

College

Newsletter



MacKillop

St Mary MacKillop College Canberra



Volume *Twelve*

22 September 2023

Coming

Up

MON 0 9 0 C T

- Term 4 Begins
- Floriade Performance Week

TUE 1 0 0 C T

- Parent-Teacher Interviews

THU 1 2 0 C T

- Parent-Teacher Interviews

MON 1 6 0 C T

- Year 7-10 PAT Testing

TUE 1 7 0 C T

- AST Second Sitting
- Year 7-10 PAT Testing

WED 1 8 0 C T

- AST Second Sitting

WED 2 5 0 C T

- Senior House Captain Elections
- Senior Hospitality Parent Dinner

WED 0 1 N O V

- Long-Tan Assembly (St Peter's)
- Campus Captain Elections (Padua)

THU 0 2 N O V

- Gala Concert



Principal's Letter

Principal's Prayer

God, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.



Dear parents/carers, teachers and students,

MacKillop Celebrates 25 Year Anniversary

In 1997, St Mary MacKillop College had its origins. Padua Catholic High School and St Peter's Catholic College commenced a process of amalgamation. In 1998, these two schools had come together, through what was a time of great change and challenge for the staff and the students, to form what was then MacKillop Catholic College. After the Canonisation of Mary MacKillop in 2010, the school had a name change to what we now know as St Mary MacKillop College.

Our Silver Jubilee Assembly, celebrated on MacKillop Day, provided the opportunity for the College community to celebrate who we are now, including the celebration of staff and student achievements, to provide a sense of the history of the school (through the contributions to the assembly of each of the past College Principals, alumni and many images) and to recognise the growth that has taken place over the last quarter of a century.

The foundation Principal of MacKillop wrote to me after the assembly and I have included an excerpt from her letter below:

"I now stand in awe at the growth and excellence of the College, of all that has been achieved by each person 'playing their part'; I stand in awe at how the legacy of St Mary MacKillop has been nurtured and expanded over the last 25 years. Well done indeed, to everyone who has been involved in its life and growth".

- Sr Noelene Quinane

The Brendan Marsh Teacher of Excellence Award

Brendan Marsh was the brother of past students Zac and Abe Marsh who died suddenly at his family home in 2017. Brendan's brothers and sisters decided to make a donation to the College to recognise outstanding teaching at MacKillop and to perpetuate the memory of their brother.

The Brendan Marsh Teacher of Excellence Award recognises outstanding practice by a MacKillop teacher. Brendan's father, Phil, very kindly travelled to Canberra to assist in the presentation of the award at the Silver Jubilee Assembly.

The award recipient for 2023 was announced as Kate Goolagong. Kate is a passionate and dynamic teacher, committed to the students in her classes and a first-class leader who has shaped the Science Faculty on the Padua Campus into a collaborative team that is an exemplar to other faculties across the College.

2024 College Student Leaders

This week elections have been held on the St Peter's Campus for the College student leaders of 2024. Congratulations to the 33 students who had the courage to nominate themselves for positions of leadership and the seven candidates who have been successful. Our 2024 College Captains and Portfolio Captains will form a very high-quality leadership team.

College Captains - Sadies-Avari Petersen and Harrison Angus

Faith & Community Captain - Tadhg Meade

Sports Captain - Lachlan Collier

Performing Arts Captain - Zara Huber

Sustainability Captain - Briony Maginnity

Communications & Connections Captain - Isla Edwards

Variety Night

Variety Night this week showcased the varied talents of students from every year group and was an example of MacKillop students having the confidence to express their creativity through performance. Congratulations to all the performers – and to the family members who provide the support and encouragement that is so often necessary in both the development of their talent and building of confidence to take to the stage in front of a sell-out audience.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lachlan McNicol • College Principal (Acting)





Silver Jubilee Celebrations and MacKillop Day

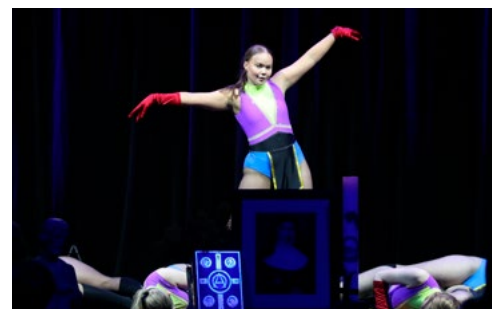
The College celebrated its 25-year anniversary with a special Silver Jubilee Assembly on Friday 8 September.

