



ST THOMAS MORE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Centred in faith and learning | Inspiring minds | Nurturing hearts

More News **Week 1 Term 1 – 1 February 2017**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the 2017 school year! The teaching staff are excited to be back and have been working through January to prepare the year ahead. We have some exciting things planned for the students this year.

I would like to say a very special welcome to all our new Kinders and their families. They have settled in very quickly - friendships have been made, procedures practised, as well as lots of reading, writing and maths, and its only Day 3! We also welcome new students in other year levels. I hope your time at St Thomas More's is a fulfilling and rewarding one.

Last week staff participated in Professional Learning. It was a busy week and teachers are now ready to get into teaching the students in their care through excellent pedagogy and practice. On Friday, our last Professional Learning day, staff attended a Catholic Education Conference at the Canberra Convention Centre. Gabrielle Shoebridge (Year 5) was invited to speak at the conference. Gabrielle did an amazing job! She addressed the 2500 strong audience with grace and confidence. Gabrielle spoke about who God is for her and how she feels about being a student in a Catholic school. Gabrielle is pictured below with Archbishop Christopher Prowse and the MC, Jeff McMullen. Well done Gabrielle!



As we begin the school year, please know that my door is always open. If there's anything you'd like to discuss or bring to my attention, please drop in. I think it's much better to keep communication lines open.

St Thomas More's Staffing 2017

We especially welcome Mrs Pamela Sixsmith to St Thomas More's this year. Pam has taught at STM in previous years and we are very happy to have her back!

Parish Priest	Father Julian Wellspring
Principal	Mrs Julie Wiley
Assistant Principal	Ms Nicole Mikkonen
Religious Education Coordinator	Mrs Donna Victory
Kindergarten	Miss Caitlin Brown
Yr 1/2 Green	Ms Nicole Mikkonen (Mon – Wed) Mrs Pamela Sixsmith (Thurs – Fri)
Yr 1/2 White	Miss Sophie Cummins
Yr 3/4 Green	Mrs Helen Bramanathan (Wed – Fri) Mrs Samantha Mance (Mon – Tues)
Yr 3/4 White	Mrs Donna Victory (Mon – Thurs) Mrs Samantha Mance (Fri)
Yr 5/6 Green	Mr Dayne Spencer Mrs Pamela Sixsmith
Yr 5/6 White	Miss Jessica Pearson Mrs Pamela Sixsmith
Library and The Arts K-6	Mrs Liz French
Italian Teacher	Mrs Antonija Rover
Learning Support Teacher Enrichment Teacher Classroom Support	Mrs Sharon Melhuish
Learning Support Assistant	Mrs Amanda Lynch and Mrs Robyn Eldridge
Defence Schools Transition Aide School Chaplain	Mrs Sonja Mingay
Office Manager	Mrs Julie Ogden
Maintenance	Mr Peter Hales

School Expectations

At all times, we expect students to demonstrate consideration, cooperation and courtesy. Perhaps families could discuss these expectations at home.



School Prayer

*St Thomas More pray for us and our school.
Come Holy Spirit, be my helper and my guide.
Jesus Christ - yesterday, today and forever.*

St Thomas More Parish

Mass times and other Parish information can be found by clicking on the link below -

<http://www.stthomasmore.org.au>

Parent Information Night

Next Tuesday (7th Feb) parents will have an opportunity to meet the teachers at our Parent Information Night evening. Please come along at 6.00pm to visit your child's classroom and to meet their teacher. The teacher will repeat information again at 6:30pm so that you can attend another room. The aim of these sessions is to:

- Meet the teacher
- Visit the classroom
- Hear about matters particular to your child's class
- Learn about class routines and teacher expectations
- Set up lines of communication with the classroom teacher

This is not an opportunity for parent teacher interviews so if you think it is important to meet with teachers early in the year please make a separate time. **If children are attending they will need to sit with you in the classroom.**

Class Contacts

Included in the information sent home on Monday was a letter about St Thomas More's Parent Network. This network provides an opportunity for all parents to be connected with other families. We encourage all families to provide their details for the class contact list to promote communication and being kept informed of important class events.

Please complete the form and return it to your child's teacher by the end of Week 2.

