

# NEWSLETTER

19 February, 2010

Volume 12 Issue 2



## College Mission . . .

Building on a foundation of Christian values, the mission of Aitken College is to enable students to become informed and compassionate members of the wider community by inspiring academic achievement and creativity, nurturing self worth, encouraging environmental responsibility and committing to service with and for others.

## Term dates for 2010

Term 1	1/2 February	to	26 March
Term 2	14 April	to	25 June
Term 3	19 July	to	17 September
Term 4	4 October	to	10 December

## Important Diary Dates for 2010

Mon	08 Mar	Labour Day Holiday
Thu	18 Mar	Parent Teacher Interviews (Prep-12)
Thu	25 Mar	Parent Teacher Interviews (Prep-12)
Fri	26 Mar	Term 1 concludes
Mon	12 Apr	Staff Conference Day (student free)
Tue	13 Apr	Staff Conference Day (student free)
Wed	14 Apr	Term 2 commences
Mon	26 Apr	ANZAC Day Holiday
Mon	14 Jun	Queen's Birthday Holiday
Tue	15 Jun	Report Writing Day (student free)
Fri	25 Jun	Term 2 concludes
Mon	19 Jul	Term 3 commences
Fri	17 Sep	Term 3 concludes
Mon	04 Oct	Term 4 commences
Mon	01 Nov	Mid Term Break
Tue	02 Nov	Melbourne Cup Day Holiday
Wed	24 Nov	Report Writing Day (student free)
Wed	08 Dec	Presentation Night
Fri	10 Dec	Term 4 concludes

Thought: "When you're on top of the world you should remember it turns over every twenty-four hours".

Tamie Fraser

## From the Principal

As the students settle into the new school year, I encourage parents to maintain interest in their child's schooling by checking diaries regularly, reading the newsletter and keeping in contact with the relevant teachers. The parent-school partnership is most important for having a happy student who is doing well at school.

Some ways in which parents can help are:

- Encourage your child to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour

- Assist your child with time management and organisation
- Role model your love of learning whether it be reading, having topical conversations or going on family outings
- Teach your child manners and respect and how to handle conflict

Each child has their own special gifts and talents and these need to be nurtured.

*Mrs Josie Crisara  
Principal*

## From the Deputy Principal

The College photographer, Mr Robertson and Mr Bond send their thanks to all students for their pleasant and polite behaviour during the recent photograph sessions. Our compliments to parents on your children's conduct and presentation.

The first House carnival, Years 8 to 12 Swimming was held this week at the St Albans Leisure Centre. It was great to see such a high level of participation, both in the individual events and the team events such as volleyball and water polo. Most students are now wearing their House t-shirts which have contributed greatly to enhanced House spirit and a colourful 'look' to the carnival. Congratulations, to the sports staff who organised the event, the House Captains for their leadership and to all students who enthusiastically participated.

The Year 12 parent information night this week highlighted an emerging issue for all parents to consider that is increasingly affecting children - sleep deprivation. Social researchers and also our own teachers are noticing more students who are obviously sleep deprived. A number of factors may be contributing to this. Some senior students are working too many hours at part-time jobs; research claims that more than ten hours a week will adversely affect academic performance. More and more children are consuming energy drinks which typically contain much more caffeine than a cup of coffee as well as large amounts of sugar; too much at any time of the day is detrimental to health and may interfere with natural sleep patterns. It is recommended that children

should not have TV, computer or mobile phone in their bedrooms; to allow these creates a distraction that has been shown to keep many children from going to sleep and to form habits of waking during the night to use the internet and respond to phone messages. Bedrooms should be places to wind down before sleeping; I encourage parents to maintain strict rules in this regard.

*Mr Kim Forward  
Deputy Principal*

## Brookhill School Notices

Congratulations and thanks are due to the Senior School students for their behaviour and participation in this week's House Swimming Sports. The day was a huge success, due in large part to the excellent example set by the students from the Senior School and the Senior House and Sports Captains.

It appears that we have entered the Cameron era at Aitken College. Once again Cameron House emerged triumphant from the House Swimming. We are now looking forward to the House Athletic Carnival to see if anyone can knock Cameron out of top position.

