Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion - 8th September

Partnerships

Mount St Bernard College is a unique and vibrant school community with diverse partnerships. The dynamics of the college has changed over the years and we are certainly very different now compared to years ago. The vast majority of our students are boarders and the majority of these are indigenous. This is one of the many transformations that have occurred over the years. To achieve our goals and promote our success we all need to be on the same page and working in partnership.

We cannot educate our children without reaching out to our parents. When schools and families work together, children have a far better chance of not only being successful in school but being successful in life as well. We can talk about three R’s to effective partnerships. Respect, responsibility and relationships. Inclusive schools who are successful in their parent partner and school partnerships share these three qualities.
In building respect both the parent and the school are valued, they are trusted and they are respected. The needs of the child come first and the child’s needs form the basis of all interactions. Both recognize that the family perspective is invaluable in providing insight and information as to what a child needs to be successful in school. The parents are full partners in the decision making process because that information is so important and there is what we call an open door policy at school. Open door in that there is a climate that welcomes parents and that expresses concern for their needs, the parent’s needs as well as the child’s needs. There is also what we call the recognition of limits. Parents have limits, they have other responsibilities as well so schools provide access to services, supports, resources and meetings at times and places that work for their parents. In the whole area of respect there’s the underlying belief that both the school and the parent really want what’s best for that child. If both want what’s best for that child then both are willing to share responsibility for the success of the child. This respect needs to cover all bases and is a package deal. In other words we do not pick and choose what we would like at the expense of something else. This is promoting inclusiveness and this is why we are a very proud college that celebrates cultural diversity.

Responsibility is also fundamental in our partnerships. Neither the school nor the parent blames the other for what’s not working but instead they claim responsibility for school success. When we talk about parent-friendly schools we’re talking about schools that are all inclusive that welcome all children that value their differences. When we talk about school-friendly homes, we’re looking at homes that re-enforce education, that help with homework, that make sure that they re-enforce at home the importance of school. That also means that schools have the responsibility to stay connected and parents have the responsibility to stay connected. Parents need to educate the school about their child. They need to share their journey with that child and schools need to connect and have a responsibility to connect with families. We often say that communication needs to be regular, ongoing, two-way, including feedback and meaningful.

Meaning communication provides information, lets us know about goals, about the scope and sequence of the curriculum and lets us know about homework responsibilities. In other words, successful and responsible partnerships accept the need to stay informed, not only about the child’s individual needs, but also about the process. Responsibility means staying connected and staying informed. It is also about celebrating all that the school offers – sporting achievements, special calendar events, NAIDOC Day, school liturgical celebrations, Catholic heritage and many others. Again it is about the ‘complete package’, which is everyone’s responsibility.

With respect and responsibility we open the door to what is called meaningful relationships. Relationships build trust and trust sustains those quality partnerships. The keys to building relationships with partnerships are the same as building relationships in the classroom. We need to feel like we belong, we need to trust and we need to believe that we are valued. Relationships nurture the collaboration that is so necessary for partnerships to survive and to help students succeed in school.

With Respect, Responsibility and Relationships, parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the responsibility to interact positively with their children, to build healthy relationships, to serve as their role models and to provide guidance. Parents are also partners in the educational process. They can exchange information and they can share in that decision making. They can help at the school and their collaboration helps us to form those partnerships that help us meet the needs of all the students. The role of parents promoting inclusive education and best practice in inclusive education is of paramount importance; in fact it’s the most accurate predictor of a child’s success in school. The three R’s, Respect, Responsibility, and Relationships help us to form those partnerships that truly make a lasting difference to all of our MSB students.
Japan and Winton Trips

We have a number of students heading off on adventures during the holidays and we wish them well and hope they enjoy this tremendous opportunity. For the first time the college is sending a group of keen students overseas to Japan to experience a unique and very different culture. The itinerary looks exciting and action packed and we look forward to the photos and stories about their experiences when they return.

Our Didge Kids (aka Beautiful Chaos) are participating in the Country Music Festival in Winton next week. Congratulations to these students, fresh of their Gold Medal performance at the Catholic Schools Music Festival in Brisbane last month. Good luck to all and thank you to the staff that have organised these tremendous opportunities and those who will be accompanying them on the trips.