We are also looking for one parent volunteer to be the "class contact" for each class. Being a class contact is a great way to get to know families in your child's class and be involved in the school community. If you are interested in being a class contact or have any questions please call the parent network co-ordinator, please contact Genevieve Cuddihy on 0424 578 933 or email genevieve.mick@internode.on.net

Newsletter

The newsletter is emailed out to families every Wednesday. Starting next week: on odd weeks, we have "More News" and on even weeks we send out "More Reminders". The electronic copy can be accessed through our Skoolbag app on your mobile device, via email and on the school website.

Skoolbag App

Have you downloaded the Skoolbag app to your phone? It's another avenue to keep updated with school news and you are able to submit your absence notes direct from your phone or device.



<http://www.stmore.act.edu.au/parents/skoolbag.html>

Counsellor

Ms Tina Nguyen has informed me that she has resigned from Catholic Care. Our new counsellor is Carrie Coghlan. Carrie will work alternate Thursdays (9.00am-3.30pm). Her first day in the school will be Thursday 9th February.

Supervision Hours

Students are supervised each day from 8.20am until 3.30pm. I would like to remind parents of the importance of ensuring that children are not dropped at school prior to 8.20am. Before School Care is available at Campbell Primary School should you need to arrange for early morning supervision. We offer After School Care here at STM.

Uniform

Thank you to families for ensuring students are in full school uniform. P.E. days are Wednesday and Friday.

Leadership Badges

This year our Year Six leaders will be presented with their badges during our Opening School Liturgy on Friday, February 10th (Week 2). Parents are warmly invited to join us for this special Liturgy. It will begin at 9am.

May peace be in your families,



Julie Wiley
Principal.

News from our REC

Become More Peaceful



Welcome back to school for another year of learning, growing and celebrating.

This year, St Thomas More's School is focusing on '**Becoming MORE.**' This term, we welcome Peaceful Penny back to our community. Penny is here to help guide us in '**becoming MORE Peaceful**'.



One way we can become more peaceful is by learning to respect ourselves more, as well as one another.

Respect is...

...thinking and acting in a positive way towards yourself and others.

Respect is...

thinking and acting in a way that shows others that you care about their wellbeing and their feelings

When we show respect for ourselves and accept ourselves for who we are, then we are more able to accept others for their uniqueness as well.

When there is total acceptance and respect, we are more inclined to be at peace with ourselves, each other and the environment.

I wish you all a peaceful start to the school year.

Donna Victory
Religious Education Coordinator

School Chaplain

Mini Vinnies



A warm welcome to the 2017 school year. I wish everyone a great year ahead. We have 12 new families in kindergarten and 15 new families in the other year groups. I sincerely hope you find St Thomas More's to be welcoming and friendly and that you soon feel part of our community.

Mini Vinnies

Mini Vinnies is a group of students in Years 4-6 who volunteer to help those in need in their school and community with a focus on social justice issues. Mini Vinnies participate in activities such as fund raising, clothing appeals and visiting the elderly. Mini Vinnies meetings will occur every second Friday in the Afters Room at 1.10pm. Students interested in joining Mini Vinnies should come along to an Introduction Session on Friday, 10 February in the Afters Room at 1.10pm.

Called to Care Meal Bank

Notes will be sent home in the next week seeking volunteers for St Thomas More's *Called to Care Meal Bank*. *Called to Care Meal Bank* is a roster of volunteers willing to cook one meal for four people. The meals are kept in the school freezer and given to families in times of hardship such as when there is illness. It is anticipated that as a volunteer you may be rostered to contribute once or twice a year (depending of the number of volunteers and the need). This is a great way to show love and care within our own community to families when extra care and support is needed.

Feel welcome to visit or contact me on 6249 8869 or send an email to sonja.mingay@cg.catholic.edu.au

Sonja Mingay
School Chaplain
Work hours: Thu 11am-3pm, Fri 9am-3pm

DSTA NEWS



Welcome and best wishes to everyone for a prosperous 2017. I hope all our new families settle in quickly and soon feel part of the St Thomas More's Community.

For our new families (not kindergarten), Help Sheets with class information have been sent home. It would be great if you could return the *Getting to know you* sheets to the School Office by Monday 6 February (start of Week 2). For those families that have come from interstate, you should have also received the *St Thomas More's Guide for Defence Families New to Canberra*. I would love to hear from you whether you find the guide handy or have any suggestions to add to it.

A *St Thomas More's DSTA Support 2017* form has been sent home this week to all Defence families and it would be appreciated if these could be returned by Monday 6 February (start of Week 2).

Craft/lego sessions will be held on Monday lunchtimes (after eating time) and relaxation sessions on Tuesdays 1.40pm beginning in Week 2. These will be organised on class rotation throughout the term.