Coming up on Friday 5 March, all Year 11 students will take part in Clean-Up Australia day. This event is a part of the wider College commitment to Community Service and the environment. The students will be spending the day cleaning up the area at and around the Williamstown foreshore, as well as taking part in House based activities.

*Mr David Murphy  
Head of Brookhill*

## Glenarthur School Notices

Thank you, for your attendance at our Glenarthur Parent Information evening. Your presence was appreciated and from the feedback I have received, both parents and Homeroom teachers found the evening useful and positively interactive.

**Children of the Glen:** Congratulations to the many brave students who vied for positions of responsibility on the School Council. The 2010 House and School captains were applauded in our recent assembly and congratulated by our Principal, Mrs Crisara. These students will be formally presented to the College on Monday 1 March; they will join others from across the College at a Leaders' Training Evening on 22 February.

**SCHOOL CAPTAINS** Caitlin Emiris (9P)  
Marcus Barresi (9P)

**HOUSE CAPTAINS**

<u>Millar</u>	Maddison Maric (9MO) Bradley Smith (9P)
<u>Cameron</u>	Therese Rowan (9P) David Jugovic (9MI)
<u>Clarke</u>	Alyssa McCarthy (9MI) Glen Bugeja (9MC)
<u>Brodie</u>	Jemma Lovett (9MC) Bradley Gorman (9P)

The wider Glenarthur student leaders' group which includes the Class Captains will be attending a

complimentary Reach leadership seminar this term; a permission form will come home to you.

I must say with pride that the children were exemplary in their behaviour at the swimming carnival. I often get comments from the coach drivers of how well-behaved our students are. This is due to your unflagging efforts, parents – thank you.

**Things to watch for in the Glen:** Reminders from previous newsletter: An information letter will come home via your child for the highly successful **Oxygen Factory** seminars that will be held for all Year 8 students on 4 March; Year 9 students on 5 March. The cost, same as last year's price, will be billed to your school fees.

*Mr Shelton Bond & Mrs Elpis Vlahopoulos  
Head and Assistant Head of Glenarthur*

## Dunhelen School Notices

It has been another very busy fortnight in Dunhelen! All our Year 7 students enjoyed some great weather during their camp to Phillip Island Adventure Resort and had a fantastic time, while the Year 6's had a peaceful time back at school, enjoying the fact that they had the 6/7 Adventure Playground and the rest of Dunhelen to themselves!

At a special assembly on Tuesday, we heard from our potential School and House Captains. By the time this has gone to print, we will have elected our Dunhelen leadership team. I would like to congratulate all the students who nominated themselves for a leadership position. We had some very strong applicants this year, particularly for the School Captain positions. Homerooms are also in the process of electing Environment Captains and Class Captains.

Our newly elected House and School Captains will participate in a Leadership Training afternoon this Monday, 22 February at Sherwood Receptions. At this event, captains will gain important leadership skills and have their role as a leader at Aitken College, outlined to them. It is sure to be a wonderful afternoon. Our newly appointed School Captains and House Captains will be inducted on Monday, 1 March during period 5 when they will receive their captain's badge.

Below, I have included a reflection about camp from three of our new Year 7 students; Alice Zugan, Madeline Comrie and Georgina Bell of 7C. Thank you for your contribution, girls!

*Miss Sheridyn Davies & Mrs Francis Scuderi  
Head and Assistant Head of Dunhelen*

### YEAR 7 CAMP REFLECTION

*On Monday 8 February all of the Year 7 students and lots of teachers left Aitken College to go to Phillip Island Adventure Resort for a three day orientation camp. After a long bus ride we finally reached our destination, Phillip Island.*

*When we got there we went to the function room where we met Brad, the events co-ordinator at camp. He gave*

*us a pep talk about the camp. We then found out what cabins and activity groups we would be in for the duration of our stay. Later that day we participated in our first two activities, followed by dinner. For dinner we had spaghetti bolognese and for dessert we had chocolate mousse. Once we had all finished dinner, all 150 students went to A Maze 'n' Things where we explored the Illusions Room and Outdoor Maze and played Mini Golf in small groups.*