To all parents and carers, I encourage you to discuss your child’s interim report with them and converse about the successes and areas for improvement. I also encourage you to contact the subject teacher if you require any further clarification.

Finally, enjoy holiday time with the family and we will see you all back in two weeks’ time.

Regards

David Finch

---

Social and Emotional Learning: Self Awareness

Last newsletter, we introduced the five Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. This week we take a closer look at self awareness: the first and most fundamental SEL competency.

What is self awareness?

According to the Lions Question SEL program, self awareness is comprised of eight skills:

1. Labelling one’s feelings accurately
2. Recognising the connection between feelings, thoughts and behaviour
3. Accurately assessing one’s strengths and limitations
4. Motivating oneself
5. Working towards and achieving goals
6. Setting realistic goals
7. Having a well-grounded sense of self-efficacy and optimism
8. Having a positive mindset

You can find more information on the Lions Quest program at https://www.lions-quest.org/

Why is it important?

Self awareness is fundamental to SEL because it allows us to effectively move on to the second skill set: self management. As we all know, self management can be difficult at all stages of life! More on that next week, and if you have any questions about our Mount St Bernard College SEL program feel free to contact Middle Leader SEL Doris Cuda.
The Importance of Respect

I know I often write about Respect, however, I believe that in order for our students to succeed in life they need to learn how to respect others. Everything we do in life requires collaboration or team work. These things can only happen successfully if we know how to show respect.

Being disrespectful tarnishes our character and dictates our reputations. Disrespect minimises our opportunities for growth and prevents us from being our best. Disrespectful attitudes often start at home and if left unchecked they can create a lifetime of poor choices.

Sometimes without realising it we can say and do things that make children and young people think disrespectful and aggressive behaviours are acceptable. We do this when we play down disrespectful behaviour toward a sibling; accept aggression as just part of being an adolescent; and even blaming others for provoking aggression or disrespectful behaviour.

Gradually, children begin to believe that disrespect is just a normal part of growing up.

Respect starts at home

As parents we have an incredible power to shape positively children’s attitudes and behaviours, including how they treat others.

Here are three ideas to build respect at home:

1. Start by insisting that siblings treat each other well. Encourage both genders to resolve conflict and disputes using low power methods such as talking things through; give and take and apologising.
2. Socialise your children. It’s easy to excuse aggressive behaviour as part of being young. Model for your children how to resolve disputes in a civil and civilised way.
3. Put respect on the agenda. Healthy families talk about the things that matter to them. If respect matters then you need to hold conversations around disrespectful behaviours – whether they occur in the family or outside. Be willing to listen to children’s and young people’s views but also to challenge views that are questionable.

Respect is the core value of a civil society; and that’s also the core value in every healthy, functioning family I’ve ever worked with. Respect is the core value at MSB and is the objective and for all to achieve. Once we have mutual respect, we can begin to grow and learn together without barriers.

Positive Behaviour Support

Fortnightly Focus—Safe Holiday Choices

Whether you are spending time at home with family and friends, going on a big trip, camping or hitting the bright lights of the city—we all want to have a safe, happy holiday.

How can we make sure this happens?

Follow some simple guidelines and plan ahead.

Peer Pressure - sometimes others will be encouraging us to make poor choices.

♦ Think ahead and have your answer ready.
♦ Make sure your friends know and respect your choices.
♦ You are not weak if you don’t join in—you are strong.

Recognise unsafe situations—if it doesn’t feel right, it probably isn’t.

♦ Stay close to people you trust.
♦ Move away and ask for help if you need to.

Don’t forget we are only a phone call away. If you have any issues or concerns you wish to discuss please don’t hesitate to call or email a member of the Pastoral Care Team:
Mission Report – Term 3 Week 10

Please reflect on the words of St Paul:

Brothers, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus to make more and more progress in the kind of life that you are meant to live: the life that God wants, as you learnt from us, and as you are already living it. You have not forgotten the instructions we gave you on the authority of the Lord Jesus. What God wants is for you all to be holy.

