

NEWSLETTER

21 May, 2010

Volume 12 Issue 8



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 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	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: "Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing."

Mother Teresa



MICALLEF – Mr Dennis Micallef

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to Mrs Fiona Micallef, Samantha and Thomas on the tragic loss of their husband/father recently.

Friends of the family have set up a Trust Fund to support the family. If you are able to contribute to the Dennis/Fiona Trust Fund - your donations can be made to ANZ Bank BSB 013303 Account No. 251 237 678.



HADDAD – Mr George Haddad

Our sympathy and prayers are extended to Mrs Silvana Haddad, Jacob and Jonathan on the tragic loss of their husband/father recently.

From the Principal

At various times in the life of the College we need to deal with grief and loss. It is at these times our community can demonstrate its strength by giving whatever support they can. The loss of a parent has a significant impact on a family and it is most important that our school community rallies and offers support. At this sad time we extend our sympathy to the Micallef and Haddad families. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

At some of the assemblies this week I spoke to students regarding what they would like to see in the College Canteen in terms of 'healthy' eating. I welcome any parent comment on this. Please forward your suggestions to admin@aitkencollege.edu.au

As the students are gearing up to exams and the assessment period reaches its peak, parents are asked to support their children by ensuring a continuation of the home study program, removing any distractions as well as monitoring students' diet and sleep.

*Mrs Josie Crisara
Principal*

Aitken College Foundation: It is now six weeks to the end of the current financial year. A reminder, that you can still contribute to the Aitken College Foundation. Any family contributing \$500 or more in 2010 will also have their donation acknowledged by their name appearing on a plaque to be placed in the gymnasium or library extension and will receive a tax deductible receipt.

*Mr Petar Gajic
Finance Manager*

From the Deputy Principal

The students have been watching with interest the various building projects underway across the College campus. The Library extension is not far from completion. To allow final work inside the Library, it will be closed for the last three weeks of this Term and the first week of Term 3. Primary classes will have their library lessons in their homerooms with books brought to them. Please note that the Library will not

be available for student use after school during these four weeks.

The first Aitken community working bee for some time will be held this Saturday, 22 May from 10.00am till 12.00pm. We would love some help with the maintenance of our Wetlands and Science Garden. Tools will be supplied along with a hot lunch, from 12.00pm till 1.00pm. All you need to bring is some family or friends, gloves and suitable clothes. Please reply to the Director of Environmental Programs (Mr Duncan Sadler) to advise how many of you are planning to attend. Mr Sadler's email address is dsadler@aitkencollege.edu.au

Please remember that Broadmeadows Shopping Centre is promoting its Better Schools program by awarding points to schools for receipts lodged at the shopping centre information desk - just nominate Aitken College when you present your receipts. There are some great prizes to be won for the school.

*Mr Kim Forward
Deputy Principal*

Brookhill School Notices

I must start by congratulating all Senior School students on an excellent start to the term. Teachers report that classes are running very well and students are working diligently.

Now that we are at the mid-point of the term, I need to remind Brookhill students about the upcoming mid-year exams. For students studying Unit 3-4 subjects with mid-year exams there is only one week of teaching time remaining before you start revision for exams. VCAA exams will run on Tuesday 8 June and Wednesday 9 June. All students studying a Unit 3-4 subject will sit for the GAT on Thursday 10 June.

I strongly encourage parents of Year 12s to talk to their children about their preparation for the upcoming exams. At this stressful time, students need loving support and gentle encouragement from their families; parents should focus on helping children to achieve their own personal best performance.

All Year 10 and 11 students will be sitting mid-year exams during the period Monday 7 June to Friday 11 June. These students also need to commit themselves to a personal best academic effort. These exams provide valuable feedback to students, teachers and parents about academic progress; they also provide an invaluable opportunity for students to practise and fine-tune their exam preparation techniques before they sit official VCAA exams.