The event was held in conjunction with MacKillop Day, with the assembly replacing the traditional Feast Day Mass for the special occasion.

Held at the Tuggeranong Basketball Stadium, the Silver Jubilee Assembly included reflections on the first 25 years of MacKillop, a short liturgy, special awards, and a range of presentations and performances.

In the afternoon, students went back to the St Peter's Campus for the annual MacKillop Day celebrations, with activities like the obstacle course, horizontal bungee, face painting, sumo wrestling, carnival games, upbeat music, and a wide range of food and drink.

A full recap of the day can be found on our [Website](#).





Variety Night 2023

The College held its annual Variety Night SRC fundraiser at the Padua Campus last night.

The audience was treated to a wide range of performances, including dancing, singing, acting, comedy, and magic. There were also games for the audience, including the Variety Night Quiz, MacKillop's Got Talent, Bingo, and Heads or Tails.

Variety Night was sold out, meaning the event raised more than \$3000 towards MacKillop House in Lyneham, which is the College's 2023 House Charity.

Thank you to the audience for the support they showed and congratulations to the performers, stage crew, AV team, SRC members, and everyone involved. It was a great night!





Spring Zing

This year, Year 10 attended the annual Spring Zing at the Woden Southern Cross Club on Friday 15 September. It was a night full of music, dancing and food!

With the theme of Hollywood, we had many different costumes, from Pitbull to Mama Mia. Students were busy dancing the night away and snapping pictures at the photo booth! Even the teachers got involved dressing up as security guards. This was definitely one of the best highlights of this school year for us all!

The night ended off with Mr Johnson and Ms Sullivan announcing the best dressed winners; Pennywise as the best dressed individual, Danny and Sandy from 'Grease' and Kath and Kim from (you guessed it) 'Kath and Kim', as best dressed couples and lastly, Top Gun and Barbie as the best dressed groups. Of course, we must give a shout out to the best dressed teacher on the night, our own College Principal, Mr McNicol. It sure was a night to remember!

Sania Sijo & Stephanie Prince • Year 10



INSPIRE 2023

The Annual College Art Competition

INSPIRE Art Competition Winners

Overall Winner and People's Choice Award

Maria Ajamieh (Year 12 - Painting)

Digital

1st Place - Caleb Somerfield (Year 7)

Highly Commended - Emily Nguyen (Year 11)

Drawing

1st Place - Natasha Coates (Year 12)

Highly Commended - Angela Awwad (Year 11) and Jessica Lubinski (Year 11)

Photography

1st Place - Noa Zisman (Year 9)

2nd Place - Charlie Vandenberg (Year 11)

Highly Commended - Bella Pitman (Year 12) and Arlo Smit (Year 10)

Painting

1st Place - Bella Pitman (Year 12)

Highly Commended - Ebony Humphrey (Year 8) and George Cross (Year 10)

Sculpture/Mixed Media

1st Place - Jacky Pearson (Year 12)



Overall Winner and People's Choice Award
Maria Ajamieh (Year 12 - Painting)



Padua Building Project

We are thrilled that work has now commenced on our new Physical Education Facility at the Padua Campus. The Facility will contain two indoor basketball courts, one outdoor court, three classrooms, a fitness centre, change rooms and a staffroom. The Facility will add to the extensive offerings in Physical Education and allow accommodations for our student population.

Last week the Built team cleared the site of vegetation and removed existing structures. The building site offices, meeting rooms and storage facilities were installed. Site fencing and banners were installed to ensure security and safety around the site. Additional fencing closer to the road will also be erected in coming weeks.

Jacklyn Bryant • Head of Campus, Padua

St Peter's Performing Arts Centre

In August, our construction company, Built, erected the fence around the area where our new Performing Arts Centre is being built. This Performing Arts Centre will be a state-of-the-art performance space for Dance, Drama, Music and includes the provision of facilities for theatre arts such as costume and prop making. A 400 seat theatre will be available for a range of performances and assemblies. Regular onsite meetings with Built have taken the College step by step through the progress of the project. Currently the site is being cleared in readiness for utility services to be installed. Acoustic engineers and lighting specialists have met recently to discuss the best fit-out options for the space.