Passing on the wisdom from one generation to another is one of the essential responsibilities of any community. It can occur at the school level in the most straightforward way: our hands-off rule seeks to pass on respect for each other by ensuring students feel safe at school. It also occurs in acquiring the discipline required to make progress in study, sport and the arts. It occurs when we accept the responsibilities of friendship with God and our neighbours.

The authority of MSB wisdom is not one we have given to ourselves. It is our faith in Jesus as the Word of God spoken to us. The National Catholic Education Commission says it like this in its Framework for Formation for Mission in Catholic Education: A Catholic school is

Christ centred – it articulates the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and his Gospel as a revelation of God’s love for us and the way to true freedom as it is proclaimed and lived in the contemporary Catholic Church (p.12)

There is no greater ‘school of life’ than the family. To be holy is to be wholly in love, remembering that God loved us first, and the foundation of our wisdom is responding to that love in and through the wisdom of the Catholic community.

May God continue to bless our irreplaceable fathers and mothers.

Over the past week I have been involved in, along side other members of the Leadership team, enrolment interviews for students to commence here at MSB in 2018. It is always a pleasure to meet prospective students, especially those that want to come here and their supportive parents. It reminds me that to succeed you need a positive attitude, enthusiasm and people behind you, supporting you all the way.

Congratulations to those students who received the sacraments of baptism, first communion and confirmation last Friday 8th September in the College chapel. It was heartening to see students’ families and friends attend to support them. Bishop James Foley led a joyful mass for these students, their families and for the whole College community. Thank you goes to Mr Danny Shaw and Sr. Barty for preparing our students to receive these sacraments.

Wishing all students, staff and families a restful holiday and may all return to MSB in October for term 4 and the push to the end of the year.

Assistant Principal—Mission
Jason Fair, 23 from Cape Town, South Africa — Arrived January 2017

Favourite Quote: “If you only do what you can do you will never be more than you are.”
Kung Fu Panda

What were you doing before you came to MSB?
I was studying a Business Science degree specialising in Finance and Accounting. I spent most of my time playing sport, coaching and hanging out with my family.

Why did you decide to come to Australia?
I was not keen on studying a postgraduate degree and I felt that I really wanted to explore my passion for working with kids. I had also been told that I should be working with kids from my experience of working in Schools, tutoring and coaching, so figured leaving home and going to a foreign would allow me to really explore myself and where I want to go.

If you could go anywhere else in the world, where would you go and why?
South America to hike the Inca trail with my Dad and Brother.

What's your favourite thing about working at MSB?
Doing activities with the kids and just hanging out with them. I really enjoyed taking kids on expeditions as I find it’s the best way to connect with the kids because you are hiking in nature and the kids are away from their electronics and are forced to communicate with you. I have also recently enjoyed being able to take some of the senior boys to the gym and connect with them in that way.

What do you like to do in your spare time?
Exercise and watching series.

If you were an animal what would you be?
A Leopard because I think they are awesome and so majestic.

Do you have a favourite tv show or movie?
Friends or Game of thrones

What's your proudest accomplishment?
Surviving seven months in Herberton. I have lived in a big city all my life (Cape Town is roughly the size of Melbourne) and have lived at home for most of my life, so to be able to live here in the middle of nowhere (and enjoy it) and really learn to be by myself has been one of things I’m most proud of.

What are your plans for once you leave MSB?
Unfortunately I am leaving at the end of this year as it is the end of my contract here but this year has reinforced my passion for teaching and working with kids so I have accepted a job in South Africa to pursue teaching and will be studying part time to get my teaching degree.
Abby Blair, 23 from Falkirk, Scotland — Arrived January 2017

Favourite Quote: What if I fall? Oh but my darling, what if you fly? – Erin Hanson

What were you doing before you came to MSB?
I graduated with a degree in IT in 2014 and had been working in administration at a University in Scotland for almost 2 years before I came out here.

Why did you decide to come to Australia?
I wanted to do something different. I’d never travelled particularly far from home and, at 22, I found myself in a job that I could potentially keep for the rest of my life. I felt like I’d settled before I’d even done anything, so I decided to change that.

