To voice concerns, questions and share opinions. The English department's aim is to produce students who are globally aware, empathetic critical thinkers and able to express themselves skilfully and coherently. Units of work are deliberately designed to challenge the views we (teachers and students alike) have about particular issues relevant in society today. Through these units, students are taught how to tackle (sometimes contentious) material, to have a deeper understanding about the characters, motivations and themes and also how to maintain respectful relationships towards each other when discussing these issues. Students learn how to listen, respond and voice their own opinion in class. The ability to talk, discuss with others, challenge opinions, offer their own and then concur are skills that are becoming more relevant and sought after in the workplace. More importantly, they are skills that strengthen their understanding of the world and their place in it.

Talking, listening and sharing opinions, discussing news threads, memes and all that we are seeing on the news and through social media, is now more important than ever. When we do not talk, fear grows and fear is paralyzing. Fear leads to dysfunction and an inability to think clearly. Talk with your children and listen. When talk is encouraged, questions are allowed to be asked and various opinions shared, we feel more confident about what we know and learn to understand what we do not. In this atmosphere of open and clear communication, we create a means for our children to overcome fear and anxiety and not be reduced by the circumstances we face.

**Lyndall Baker & Nicola McLennan • English Coordinators**

## School Fees

Fees for Term 1 should now be finalised unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement. Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately.

Please note: A credit for Year 11 Retreat has been placed on your account.

It is most important that you notify the College regarding any changes to your email address as this is our primary form of communication.

If you require more information regarding Direct Debit arrangements or other approved payment methods or are experiencing difficulty paying the fees please contact the Fees Office.

**Michelle Predovan • Fees Manager**

## Lawn Mowers

The Technology Faculty is hoping to seek out more old lawn mowers so that Year 10 students can work on them. Contact John on 6209 0164 if you are able and would like to donate.

**John Solari • Technology**

## Sport & PE

### Rugby Sevens

Last Friday, students represented the College at the Brumbies Gala Sevens tournament. One of the 9/10 boys teams won their competition, but all teams are to be commended for their exceptional displays of teamwork and courage.



## PE Pathways Profile

We're looking inside the fitness centre at MacKillop as we begin a new series of profiles on some of the College's elite athletes.

**Name:** Lachlan Fitzpatrick

**Sport:** AFL & Basketball

**Year Group:** 110

**Biggest accomplishment so far:** Giants Academy for AFL and National Championships for Basketball

**Sporting Hero:** Nat Fyfe

**Sporting aspirations:** To play in the AFL

**Favorite inspirational quote:** "Some people want it to happen, some people wish it would happen, others make it happen." - Michael Jordan

**Favorite song to listen to when training?** *Young & Alive, Bazzi*

**What do you like most about the PE Pathways program?** There are many good aspects to the PE Pathways program, but the thing I like the most is the leadership responsibilities that come with it.



INSIGHTS

## Leading the way for children during the Coronavirus pandemic



If you're like me, the news of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has your head spinning and your heart pumping. That's only natural as life as we know has taken a seismic shift in recent days.

International travel bans, cancellation of sporting and cultural events, shopping frenzies and talk of school closures continue to dominate the airwaves. Terms such as social distancing, self-isolation and social lockdowns have entered our vocabularies and may soon become part of our daily lives.

Coronavirus is having an unprecedented impact on our daily lives, and will probably do so for some time. While keeping ourselves and children healthy and safe is our main concern, it's also essential to address the anxieties of children and young people during these changing times. Here are some ideas to help inform, reassure and keep children and young people safe.

### Build on what your children know

Children and young people have already been exposed to a great deal of information about corona virus through media, digital means and direct social contact. Their understanding will vary depending on their age and also the quality of their information sources so you probably will need to help kids process what they already know.

Casual conversations with teenagers and older children can be useful ways to glean their understanding. You could ask questions like "What are you hearing about Coronavirus? Is there anything you're not sure about?" Younger primary age children may need a more direct approach with parents addressing their specific concerns without giving too much information that can overwhelm them.