Interact: At assembly on Monday 3 May, we were privileged to have in attendance Mr Mel Gray, Mr Paul Tanti and Ms Barbara Wyatt (also Head of Cumberland), who were representing the Rotary Organisation. These guests spoke about the work of the Rotary Organisation in general and, in particular, about Interact. An Interact club is a Community Service Club for young people aged from 12 to 18, that is sponsored and supported by a local Rotary Club. It was proposed at assembly that the Tullamarine Rotary Club sponsor and support the establishment of an

Interact Club at Aitken. At a meeting after assembly, more than twenty students indicated interest in becoming founding members of the Aitken College Interact Club. This was a fantastic response and means that we can now progress to the next stage in establishing Interact at Aitken.

Next Wednesday, 26 May, there will be a meeting at lunchtime in B3 for all students interested in Interact. At this meeting, we will call for nominations and elect a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer for the Interact Club of Aitken College. I encourage all students who are interested in becoming involved in a service club to come to this meeting and sign up as members of the Interact Club of Aitken College.

Uniform: Winter uniform is now compulsory for all girls. Can parents please ensure that the skirt length comes to below the knee. Some other points to note are:

- Scarves are not to be worn in class. They can be worn to and from school and at recess and lunch time only.
- Spray jackets and winter parka can be worn to and from school and at recess and lunch time only.
- All students are expected to have their top shirt buttons done up at all times.
- Students are expected to wear their blazers to and from school. As Senior School students must go straight from period 5 class to homeroom, they must make sure that they get their blazer from their locker or bag and put it on if they aren't wearing it during period 5.
- Long pants are compulsory for boys.

*Mr David Murphy
Head of Brookhill*

Glenarthur School Notices

It was wonderful to attend the VCE Theatre Studies student production. I am continually in awe of their skills. They are a real team, all working so well together. Thank you, also, to the many staff and students who worked so tirelessly and cheerfully behind the scenes. Their contribution to the College fabric is not easily captured by words.

As we draw closer to the end-of-semester report, students are [hopefully] making that increased effort to apply themselves to their studies and to achieve the best result possible. They are often reminded about their responsibility to their parents. I explain this in terms of a 'contract' with you; their undertaking is to use their abilities and to be true to themselves. One of your responsibilities, which I'm sure you have fulfilled, is to provide a quiet study place free from distractions.

The Year 9 NAPLAN tests have been completed. We await the results from VCAA in due course.

Try a Trade Exhibition: A number of Year 8 students visited this annual and worthwhile event at Broadmeadows Town Hall. They enjoyed a range of trade stalls which offered practical experience. Glenarthur students send their appreciation to Ms Gibbs and Ms Borg for organising a delightful day.

Please continue to monitor your child's use of the internet. Students should not have computers or other internet capable devices in their bedrooms. Children can very easily be drawn into unpleasant situations and conversations, which can and do have ramifications at school. Sleep deprivation is also a major concern. Students are regularly reminded of their shared responsibility to maintain a peaceful and pleasant tone in our very own microcosm.

At assembly we often stress the importance of completing assignments and exercises set to inculcate sound study habits. This habit of diligence and reliability was linked with future success and dependability. We also spoke about courtesy to others and a shared respect for our community.

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

Dunhelen School Notices

Primary Peer Support: Last week was the first session of the Primary Peer Support program for 2010. Thank you to all of our hard-working Year 6 Peer Support leaders and to Miss Ioannidis for all the hard work she has put into this year's program, as Acting Primary Peer Support Co-ordinator.

We believe that this program is a great experience for both the Prep and the Year 6 students. The Preps enjoy it because they play lots of games, but it also helps with their learning skills. The first lesson we had was when we played a balloon game. This was a great learning experience as it helped the Preps gain trust for one another. Then we made name tags. In this activity we all had to write our names on a name tag and decorate it with things we like. The Preps enjoyed this activity because they love to draw things and it also gave them some knowledge about what other people like. We hope that the next lesson is also going to be fantastic.