*On the second day of camp we woke up early to get ready for our first of 5 activities that day! For lunch on Day 2, we had chicken wraps, which were the best thing we ate while we were there!!!!*

*On the third day we woke up, packed our bags and got ready to leave before completing our final two activities. Whilst at camp, we participated in the following activities: Giant Swing, Twin Flying Fox, Raft-making, Canoeing, Team Rescue and High Ropes. Everyone also got to spend some time in the heated pool and enjoy some well-earned free time. Most students' favourite activity was the Giant Swing (and even some of the teachers had a go!).*

*Before departing Phillip Island, we stopped at the Cowes Foreshore for lunch and arrived at a chilly and wet Aitken College two hours later. It was an awesome camp and we all had a great time!!!!*

*Alice Zupan, Madeline Comrie and Georgina Bell, 7C*

## **Cumberland Notices**

The children continue to work well; however, it is important that parents work with the College to support what we believe to be sound educational practices. Reading material is often a subject of contention. There is often a huge gap between the words children can read and what they can actually comprehend. Sometimes books such as the Twilight series (which are very well written) are not suitable in content for children of primary school age. Adults complain of young children today having an inappropriate outlook on life and it is material such as this that leads to such notions. Thank you to the parents who have volunteered to assist in the classroom. Please be aware that in order to do so we require evidence of your Working with Children Card.

This week, School and House Captains were named. I wish to congratulate the following students:

### **SCHOOL CAPTAINS**

Emily McPherson and Alex Hunter

### **BRODIE HOUSE CAPTAINS**

Seren Akyuce and Anthony Riccio

### **CAMERON HOUSE CAPTAINS**

Jessica Dittmer and William Murray

### **CLARKE HOUSE CAPTAINS**

Hannah Manuel and Corey Baker

### **MILLAR HOUSE CAPTAINS**

Helen Sassine and Ryan Menzies

*Ms Barbara Wyatt  
Head of Cumberland*

## **Fairview Notices**

**THRASS - Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills:** The Preparatory school has scheduled two THRASS information sessions for Thursday 25 February and Thursday 11 March at 7.30pm in the Chapel and Performing Arts Centre.

Session 1 on Thursday 25 February will provide parents with the opportunity to see and understand the process of THRASS. Session 2 on Thursday 11 March is a workshop evening. Parents must attend both sessions and cannot attend session 2 without attending session 1. (It is not appropriate for your children to attend these sessions). If you have not replied to these sessions and wish to attend, please contact your child's homeroom teacher.

**Winter uniform:** All of the Prep and new parents should have organised their winter uniform for next term. Winter uniform articles will not be available for over the counter purchases and appointments for fittings must be made. Summer uniform is worn in Terms 1 and 4. Winter uniform is worn in Terms 2 and 3. Children are permitted to wear their summer or winter uniform at the beginning of Term 2 and 4, depending on the weather conditions at the time.

**Toys and Valuables:** Please ensure that valuables, toys and swap cards are not brought to school. The children are also not permitted to bring these items to 'Show and Tell'.

*Ms Kerrie Neophytou  
Head of Fairview*

## **Careers News**

**CAREER NEWS NO. 2:** The second edition of Career News for 2010 has been posted on the College website. The following link will take you to the careers newsletter: <http://aitkencollege.edu.au/?id=237>.

This edition contains information about upcoming careers and employment expos, folio preparation programmes at RMIT, some information on choosing a career for the future, a Talk and Tour at La Trobe University in the Term 1 holidays, an ADFA information evening, the UMAT, an Engineering Expo, the courses which still have places for 2010 at NMIT and more. You are also welcome to contact Careers Staff in Room B21 or via email ([careers@aitkencollege.edu.au](mailto:careers@aitkencollege.edu.au)) or phone (9333 1866).

*Mrs Clare Borg and Ms Rae Gibbs  
Careers Advisers*

## **Performing Arts News**

More than fifty students have impressed us over the last few days trying out for this year's College Musical, Jesus Christ Superstar. **Jesus Christ Superstar** will be staged for five performances across two weeks in Term 3. A full cast list should be up by the middle of the week with the first rehearsal set down for Tuesday, 2 March. Good luck to all those who have auditioned.