Built have installed a time lapse camera which is capturing all of the work from fence installation to completion of the centre. This footage will be available at a later date to be shared with students, staff and the College community. Windows with sight into the building site have also been installed into the fence so that interested people can look in and observe what is happening on site.

We are all excited about this project and what it will offer to our students, their learning and to the greater MacKillop community.

Maria O'Donnell • Head of Campus, St Peter's





Senior Melbourne Trip *Visual Arts and HASS*

Senior students studying Visual Arts and HASS were fortunate enough to visit Melbourne last week.

Legal and Sociology students ventured across the city for three days, exploring famous crime sites, an insightful talk by 'The Big Issue', the 'Goddess' exhibition at the ACMI, a tour of the Old Melbourne Gaol, the Botanic Gardens and ANZAC Memorial.

The Art students had the opportunity to participate in numerous self-guided tours in drawing, photography and sculpture to further enrich their knowledge and artistic skills. They were blessed to conclude their trip with a Stencil Workshop at Blender Studios, where they created and amazed us all with their unique pieces, demonstrating their talents and abilities.



Our tour was insightful and educational, and we had the opportunity to take advantage of some co-curricular activities. We explored many different cuisines at Queen Victoria Markets; certainly eating more than anticipated! Many of us watched the NRL semi-final, which was in support of the home team - the Storm. Others went on a Ghost Tour of the Old Melbourne Gaol, with the rest opting for more dessert at Brunetti's; a trip favourite! HASS students were pleasantly surprised with a Party Bus picking them up to take them to the airport in Melbourne. It's clear why we are Humanities students, because singing wasn't for us!

Overall, it is safe to say that we all had a great time and feel immensely grateful for the opportunity to take our learning and apply it into a real-world setting. We would like to particularly thank Mr Batten and Mrs Prestipino for creating this opportunity for us, and Mrs Fife and Mr O'Callaghan for assisting us as well. We created many lasting memories that we will take into our futures, and we hope that the teachers had as much fun as we did!

Charlotte Woolf & Sophie Vassallo • Year 12



Chemical Synthesis at ANU

In Week 9, Year 12 Chemistry students participated in a chemical synthesis practical at the Science teaching laboratories at ANU. Students carried out the chemical reactions required to make their own samples of both paracetamol and aspirin, before testing the purity of the samples using modern spectral analysis techniques. They finished the day by making liquid nitrogen ice cream. This was a fantastic opportunity for students to apply the chemistry they have been learning to a real-world pharmaceutical opportunity, and talk to current ANU students about their degrees and what studying chemistry at university is like.

Duckling and Chick Hatching

Back at school, for the past two weeks, from Monday 11 September through to Friday 22 September, senior Biology students have been hatching chicks and ducklings at the St Peter's Campus. This is to assist students undertaking the Human Biology course, in which the current focus is on growth, development and care. Observing the hatching process and watching the changes that occur as the ducklings and chicks grow has helped students develop better awareness of the biological challenges facing each step of survival, and they have been able to draw comparisons between the surprisingly similar early developmental stages of the chicks and humans. This has been a highly engaging experience, with students asking fantastic questions about the way these animals develop and the way to best care for them. Every day, Biology students (and their teachers!) have been excited to check on the hatching process, see how our baby animals have grown, and take the chance for a quick cuddle!

Dr Melissa Pert • Science Coordinator (St Peter's)





Visit to Canberra Hospital's Disease Museum

In Week 9, Year 12 Human Biology students visited the Disease Museum at the Canberra Hospital, as part of their course relating to diagnosing and treating diseases of the human body. The museum, which is not open to the public, is usually reserved for ANU medical students and doctors of the hospital. The Year 12 students were allowed special access to explore and study some real life examples of diseases and how they affect different parts of the body.

Below are some of the reflections from the students:

"It was very interesting and it was important that we were able to physically see real life examples of cases that we have learnt about in the past."

"I definitely would recommend all future human biology students to attend as it is a great experience and a good opportunity to strengthen your knowledge."

Dr Melissa Pert • Science Coordinator (St Peter's)



Year 9 Material & Design

Tharwa Valley Forge

On Monday 18 September, our Year 9 Materials and Design class had a visit from Karim Haddad from Tharwa Valley Forge. We have been learning about industrial product design and we are working on designing our own kitchen knives. To have the opportunity to meet and learn from Karim was very special for our class. In just one hour, Karim taught us a lot about knife making. He taught us about different blade shapes and their uses, he taught us about the ergonomics of a handle, and he gave us advice on how we could make improvements to our own designs.