Alexia Costantino & Malisha Peiris, 6S



Litter: Due to an increase in the amount of litter lying around the school grounds, Dunhelen students have begun an after-lunch yard duty program, to combat the dilemma. Each afternoon, immediately after lunch, one member from each Dunhelen class will help the College community by cleaning up an area of the school. The program started last week and is already making a big difference to the appearance of the College grounds. Thank you to all Dunhelen students for their hard work in making the school a more welcoming environment. To assist this program even further, it would also be very helpful if parents could try sending lunches to school that result in as little litter as possible. We would love to stop the Dunhelen yard duty program altogether because we've run out of litter. Thank you for your support.

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

Cumberland Notices

Like many of you, I was excited for Jessica Watson as she made her heroic return to land. How did she come to be such a self assured young woman? Genes perhaps! Most certainly parents encouraged her to take responsibility for herself and her belongings. It is so important that parents do not do everything for their children. It is important for children to learn to take age appropriate risks and make age appropriate decisions thus contributing positively to their life skills.

On our own sporting front we held the House Athletics early this term. The results for Cumberland were:

- 1st Cameron
- 2nd Clarke
- 3rd Brodie
- 4th Millar

Congratulations to all students especially the Year level winners, Jacob Looi, and Katelyn Oakley (Year 3); Aaron Boundy and Brianna Hovenden (Year 4) and Cheyanne Bir and Alex Hunter (Year 5).



Year 4 students continue to correspond with their pals at Huamin Primary School in Singapore and the Year 3 students will soon commence their correspondence. This is a wonderful way of learning about another culture and also provides an opportunity to practise writing and IT skills. The staff at Huamin have very similar values to ours and we look forward to our continuing relationship with them. Recently, I visited the school to meet the staff and students. This provided a valuable opportunity for both parties to discuss our approach to the program.

Two weeks ago the Year 4 students spent 3 days at Camp Weekaway for their Life Skills camp. As usual they had a wonderful time developing teamwork and co-operative skills. Through a variety of activities that included canoeing, bush rescue and hut building the students learned to value, trust and respect each other.

Last week the Year 3 and 5 students sat the NAPLAN tests which are required by the government. The

results of these tests will not be known for some months and parents will receive a report when they arrive.

*Ms Barbara Wyatt
Head of Cumberland*

Fairview School Notices

The main topic of discussion in many settings is the internet/online social networks.

I am the first person to admit that I prefer to speak to a person face to face or pick up the phone. I comprehend and appreciate the benefits of the online social network and internet. However, I also understand that it can be an unsafe forum for our young children.

Can you please answer these questions:
Is your child's computer in their bedroom? Why?
Is your child accessing the internet for games?
Are you aware that most of these games have social networks attached to them?

Young children should not have a computer in their bedroom. It needs to be in a shared space, where you can supervise this interaction. Also they should not be accessing the internet without an adult sitting beside them.

I find it sad when the children inform me that they go home and spend hours "playing on the computer". They talk about downloading games, making friends through websites and establishing profiles. Why are they not playing outside, reading a book, having a conversation with their siblings and parents? Our lives are so busy that we are forgetting our most important gift - our children. In a blink they become teenagers and this innocent and precious time has passed.

I encourage the internet to be used for finding and gathering information, accessing educational games and supporting the learning process. It is a wonderful resource which needs to be used wisely.

The world is changing and with fast growing technology it will continue to do so. I cannot enforce online habits in every home. However I can only advise that children in the Preparatory School need time to be active and be provided with opportunities to communicate with each other – face to face!

*Ms Kerrie Neophytou
Head of Fairview*

Careers News

Career News No. 8 The eighth 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>.

Edition 8 contains information about accounting cadetships, post graduate medicine at Deakin University, a computer games boot camp, short courses in film and television during the Term 2 holidays, a careers evening about the Library and Information industry, Science school holiday programmes at RMIT, VCE Summary lectures at Victoria University and more.

You are also welcome to contact Careers staff in Room B21 or via email careers@aitkencollege.edu.au or by telephone 9333 1866.