It was great to see some new faces at the first Friends of the Arts meeting on Monday. Friends of the Arts, is a welcoming group of parents and staff who assist the work we do in Performing and Visual Arts in so many ways. You're not expected to be an expert or give up loads of your time. You don't need to make a hard and fast commitment to attend meetings but get yourself onto the mailing list, come along to meetings (which are very short) when you can or offer to help out with the canteen or behind the scenes during concerts or productions.

Friends of the Arts have their own section on the College website under the community link where you can find out more or email Jennifer at: foa@aitkencollege.edu.au.

After Monday's meeting, FOA have decided to postpone the **Trivia Night** by one week to avoid the long weekend. The new date is **Friday, 12 March starting at 7:30pm** in Common Room One. It is a great opportunity to socialise with other families and have a laugh as well. Bring along your own nibbles and drinks. Soft drinks will be on sale and tea/coffee is available. Tickets are \$10 and you may choose to organise a table group or come along yourself and join a table once you get here. For bookings, please contact Jennifer on 0414 357 619 or through the FOA email address.

We are still looking for prize donations. FOA have an introductory letter from the College which you can take to your boss or a business you know to ask for assistance and then all donations will be duly noted. Contact me at school and I will get a copy of this letter sent home to you. Alternatively, contact FOA to make a prize donation yourself.

Do not forget the annual **Performing Arts Captains' Concert** on **Wednesday, 24 March** commencing at 7.30pm. Entry is by Gold Coin donation with money raised going to help the Starlight Children's Foundation. Last year's concert raised \$700.

Students interested in performing should talk to the Captains, Amelia Wilson or Sarah Quinlan very soon. With lots of people wanting to perform, auditions will be held in the coming two weeks.

The theme of this year's concert is 'Express Yourself' and audience members are invited to coming in fancy dress. There will be a costume parade and prizes awarded for the most outstanding expression of self! And you'll have a lot of fun.

*Mr Michael Cooper*  
*Director of Performing Arts*

## Library News

A reminder to students and parents that registration for the Premier's Reading Challenge, is due by Friday 26 February. We invite your child to take part in this program which aims to foster a love of reading and develop literacy skills. If your child has misplaced the letter distributed in class, another copy may be obtained from the library.

The library staff greatly appreciates the support of many families who contribute to the acquisition of library resources through their purchases with the Scholastic Book Club. During 2009 the library earned resources to the value of \$3000.

A Scholastic book fair will also be held in the library mid March. Brochures with the details will be distributed to students in Prep – Year 8. Parents are welcome to come into the library, after signing in at the front office, to browse and make purchases. The school earns commission on the total value of sales. Again we thank the school community.

*Mrs Mardy Kerr*  
*Head of Faculty – Library*

## Physical Education News

### Year 8-12 House Swimming

The Year 8-12 House swimming carnival was completed yesterday under glorious conditions at St Albans Leisure Centre. Students competed in the traditional swimming events as well as water polo and volleyball.

Congratulations to the following students who were year level champions.

Yr 8: Izel Akyuce and Travis Faulds  
Yr 9: Megan Butler and Aydan Faulds  
Yr 10: Elizabeth Mantynen and Nathan Xuereb  
Yr 11: Brynley Cooper and Daniel Gianchino  
Yr 12: Shirin Karkaria and Matthew Bonello

The overall Glenarthur winner was Izel Akyuce and the overall Brookhill winner was Brynley Cooper.

House points: Cameron: 2, 816  
Millar: 2, 630  
Clarke: 2, 359  
Brodie: 2, 145

Well done to everyone who competed on the day with such enthusiasm, especially Cameron House who had the most competitors in the events. Thank you to all the staff who assisted and to the parents who came down to support the students.