We had the opportunity to ask questions, and inquire about different features of our designs and how we could alter them so that they would work as intended. Karim was very knowledgeable and it was amazing to have the opportunity to talk to, and learn from one of the best knife makers in Australia. The lesson was incredible and we would definitely love the chance to talk to Karim again further along our knife making process.

Maggie Grant • Year 9

Robotics

On Saturday 9 September, Reuben Lilley, Darcy Thripp, Samuel Major, Jake Watson, and Bailey Saxon participated in the VEX robotics competition at Daramalan College. The students worked on their own robot and had a chance to see the VEX IQ competition. A special mention to Bailey Saxon who refereed the VEX IQ competition and did a splendid job.

Ummehani Rangwalla • STEM Coordinator



Committee Program at the Legislative Assembly

Earlier this term, Year 8 and 9 students of the Debating Club went to the ACT Legislative Assembly to take part in a learning program. While we were there, we had the chance to look around the Assembly and learn about the way our territory members consider issues in the community. We participated in a role play of this process and experienced what it would really be like to debate in the Assembly. It was a fantastic experience for all involved.

Isobel Halliday • Year 8 Student

Faith Life

AJASS Conference

Youth Ministry Retreat

In Week 8, we had the opportunity to participate in the AJASS Year 10 Pilgrimage and travelled to Melbourne with many other MacKillop Colleges from around Australia. We had the privilege of learning about St Mary MacKillop's inspirational life and visiting the historical MacKillop sights around Melbourne where she lived and helped so many people.

We learnt about the sacrifices that Mary made and how we can follow in her footsteps as leaders to make a positive impact. We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity that we had to participate in this program and are appreciative for all the knowledge we gained on our trip!

Phoebe Vassallo, Leila Nikolic, and Christina Giannis • Year 10



Mobile Phone Procedures *Padua Campus*

The College policy on mobile phones at the Padua Campus is that no students are to use mobile phones at school, from their time of arrival until 3:15pm.

If mobile phones are sighted by staff, they are:

1. Confiscated and stored securely at the front office.
2. They may be collected at the end of the school day on the first or second occasion. In these situations, an email will be sent to parents informing them of the incident.
3. If a student's phone or mobile device is confiscated on a third, or further occasion in a year, parents will be contacted by a Pastoral Care Coordinator.

The phone will remain secured at the Front Office and will either be:

- stored at the College until it is collected by a parent/carers, OR
- returned to the student once an after-school detention has been agreed to and scheduled.

If there is a pressing issue requiring a student to use a phone they may do so at Student Reception or their Pastoral Care Coordinator's Office. Parents/carers may also get in contact with their child during the school day by contacting Student Reception.

Transport Canberra Changes

As we move into Term 4, Transport Canberra have advised that there will be some changes made to their current timetable that will become effective from Monday 9 October – Day 1, Term 4.

Two Padua Campus routes have been impacted by these changes:

- **Route 2060** – The morning service begins 15 minutes later to allow students to arrive closer to the bell time.
- **Route 2068** – The morning service will travel up Hambidge Crescent, turn left onto Proctor Street, turn right on Mead Street, turn right onto Benham Street, turn right onto Halley Street, turn left onto Hambidge Crescent and continue onto Coyne Street.

The following links from Transport Canberra's website may be a great place to ensure your child is catching the right bus at the right times;

- [School Service Changes for Term 4](#)
- [Timetables commencing 9 October 2023](#)

Nathan Wood • Director Student Wellbeing

Summer Uniform

From the beginning of Term 4 all students are required to wear the Summer Uniform. Detailed information is available in the Student Diary, on the [College Website](#), and on Canvas. Points to note include:

- Boys have the option to wear tailored mid-grey school shorts in addition to the trousers. Grey or black socks may be worn with the trousers, however, if shorts are worn the socks must be grey.
- Girls in Years 7-10 may wear the teal check summer dress with plain short white socks, or the tailored navy slacks with MacKillop monogram and a white over-blouse with MacKillop monogram.
- Please be mindful that as stated in the Student Diary; "Girls skirts, dresses and shorts are to be knee length" (p.13). It would be appreciated if any adjustments or new purchases are made as necessary to commence Term 4.
- Any holiday 'variations' such as facial piercings or fashionable extremes to hair such as colours or styles should be rectified before returning to school. In relation to hairstyles, the College policy states, "extreme variations of length are not permitted". This means that any changes in length should be graded, tapered, layered, etc. Students should return to school ensuring any haircuts or styles are within the College policy.
- School shoes are to be traditional, lace-up, black and polishable.