### Check your own thoughts and feelings

Check your own frame of mind and emotions about COVID-19 before talking to kids. Most children are astute mood detectives and they'll gauge their safety by the way you communicate with them. If you tell a child, "You've got to wash your hands or you'll get infected," you are communicating your own anxieties, making it difficult for them to maintain a healthy state of mind. Have a think about how you can frame your instructions and their importance in a way that doesn't heighten your child's anxieties.

### Stay informed

It's difficult to work out fact from fiction, correct from incorrect, information from exaggeration when the news is changing so fast. However you need to educate yourself about the virus itself, including how it's transmitted and how to stay safe. Get information from trustworthy sources such as The Australian Government Health Department website and the current federal government corona virus information media campaign.

# parenting \* ideas

## Answer questions truthfully

It's important that parents and teachers answer children's questions honestly in age-appropriate ways and within context of what is happening at the given time. If their sport or hobby has been temporarily cancelled empathise with their concerns, while helping them maintain a sense of perspective.

## Initiate positive action

One way to reduce anxiety and allay children's fears is to involve them in planning and preparation for their personal and group safety. Positive activities such as maintenance of personal hygiene, greeting people with an elbow tap and getting plenty of sleep can help restore a sense of control, that is so important for their wellbeing.

## Find refuge in rituals

Regular rituals such as mealtimes, bedtime stories and regular one-on-one time provide both an anchor to normality and a sense of connection for kids at times of change. Consider reconstituting favoured family rituals at this time if they have lapsed due to lack of time, or lifestyle frenzy.

## Look outwards

In difficult times there is a tendency to look inwards, which is a natural protective strategy. The alternative is to establish a sense of connection and community spirit by focusing on generosity and togetherness. Help children see past their own needs and look for ways to assist others whether it's shopping for an elderly neighbour, helping a younger sibling occupy themselves, or planning an indoor movie night for the whole family.

The Coronavirus presents many practical challenges to parents and other important adults in the lives of kids. Staying calm, keeping informed, and adjusting our own habits are just some of the challenges we face. However a significant challenge is one of personal leadership. That is, during these difficult times we need to be civil to each other, look out for each other and be mindful of the common good in everything we do. In this, we can all take a significant lead.



### Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.

20 March 2020

## Communique

Education Ministers met today and decided that NAPLAN will not proceed in 2020. The NAPLAN test window was scheduled to be held from 12 to 22 May.

All Education Ministers acknowledge and thank all of our school leaders, our teachers and support staff for the essential work they do every day educating our children and young people, particularly during these challenging times. They are all playing a vital role in managing the response to COVID-19.

Education Ministers reiterated that the National Cabinet has agreed, on the advice of the chief health and medical officers, that “pre-emptive closure of schools are not proportionate or effective as a public health intervention to prevent community transmission of COVID-19 at this time.” The advice of the Chief Health and Medical Officers is available at [this link](#).

The decision to not proceed with NAPLAN in 2020 has been taken to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, including potential online and remote learning.

Further, the impact of responses to the COVID-19 virus may affect the delivery of NAPLAN testing, including the operation of centralised marking centres and the implications for nationally comparable data if an insufficient number of students are available to do the test.

The decision to not proceed with NAPLAN in 2020 also means that the scheduled testing of the NAPLAN Online platform, known as the Coordinated Practice Test (CPT), will not proceed. Ministers acknowledge the work that departments and schools have undertaken in preparation for the anticipated CPT which was due to commence next week on 23 March.

Education departments and systems will continue to closely monitor health advice and work with schools to ensure appropriate support for students and staff as the response to COVID-19 develops.

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*Media queries: Greg Donaghue, Education Council Secretariat on 0423 748 320 or [greg.donaghue@ec.edu.au](mailto:greg.donaghue@ec.edu.au) .*