Year 12 TIS Excursion to La Trobe University: On

Wednesday, 5 May the Year 12 students headed off to La Trobe University for the Tertiary Information Service presentation. This was a very important excursion for students considering further study at TAFE or university post secondary school. Students were able to learn more about the options available to them in the future and to hear from a panel of experts from across the tertiary sector on topics such as choosing a course, the VTAC process and timeline, special entry schemes, Open days, fees, scholarships and transition. Students had the opportunity to speak with representatives from most Victorian universities, TAFEs and other education and training providers. They were able to



also collect printed information and brochures. As part of the excursion, time was built into the programme to allow the students the opportunity to explore the Bundoora campus and to learn more about La Trobe University. To assist the students to make the most of their time they were given a 'Race Around La Trobe' questionnaire which asked a series of questions about various buildings and points of interest to focus their exploration of the campus. Prizes were awarded to the students who finished 'the race' fastest. The exercise was also designed to give students a taste of university life as they were asked to plan their exploration appropriately and to allow time for morning tea and lunch. This excursion, combined with the one to Deakin University when they were in Year 11, has allowed students to see two quite different university campuses and it is our hope that they will follow this up by attending Open Days (Sundays in August) in Term 3. All Year 12 students will be given an Open Day calendar and this is one of the tools they may use to assist with their planning for course selection for 2011 and beyond. A very enjoyable day was had by all attendees at La Trobe and the behaviour of the students was excellent, making them terrific ambassadors for the College.



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*Mrs Clare Borg and Ms Rae Gibbs
Careers Advisers*

Chaplain's corner

Since our last newsletter, two of our students have experienced the devastation of losing their dad. Our

hearts are saddened and our compassion is stirred whenever we lose a member of our community. It gives us all a bit of a shock and perhaps even makes us look at our relationships in a new light. Life is so fragile and when we are confronted by the finality of death, we tend to treasure life more dearly. One of the best ways we can honour those who have died, is to cherish anew those who are left. May God comfort you in your grief!

*Rev Jeanne Beale
Chaplain*

Environmental Programs Report

Working Bee this Weekend: All members of the Aitken College Community are invited to an Environmental Working Bee this Saturday 22 May from 10.00am to 12.00pm, followed by a warm lunch provided by the College. Please dress appropriately as we will be working in the Science Garden and wetlands. Tools will be provided and gum boots would be great if you have them.

The eating areas have been altered to allow staff to focus on encouraging the students to stop littering. Please encourage your children refrain from littering the school grounds. You can support this by purchasing a lunch box for your child and not putting any wrappers in it. A lunch box will replace glad-wrap, which is one of the most common types of litter in the school grounds.

This week Aitken College hosted the Hume Environment Teachers Network. Teachers and Principals from other schools in the Hume region came to Aitken to hear and see what we are doing that makes us a leader in environmental education.

*Mr Duncan Sadler
Director of Environmental Programs*

Performing Arts News

Congratulations to the VCE Theatre Studies students on their production of *Minefields and Miniskirts*. There are still two performances remaining, tonight (Friday, 21 May) and tomorrow night (Saturday, 22 May) both commencing at 7.30pm.

Tickets are \$16.50 adults and \$11 concessions and are available up to 30 minutes prior to performances at www.trybooking.com. There is also a family ticket price of \$48.80 which covers two adults and two concessions. All tickets also incur a 30c per ticket booking fee. Tickets purchased at the door are slightly more expensive so it is worthwhile booking online, where you can print the tickets out for yourself.

We welcome piano teacher Penny Webster this week. Penny is filling in lessons for Monet Hawkins who is away until early next term. Students who have lessons should have received notification of new lesson times. Please contact Miss Annette Eldridge, the Instrumental Music Co-ordinator, for further details.

Year 10 Music classes will be giving a performance of their semester's work this coming Wednesday, 26 May starting at midday in the CPA. A varied program of

groups and solos will be presented and all are invited to attend. Entry is free.