If there are circumstances that prevent students from wearing the correct uniform, they are required to bring a signed note from their parents/carers to explain the situation. They need to present this to their Pastoral Care Coordinator during PC time each morning to obtain a uniform pass.

Paul Durham
Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care

Building Bridges Presentation

Building Bridges was an engaging presentation from a man called Brett Hunt; his presentation was all about his life story. Brett's story tells us about what his childhood through to adulthood was like, the many fun times and difficulties that he faced and how he was able to successfully manage these. He spoke about his relationships with others, particularly Danny and his experience in prison and how he changed his life after that. We learned that life isn't always easy and that we are all challenged to ask our mates how they are and offer help where needed.

Clancy de Mamiel • Year 9

Rock and Water Presentation

Over the last term, Year 8 have participated in the Rock and Water program as our Pastoral program on Wednesday mornings. Rock and Water helped us understand different ways to solve relationship issues. We learnt that some situations call for a water mindset, being adaptive and flexible. Other situations require a rock mindset which involves a strong and resilient stance when facing problems.

Rock and Water activities involved physical contact, either as a whole Pastoral class or in pairs, which was fun. Being involved in the Rock and Water program helped us understand respect and resilience.

Imogen Norris, Beau Breugelmans and Peter Pham • Year 8

SRC Report

Back in Week 8, the College celebrated our annual MacKillop Day. This was a very exciting day filled with endless opportunities to win prizes, enjoy great food, and ultimately celebrate the College community. As we are in our Jubilee Year, instead of a typical mass seen at previous MacKillop Days, we began the day with a whole College assembly. The assembly was full of exciting presentations, spectacular dances, and even saw the debut of a special hymn that was commissioned just for the assembly. We witnessed the very first English in two minutes by the amazing English Coordinators: Mrs Baker, and Mrs White. We were even lucky enough to have the Foundation Principal and MacKillop House representative Sister Noelene Quinane attend, as well as other supporting schools, politicians, and guests from the MacKillop community and area. It was a great way to start the day!

The following week we celebrated our last House Charity week. Mindygari made the week exciting by incorporating car park donations for seniors, pizza, popcorn, jersey day, and two more teachers vs. student soccer matches. The proceeds from both campuses once again went to the one charity this year, MacKillop House. Although this was the last House Charity week, the fundraising isn't over yet.

The SRC would like to thank everyone for their fundraising efforts this far, and we can't wait to see how much we have been able to raise for MacKillop House!

Toby Barber • Communications and Connections Captain





Life Drawing

Life drawing ran again this year at the Tuggeranong Arts Centre. Classes were primarily for our senior Visual Arts students who wanted to extend their drawing skills and experience. These sessions were run by our own Visual Arts teachers and were open to MacKillop staff to attend as well. Each session was well attended and students and staff alike enjoyed the opportunity to take some time out and experience a unique drawing environment.



MacKillop Mob

Term 4 NEW Student Support Times

Mr Margosis has had a timetable and class change so as a result many of the times for student support in Term 4 have had to change. New cards will be allocated to students in Years 7-10 to reflect the new times.

Week A

Wednesday A Period 2 – **Seniors**

Wednesday A Period 4 – **Year 7**

Thursday A Before School and Period 1 – **Seniors**

Friday A Before School, Period 1, and 2 – **Seniors**

Week B

Monday B Period 5 – **Seniors**

Tuesday B Period 3 – **Year 9**

Wednesday B Period 4 – **Year 8**

Friday B Before School, Period 1, and 2 – **Seniors**

Friday B Period 1 – **Year 10**



Elite Athlete Spotlight

Meaghann Scott

What is your sport?

I play Basketball, Netball, Touch and Oztag.

What is the highest level you have competed at?

I have played Nationals representing the ACT in all of my sports and I have also represented the Southern Country Pride Oztag team at the City vs Country tournament.