If you could go anywhere else in the world, where would you go and why?
I’d love to visit India. One of the big cities like New Delhi, they look so full of colour, energy and culture, I’d love to experience it firsthand.

What’s your favourite thing about working at MSB?
Learning about Indigenous cultures. I knew basically nothing about them before I came and the kids and staff here have taught me so much. One of my favourite parts of my job is getting to take the kids home and see the communities they come from. I love learning about the traditions, watching the dances and hearing the songs of a culture so different to my own.

What do you like to do in your spare time?
I spend a lot of my time reading, playing cards and watching movies. I also go on a hill walk most days, with a puppy if I can find one.

If you were an animal what would you be?
Probably a house cat, I’m pretty domesticated.

Do you have a favourite tv show or movie?
Gilmore Girls and Away We Go.

What is your proudest accomplishment?
After deciding I wanted to spend time living in Australia, making that happen for myself.

What are your plans for once you leave MSB?
I’m planning to stay and explore Australia for at least another year before hopefully beginning some sort of career in education or childcare but I’m not much of a planner so who knows where I’ll end up?
Over the last few weeks Year 7B and 8E have been studying Measurement in mathematics. Year 7B have been working on an assignment which involves planning and drawing a garden to meet a given specification. This had to include a scale, various features and be drawn. Students enjoyed the creativity of the task and have the opportunity to do some online window shopping to cost up their projects.

Over the last few weeks Year 7B and 8E have been studying Measurement in mathematics.
The students brainstormed possible actions and choices they could make to communicate the message of the Gospel. They organised an activity to promote positive actions at St Teresa’s Primary School, Ravenshoe.

The students confidently spread their message of the Gospel and did a deadly job. Other St Teresa classes requested to be involved when they heard how the experience was from other classes.

Well done 8Z.
Do you know a teen aged 13 - 17? This school holidays get them involved into a program that they will have fun, get creative, meet new friends and learn skills that will expand their mind and help set them up for the future.

Young People, Big Ideas is a very flexible school holiday program where teens can attend 1 day or all 10! For only $49 everything is taken care of, they just need to show up ready to have some fun.

Spaces are limited.
Upcoming Events 2017

Term 3
Fri 15 Sept
Boarders Travel Day Home
School Holidays commence
Tues 19 - Sat 23 Sept
Didge Kids - Winton Outback Festival

Term 4
Mon 2 Oct
Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday Qld
Tues 3 Oct
Boarders Travel Day to School
MSB Office Re-Opens
Wed 4 Oct
All classes commence term 4
Sun 8 - Fri 13 Oct
AFL Trip to Bamaga
Sat 14 - Mon 16 Oct
Boarders Leave Weekend
Mon 16 Oct
Pupil Free Day - QCAA Verification Day
Tues 17 Oct
Immunisations Yr 7 HPV & Yr 10 Meningoccal
Wed 18 Oct - Fri 20 Oct
Class 8C Geography Excursion

Upcoming Events 2018

Mon 16 April 2018
Pupil Free Day
Diocese of Cairns Commonwealth Games

IMPORTANT REMINDERS
A) Parents and Carers please remember that students can only sign out within the following conditions:
   • A written and signed note in student diary or letter addressed to student reception
   • A phone call directly to student reception
   • A personal pick up – parent coming to student reception to pick up their child
   • Contact from older siblings is not acceptable – e-Minerva contacts only.
B) Senior licensed students are not permitted to transport other students in their own vehicles unless written permission has been exchanged between families and a copy provided to the college.

Well Women’s Clinics

These clinics are available to Medicare eligible clients
Service includes Pap Smears, Sexual Health Screening, Breast Awareness, also information on Contraception, Continence, Menopause, Lifestyle Issues, Bowel Health, Domestic Violence, etc.

All services are provided by a specially trained Women’s Health Nurse.

Atherton Health Centre
Monday 11th & Monday 25th Sept Ph: 4091 0263

Malanda Health Centre
Wed 13th & Tuesday 19th Sept Ph: 4096 5339