*Miss Julie Brown*  
*House Sports Co-ordinator*

## Moonee Valley Bus Lines Sunbury Bus Vacancies 2010

Moonee Valley Bus Lines will have a limited number of vacancies on our school bus in 2010 that travels from Sunbury to Aitken College via Bulla. If you are interested in utilising our service, please do not hesitate to contact Lisa Kennedy at Moonee Valley Bus Lines on 9310 5286

## HOMework SURVIVAL TIPS

### Homework survival tips for the whole family

At its best, homework can be an opportunity for kids to learn the skills of time management and the value of solving problems on their own. At its worst, arguments over homework can create power struggles in families, bruise parent/child relationships and waste valuable time. Usually, the common 'nag, nag, nag' scenario is ultimately ineffective...so how can we prevent homework from turning our households into battlegrounds full of conflict, threats and arguments? Teachers will tell you that children who have an organised and stable homework routine are most likely to achieve better results in the classroom. Making choices that are right for your child and take the circumstances of your family into account are very important. If you can create a calm environment that supports children as they complete their homework, you will establish life long learning habits that are healthy, realistic and sustainable.

### Choose the right time to get started

Sitting in a classroom all day is a big ask for kids. They need some time out after school to talk about their day, have a snack, get changed and generally wind down. About 20 minutes is generally a sufficient amount of time for this and gives kids a defined break between school time and home time.

### After school snacks

TV loves to promote the idea of 'milk and cookies' as an ideal after school snack. Snacks that are full of carbohydrates, preservatives and sugar will give your kids a blood sugar 'high' that could make settling down to do homework very difficult. Why not try a high protein snack that includes cheese, a dip and crackers or a milk shake? 'Brain foods' like small chicken drumsticks and healthy sandwiches will fill kids up and keep their bodies on an even keel during homework time.

### Have a dedicated homework area

Most children work best in an area that is free of distractions like toys, music, games, computers and TVs. This can be in a bedroom, but often the kitchen table or a study area in the family room is even more effective, as parents can ensure that their children stay on task and be on hand to offer help and encouragement.

### Protect homework time

Teach your kids to prioritise what is important by having a set time each day for homework. It may be after school, after dinner - or even before school if your family can manage it. Ensure that activities like play dates, sports training and other after school activities are arranged so that your family's homework routine comes first. Rewards for completed homework can include favoured activities like watching TV, playing computer games and visiting friends. A weekly homework and activity schedule displayed on the fridge is often a good way to keep the troops on track.



A dedicated homework area helped Finn maintain his focus

**Allow children to choose an easy piece of homework first :** For some kids, mastering one piece of homework is motivating. It makes them feel successful. With plenty of praise from you, they can be encouraged to tackle the next, more difficult task, confident in the knowledge that they already have one task complete.

**Plan breaks:** Research shows that adults can concentrate at optimum levels for about 45 minutes before their levels of application and effectiveness start to wane. Imagine what it is like for kids to work for hours on end after a long day at school! Between homework tasks, encourage your kids to do something physical for 10 minutes. Throwing a ball, practising a dance routine or taking the dog for a quick walk to the end of the street is a good way to renew energy.

**Try not to take over:** It would be so much quicker and easier to ensure that your children get the right answers by doing it for them, wouldn't it? Children can become reliant upon the parent who always comes to the rescue when homework gets too tough. Learning to find solutions is an important part of development and homework is designed to teach your child to learn and work independently. It also gives teachers a good idea of what your child has retained, and so doing your child's homework for them is not really doing them any favours.

Instead of providing the answers, try asking an open-ended question like 'What information would help you?' or 'How did the teacher explain it?' If your child is really struggling, consider informing the classroom teacher in a discreet way. The teacher may be able to offer some in class support or clarification that may make the task easier for your child.

**Get professional help:** The school curriculum has changed significantly since most parents were at school. Primary school maths is one of the biggest culprits. As parents and children argue over the 'new' ways in which tasks like 'trading' and long division are done these days, the conflict over homework often gets worse.

**When all else fails - get help for your child:** Consult the classroom teacher for feedback and advice. If you do not feel confident in assisting your child yourself - find someone who can. The best help comes from those who can teach your child in a face to face situation. An older sibling, cousin or friend could step in, however, familiar relationships sometimes suffer when a frustrated child is trying to learn. Professional services are often a good alternative. In a supportive environment, even the most hesitant child can become more confident. Help that is provided by someone outside the family is often a much better way of keeping things calm. Your kids know how to 'push your buttons' - but they will probably be less likely to try the same tactic with a teacher. Seasoned parents with years of homework experience behind them will tell you that often the path of least resistance is a wise one to take! Ultimately, encouraging your child to have a 'can-do' attitude toward homework is one of the best things you can do for them.