What is your most memorable sporting moment/achievement?

My three most memorable sporting achievements would be going to Nationals for basketball in Perth as co-captain and having the best time off and on court. I came away very happy with my statistics from the tournament. Next would be winning the Southern NSW Junior State Cup, receiving player of the final and then from my coaches, the coaches award. Then lastly getting to go to Melbourne and compete in the National Under 12s Hardcourt Tennis Championships which was played at Melbourne Park.

Who is your sporting idol and why?

Leilani Mitchell is one of the women I idolise in the sporting world. She is a 5'4 basketball guard who has played in America and played for Australia. I idolise her because she represents someone who worked hard and overcame the people who might have overlooked her because of her height.

What is your next competition?

The National Youth Championships for Touch Football on the Sunshine Coast, QLD.

What do you hope to achieve in your sport?

I hope to play sport for as long as possible and hopefully become a professional athlete.

What has your sport taught you?

The harder you work, the more you will get out of your coaches and teammates. It has also taught me that in the end you won't really remember the games you play but the memories you make off the field.



Interschool Mountain Bike Champs

On 1 September, four teams from MacKillop competed in the ACT School Mountain Bike Championships at UC Stromlo Forest Park. The race was a 4 hour relay where riders would each go out and complete a lap of the track before heading back into transition, tagging their teammate and sending them out to complete a lap. The course consisted of some steep climbs along the fire roads with some fun flowing single track for all of the riders to enjoy.

After almost four and half hours of racing, MacKillop's junior male team, consisting of William Adams, Elliot Evans, Oliver Cokljat, Bailey Emblen came away with the win of Junior Boys (7/8) by a couple of minutes against some very stiff competition from all over the ACT and NSW. Overall the day was a great success with a win for our Juniors and no crashes or injuries.

Barrett Bannon • Year 12

Student Achievements

Alana Fraser (Year 9) was selected by her local AFL club TVAFC to go to parliament house, due to being a premiership team winner and her individual achievement of 'best on ground', where she was a part of filming for the news with AFL Giants Phil Davis, and interviewed by AFL Australia about her achievements in AFL and her hopes to become a AFLW player. This was a part of the national AFL Premiership Trophy Tour.

Samuel Whyte (Year 7) will be representing the ACT in the Australian Junior Oztog Nationals in Coffs Harbour in October, and will also be completing in the Australian AFL U13/14 Team in December in Fiji.

Madison Cachia and Hamish Wales (Year 9) have been selected to represent the ACT at the upcoming National Youth Soccer Championships.

Ryan Moore (Year 9) has been selected to play in the GWS Giants Development Academy's Under 15s "Super 24" team in Coffs Harbour in October.

Lachlan Collier (Year 11) player for the ACT Schools Rugby Union Team who played against Tonga on Wednesday 20 September at Marist College.

Madeline Williams (Year 9) was selected to participate in a dance retreat overseas in September.

Eric Arrouk (Year 9) competed in a recent judo competition held at the Padua Campus and came away with a Bronze Medal.



Notices + Information

Year 10, 11 and 12 Examinations 2023

Semester 2 Examinations dates are scheduled as per the College Calendar. Please see below:

Year 10 Examination Period:

Monday 6 November-Wednesday 8 November 2023

Year 11 and 12 Examination Period:

Monday 13 November-Friday 17 Friday 2023

As scheduled events and for examination security, it is an expectation that all students will be present for their examinations.

Approved Leave

Parents and carers are reminded that any student leave from school, with the exception of illness or misadventure, must be made through an Application for Leave form which is found on Canvas or via an email to the Campus Head. Applications for leave are required with at least two weeks' notice. If special circumstances exist, please make direct contact with the respective Campus Head.

With specific regard to Year 11 and 12 students, any assessment that is missed during a period of leave must be rescheduled and approved prior to the commencement of leave. If this is not completed prior to the period of leave, students may have penalties applied to their assessment.

Fees

Term 4 2023 fee statements will be sent electronically in the upcoming holidays.

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

Thank you to the families who have paid Term 3 fees. Any outstanding fees should be paid immediately unless paying by Direct Debit or other approved arrangement.

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

Community News

MacKillop Judo Club

MacKillop Judo Club runs at the Padua Campus gym on Tuesdays at 6pm, Wednesday at 4:30pm and Friday at 6pm. The growth of our MacKillop Judo Club is shown by continuing new members, family participation and enjoyment, plus competition success. If you are interested in joining call Stephanos on 0411 105 449.