Thank you to those who entered the Friends of the Arts *Jesus Christ Superstar* ticket raffle. It will be drawn at the final performance of the VCE Play this Saturday night and further entries will be available during these performances. I have had a number of enquiries about ticket sales for Superstar. Tickets will go on sale on Monday, 14 June (Queen's Birthday Holiday) from 8.00am at www.trybooking.com.

There are five performances commencing Friday, 30 July. Tickets are \$27.50 Adult or \$22.00 Concession/Child plus 30c per ticket booking fee. There is a Family Ticket (2Ad/2Ch) available for \$88.80 which represents an \$11 saving on the full ticket price. So perhaps if you are a family of three, you might like to bring along a friend.

Do not forget the Friends of the Arts social event of the year. A group booking for *Mary Poppins* has been made for the 6.30pm performance on Sunday, 29 August. Tickets are \$95 each, representing a saving of more than \$20 per ticket. There are only a handful of tickets remaining and if you are interested contact foa@aitkencollege.edu.au or telephone Jennifer on 0414 357 619.

*Mr Michael Cooper
Director of Performing Arts*

Visual Arts

Excursions to the National Gallery and to Werribee Park: At the start of Term Two the Year 9 Visual Arts students attended an excursion to see the amazing sculptures by Ron Mueck at the National Gallery of Victoria. Students were truly stunned by the super realistic sculptures and the exaggerated sizes. Some of the sculptures are huge, while some are tiny. They are made of silicone and fiberglass and take many hours to produce. To understand the development of sculpture styles the students also saw a range of other sculptural works ranging from Ancient Greek to Medieval times and through to Modern Abstraction. After lunch at Southbank students visited the Top Arts Exhibition at Federation Square. Students completed a comprehensive written worksheet during the day for assessment. Some students had never been to an art gallery so it was an exciting outing for them. Seeing artworks in front of you is so different to looking at a digital image or a text book. Feedback from students always makes the day an extremely worthwhile experience. I hope that excursions like this inspire families to visit public art galleries, commercial galleries and regional galleries.

In April the Year 10 Photography students visited Werribee Park and the RAAF Museum at Point Cook. The purpose of this excursion was to provide the students with an opportunity to create inspirational photographs and to further practise their camera skills in an interesting environment. Students and staff braved the cold weather and took many photos of the grounds, architecture and aircraft inside the museum. Photos from this excursion will proudly be on display in the annual Student Art Exhibition during October.

*Mrs Michelle McKay
Head of Visual Arts*

PE/Sport uniform

Please note the following rules relating to PE uniform, for which non-compliance will have disciplinary consequences for students:

1. Students must use the College sports bag; they are not permitted to use their backpack for taking sports clothing to PE classes.
2. Footwear for PE/sport must be of the sturdy lace-up runner type; slip-on shoes, 'volleys' or other non-supportive shoes are not permitted. This is a matter of safety and prevention of injury.

Planning and deadlines

Planning is a great motivator for many kids and helps overcome many of the fears kids have. When kids learn to plan their time, their actions, their budget, their social life and their activities, they get a sense of control instead of feeling overpowered by external sources.

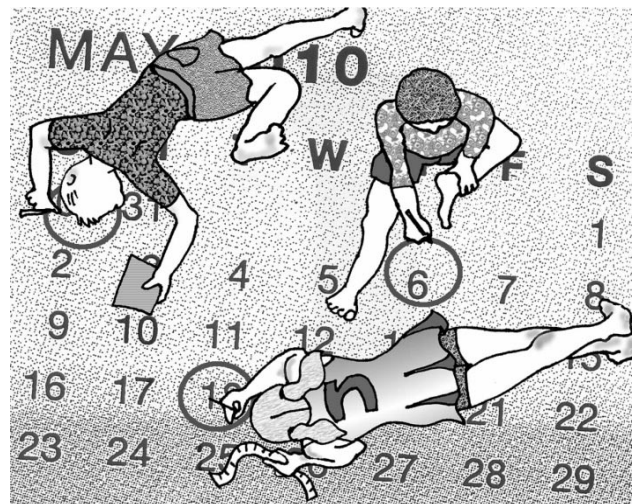
Planning is another form of chunking down. It is supposed to ease the feeling of being overwhelmed. Many kids want to do or have things but have no idea how to get them. They do not even know the right questions to ask.