**Source:** [www.essentialbaby.com.au](http://www.essentialbaby.com.au)

The PARENTING TIPS PAGE is provided as a service to the  
Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia  
To receive Parenting Tips by email: [parentingtips@pared.edu.au](mailto:parentingtips@pared.edu.au)

## AIR FORCE CADET SCHEME

The local unit of the Australian Air Force Cadets now has vacancies for young men and women between the ages of 13 and 18 who are interested in aviation or a military career to join in 2010. The unit meets every Monday night during school term at Maygar Barracks in Broadmeadows. There will be an information evening for interested teenagers and their families on Monday 1 March at 7.00 p.m. Please direct any enquiries to Flight Lieutenant (AAFC) Jennie Brady on 0425 716 670 or email the following address: [jennie.brady@cadetnet.gov.au](mailto:jennie.brady@cadetnet.gov.au)



# OSHC NEWS THIS WEEK

## 'we make kids smile'



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Term 1 Week 3	Outdoor Activities: Ball games & Indoor Activities: board games, drawing	Outdoor/ Indoor activities & Plate Mosaics	Outdoor sports and games & Kids Choice crafts	Outdoor/Indoor Activities & Cooking : funny face biscuits	Indoor/Outdoor activities & Plate Mosaics

## NEWS

*Hi ya folks, welcome to OSHC at Aitken College!*

*I must say a big thankyou to everyone who has made my first two weeks here at Aitken very welcoming ~ it is a pleasure to meet you all and your fantastic children! Thankyou also, to all the OSHC and teaching staff at Aitken for your support.*

*This week we will draw the winners of our colouring competition as I know the kids are eager to find out who has won! We also made quite a few lovely valentine's trinkets last week, which children lovingly made for family. This week we will embark on some other decorative crafts. Unfortunately we are limited for displaying things in our space. However, I know the kids are always begging to take things home to show them off to mum and dad.*

*I have discovered that your children tend to like both a mix of indoor and outdoor opportunities, though as part of our mission at OSHC we like to encourage outdoor physical activity for fitness and health reasons. We prefer to take the children for some time outside to play games after all, they have been cooped up in a class room all day and need a chance to run around. Of course children will be given options and choice, however, on occasion when we have limited staff the decision will be based on the majority preference, and usually most of the children love to go outside for a brief while, providing the weather permits of course.*



### **PLEASE REMIND YOUR KIDS TO BE SUN SMART- HATS**

Parents please remember to give your child a hat for school and remind them to bring it to OSHC. We understand that kids tend to lose their uniforms and also that they are required to keep their hats in class. However, if you could please perhaps pack a spare hat in their bags we will be able to let all children play outdoors. We will provide suncream but SLIP, SLOP & SLAP is what is absolutely necessary. Of course we will not be outdoors in smouldering heat, but even on mildly sunny days children do need a hat or else they will be given quiet activities in a covered area. Also note: dairy products should not be packed for an after school snack and left in children's bags all day, especially during the summer season.

### **BOOKINGS**

Parents please ensure you inform me on - **OSHC 0401 050 498** or **Camp Australia 1300 105 343** if you wish to make a booking or a cancellation. Please remember that Camp Australia's policy states we require at least 7 days (1 week's) notice of cancellation to avoid being charged, this is necessary due to the CCB changes - all submissions of attendance need to be made one week prior. Also please notify the school or Camp Australia if you need your child to attend care as a last minute emergency booking on the day.

### **IMPORTANT NEW ENROLMENTS**

We would like to encourage parents to register online on the Camp Australia website- [www.campastralia.com.au](http://www.campastralia.com.au) and follow the links. This ensures quick transfer of information and the quicker information is confirmed bookings can be made. Once you have registered online please notify OSHC staff as to what days your child will be attending as the rolls are often printed at the beginning of the week - new bookings are pencilled in, though will be printed on the following week's rolls.

### **OSHC TIMES**

**BSC**  
**7:00AM- 8:30AM**  
**ASC**  
**3:00PM-6:30PM**