Futsal Mania

Are you interested in playing futsal? EOI is open for teams and individual players at Futsal Mania. **Futsal starts in October** for kids under 6 to 14+ years of age at the PCYC in Queanbeyan. Term 4 regos are open now! Email: futsalmaniansw@gmail.com or visit: [Futsal Mania](#)

Tuggeranong Tornadoes Little Athletics Club

The Tuggeranong Tornadoes Little Athletics Club registrations are now open. They are holding 'Come & Try' days on Saturday 14 and 21 October from 8:45-11am at Kambah Oval. For more information visit their [Website](#).

Two Sheds Workshop

Canberra kids Term 4 after school classes are open! Come and build some awesome projects with Two Sheds Workshop, Wanniasa. Workshops for kids 7yrs+, no experience needed. Check out the range here: [Two Shed Classes](#).

Needs Of Lay Catholics Today

What do adult lay Catholics need today to help them live a committed Catholic life amid the circumstances of modern society? To find out and to help improve their services to our Archdiocese, the Canberra Circle of The Catenians, an international association of lay Catholics, is conducting an Archdiocesan-wide online survey.

Please help by completing this brief, anonymous, tick-box [Survey](#). Thank you. Contact: 0419 695 927 or phil13murray@gmail.com

Game On CBR

Game On CBR is a community based, free, family friendly physical activity "pop up." The aim of the events is to promote physical activity/60mins a day target for children through providing fun, accessible sessions and ideas for children, families and school communities.

In Term 4 the events will be held at Wanniasa School Senior Campus Outdoor Courts. Check out the events on their [Website](#).

Sustainable Canberra Expo

The ACT Government is holding the inaugural Sustainable Canberra Expo on 13 and 14 October 2023 at Thoroughbred Park. The Expo is free to attend and open to the ACT and surrounding community.

There is more information on their [Website](#).

Second Hand Uniform Shop

The SHUS will open, by appointment, the second week of the school holidays (from 2 October) to meet your uniform needs. Please email uniforms@mackillop.act.edu.au or text 0427 089 370 to make an appointment.

Judy • Uniform Shop Coordinator

ACT Spring Holiday Cricket Camps

AAS Cricket Coaching is holding a Holiday Cricket Camp from 3-5 October on Watson Oval for players 6-17+ and AASC Skills Clinics on 26 and 28 September at Reid Oval (for intermediate and advanced players). The sessions are structured and enjoyable with a wide variety of cricket drills, activities and games.

Visit [Here](#) to book, or contact 0400125342 or activeallsports@outlook.com for more information.

YWCA Canberra Youth Programs

The YWCA Canberra Youth Programs Team provides a FREE school holiday program to young people aged 10 to 25 in Tuggeranong. Activities will be run from the Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre, 22 Sidney Nolan Street, Conder – email youth@ywca-canberra.org.au to register.

For more information call (02) 6185 2090, view the [Program](#) or visit their [Website](#).

Viking Park

The Australian Wallabies U18 and New Zealand All Blacks U18s are playing two international matches at Viking Park these school holidays. Entry is FREE and perfect for the whole family. Matches are Thursday 28 September (2pm Kick-Off) and Monday 2 October (12pm Kick-Off).



MacKillop
St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

Contact details



02 6209 0100



info@mackillop.act.edu.au



www.mackillop.act.edu.au



**PO Box 1211
Tuggeranong ACT 2901**



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



Absentee SMS Line
0429 131 463

Socials



[www.facebook.com/
mackillop.act](http://www.facebook.com/mackillop.act)



[www.twitter.com/
mackillop_act](http://www.twitter.com/mackillop_act)



[www.instagram.com/
mackillop_act](http://www.instagram.com/mackillop_act)



[www.youtube.com/
stmarymackillop](http://www.youtube.com/stmarymackillop)



R U OK?

I'm not really supposed to say this, but R U OK Day has always sat a little uncomfortably with me. I know we need to show we care – and I'm all for that. I know we need to be willing to have the tough conversations – and I'm all for that.