Simple things, like preparing for a test, something most kids experience over and over again during their school years, present time management and technical challenges to the kids. Being unable to plan their homework makes it seem hard and may discourage them from even starting.

Using a calendar

Encourage your kids to use a calendar. When they are young, buy them a themed calendar that they like and teach them to use it every day. Here are some things kids can write in their calendars that will teach them planning.

1. **Homework** - tell your kids to write homework due dates, but teach them the importance of finishing their homework as soon as possible, when information is still fresh in their mind.
2. **Assignments** - tell your kids to write assignment due dates and plan backwards from them. Help them estimate how long it will take them to complete each assignment and teach them to always have a "time buffer", just in case they need some more time. I set "Ronit's due date" for assignments to a week before the official due date. This has saved me many times from not finishing assignments.
3. **Special events** (birthdays, parties, trips, family gatherings) - the kids can paste or staple invitations and permission slips to the right date and always be ready on time.
4. **To do list** (bring jumping rope to school, return library book)
5. **Time table for hobbies** (basketball practice 3:30-4:30 on Mondays, music lesson 6:00-6:30 on Wednesdays)
6. **Fun ideas for spare time** (weekends are usually blank, so the kids can use them for general lists)
7. **Phone numbers of friends** - organized kids have names of friends with their phone numbers and preferably their parents' names and address. This is very useful when they plan a get together or some play time. It is also a good idea to have emergency numbers in the calendar.
8. **Library days** and due dates of library books



For the calendar kids, planning became second nature.

Tips

The most important thing about using a calendar is not having it but using it. If kids have a great calendar but never use it, it has no value. Every day, make sure you help your kids use their calendar. Go over their day and teach them to write down all the things they can think of and clear some space in their mind. Every day, make sure they look at the following day, week and month and plan what they need.

The calendar can double up as a monitoring and confidence boosting tool by checking completed assignments and even writing down impressions and lessons learned, which kids can look at again to remember.

Keep doing this until you are confident your kids will use their calendar without your help.

Deadlines

Deadline motivation can be a carrot or a stick depending on the style of the child. Some kids are last-minute kids - they are motivated to do things and get to their peak state when they have a tight deadline to meet. It excites and energizes them. Others dread deadline and feel strangled by having a point in time by which they need to produce or do something.

If your child is a last-minute kid, although this is perceived a negative thing, it may bring out the best in them and yield the best outcome. So if your kids study for exams only the night before and get an A - let them. If they do the project the day before its due date and get an A - let them.

For kids who perform badly under tight schedules, deadlines are a source of pressure. Encourage your kids to set their own deadline, as I explained above. When kids set their own deadlines, they have a better feeling about controlling their time and they can take into consideration their other activities.

Family calendar

Use a family calendar to be a role model and encourage family planning. A simple contact paper (sticky transparency) attached to your refrigerator or a centrally located door and some whiteboard markers will do the trick. Write down anything the family needs to take into consideration when planning something new.

Encourage your kids to add their activities in the family calendar to give them a sense of belonging and to show their input is valued.

Encourage your kids to ask "who, what, when and where". Once they get into the habit of asking these questions, they will be able to plan ahead better, because each question covers a different angle. For example, if they need to go to music lesson, they would ask "Who will take me there?" or "How will I get there?", "What do I need to take with me?", "When does it start?", "When should I practice?" and "Where are my notes?"

Summary

1. Planning is a motivation technique that helps your kids deal with their fear of the unknown
2. Use a calendar to teach planning
3. Use a family calendar to encourage collaboration and consideration between family members
4. Deadlines can be a stick or a carrot, depending on your kid's personal style
5. Deadlines are only effective as self motivators
6. Use the what, where, when, who and how question to practice planning ahead
7. Give your kids lots of practice time

Source: Ronit Baras
www.ronitbaras.com