The trouble for me is twofold: first, asking “are you ok?” doesn't tend to feel authentic in most casual conversations. This, we can change, by having more meaningful conversations. But second – and importantly – in the unlikely event that someone says “No, I'm actually not doing so well” we tend to be a little unsure of how to respond. This is the case whether we're talking to a friend or one of our kids.

Our Insights articles are typically about parenting. This article can still apply to parenting, but really, this one's for everyone who has ever wondered how to ask if someone is ok, or who has felt unsure about *how to respond when things aren't ok*.

R U Ok?

Think about how we typically ask someone how things are for them. Common questions might be:

- **How are you?** (Common responses are “not bad”, “fine thanks”, or a sigh followed by “I'm ok”.)
- **How was your day?** (Common responses are “meh”, “mmmm hmm”, or “fine”.)
- **What's wrong?** (Common responses are “nothing” or a big gush of emotions.)

Let's consider a couple of important factors:

1. What have they already told you?

Perhaps their body language is slumped. Maybe they seem to have been crying or are jittery, upset, or even antagonistic.

2. How's your timing?

Asking a question about emotions when someone is emotional or tired can trigger responses that aren't helpful. Sometimes we might even become irritated when we get a one-word answer like “fine”. Timing matters.

3. Is there an audience?

If others are around, a person will want to “maintain face”. Face needs describe the way we try to look like we have it together so no one judges us. An audience reduces the likelihood that someone will be honest with us.

4. How have you asked?

We often ask if people are ok because we've seen that they're looking like they're struggling, but we ask at the wrong time or in front of a crowd... or perhaps we ask the wrong way. A quick “what's wrong?”, or “how are you” can sometimes give the impression that we're not interested in the answer.

5. How is your relationship?

A lesson I've learned the hard way is that if I don't share a strong enough relationship with someone, my questions about how they're doing won't go very far. (Face needs play a role here again.) A person has to know – deep in their bones – that you've got their back if they're going to open up.

How to ask the question

There are many ways to find out how someone is. Here are three suggestions:

First, when you see that someone isn't doing so well, you are away from others, the timing is right, and the relationship is strong, ask "Are you ok?" The question should be asked with eye contact (and a gentle touch – perhaps on the shoulder – if appropriate), compassion, and a clear desire to know more.

Second, you might follow the suggestion above but instead ask "How are you *feeling*?". This question opens a dialogue that can also be productive.

Third, say what you see. (This is my preferred option, although it may not always be right.) In this instance, you might say, "It looks like you're having a really rough time at the moment." Or you could say, "I might be reading this wrong, but lately I feel like it's been a struggle for you." This leads to a more natural "are you ok?"

When they say they're fine

People often hide how they're really feeling. They don't want to look weak or incompetent. Or perhaps they don't want to be honest – with you or themselves.

A friend recently shared the following with me:

I was on a walk with a few mates. We walk regularly together – at least twice a week. After a walk, Shane came up to me and said, "No one cares about what I'm going through. But I'm falling apart. I just don't think I can keep doing this. And no one is checking in."

My friend had checked in with Shane that day (and every other day they met) with a standard "how are things, mate?" and Shane had met that question with a smile, a nod, a handshake, and a "yeah, great mate. You?"

Now and then, it's good to pause and say something like, "Ok, that's the standard answer. But how are things... really? Are you ok?"

Often it's the second question that makes the difference.

Where to from here?

When someone gives you an indication that they're struggling – that they're not really "ok" – you might sometimes get stuck. What do you say?

Clumsy statements like "you'll be ok" often spill from our lips. We mean well. But this rarely helps.

Well-intentioned advice might be our natural response. It's rare that someone who is not ok actually wants our advice though. This is better saved for later.

Instead, try the following:

1. Say thanks. "I really appreciate you letting me know."
2. Validate. "Things can be really rough sometimes."
3. Listen. "I'm here and I'm listening."
4. Offer support. "If there were anything at all that I could do, what would it be?" or better yet, "I think I can help. Are you open to...? (and make an offer of support like a meal or a regular catch up)".

And if someone is in real danger, **call Lifeline on 13 11 14**.



AUTHOR

Dr Justin Coulson

Dr Justin Coulson is a dad to 6 daughters. He is the parenting expert and co-host of Channel Nine's Parental Guidance, and he and his wife host Australia's #1 podcast for parents and family: The Happy Families Podcast. He has written 7 books about families and parenting. For further details visit happyfamilies.com.au.