Deployment Group will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes (after eating time) starting in Week 2. Please let me know if your family has a Defence parent away (whether it be deployment, course or exercise) and your child would like to attend the Deployment Group.

An Education Assistance Scheme (EAS) is available to Defence students who have moved school as a result of posting (applicable for up to 18 months after moving) and need additional services to help them meet the academic standards of the new school. Changes to the application and reimbursement process for the EAS, now

managed by the Defence Family Helpline 1800 624 608, were announced in mid-December last year and are in place for 2017. Please contact me if you would like more information.

Defence Community Organisation (DCO) Canberra E-News February Highlights

What DCO Canberra's Welcome to Canberra! Twilight Event

When Friday 10 February 2017, 5–8pm

Where ADFA Gymnasium and AFL Oval (enter via the Gun Gates, Fairbairn Ave, Campbell)

RSVP dco.canberra@defence.gov.au

Info Attractions include information stalls and free and fun activities such as bucking bull ride, skyzone trampoline, petting zoo, reptile display, face painting, Great Zamboni Magic show, display by the ADF Precision Drill Team and tethered rides in the RAAF hot air balloon (weather permitting). There will be a range of food and drinks available for purchase.

What Arboretum After Hours

When Fridays 3 & 10 February 4.30-6.30pm

Where National Arboretum, Southern Deck

Info Perfect summer catch up for families and friends. Enjoy spectacular views, great live music and delicious food and drinks. Free music 4.30-6.30pm. Free parking after 4pm. Late night shopping at the Curatoreum Gift Store. Village Centre and National Bonsai and Penjing Collection open until 7pm. Pod Playground and forests open until 8:30pm. Free guided *Fire and Water* walks. For more information, call 6207 8484 or follow link http://www.nationalarboretum.act.gov.au/visit/whats_on/whatson-full-story/arboretum-after-hours.

What Chinese Lantern Festival

When Saturday 11 February 2017, 6.15-8.45pm

Where Beijing Garden, Lennox Gardens, on Flynn Drive in Yarralumla

Info Follow link

http://www.acfs.org.au/images/stories/publicity/lantern_festival_combined_flier_2017.pdf

DCO Canberra E-news is promulgated monthly via email. It includes handy information such as upcoming events, contact details for social groups and links to DCO resources. If you wish to be on the E-News mail out list, send a request to dco.canberra@defence.gov.au. Alternatively, 'like' the DCO Facebook Page to receive information and updates.

Feel welcome to visit or contact me on 6249 8869 or send an email to sonja.mingay@cg.catholic.edu.au

Sonja Mingay DSTA
Work hours: Mon-Wed 9am-3pm, Thu 9-11am

Music Tuition

Piano lessons are available at school with Jaki Kane (BMus Hons) and Andrew Koll (BMus Hons). There are some vacancies this term. Please contact Jaki on 0407007362 or email: jakikane@hotmail.com



Flute lessons are available at school with Andrew Koll (BMus Hons). It is best for children to be over the age of 9 before learning to play the flute. Enquiries to Andrew on 0407066304 or email: realbach@tpg.com.au

Scholastic Bookclub Coordinator for 2017

We are now seeking a volunteer to take on the organisation of our school Bookclub orders for 2017. Do your children enjoy reading? Have you purchased books through the Scholastic Bookclub? Can you spare a few hours twice a term?

If you are interested in taking on this role, please call Julie in the Front Office on 62498869.

Dates for your Diary

7 Feb	Parent Information Evening 6.00pm
10 Feb	Leadership & Opening School Liturgy 9.00am Awards Assembly

Parent network Class Contacts 2017

Kinder	Candice Mikkonen	candice.mikkonen@gmail.com
Year 1/2 Green		
Year 1/2 White		
Year 3/4 Green		
Year 3/4 White		
Year 5/6 Green		
Year 5/6 White		

Second hand clothing pool.... Help wanted!!

Can you spare an hour to assist in the sorting of our second hand uniforms.

It would involve sorting, folding and taking excess clothing to the needy.

If you can help out before the end of term, please get in touch with Julie Ogden in the front office.

Many thanks



School Council needs you too

After nearly four years on the School Council I have decided to step down to allow others a chance to be involved. The council is an important part of our school, working together with Julie and staff to help in particular areas of running and decision making.

You do not need to be a certain type of person to be a member of the council. Everyone brings their own skills and gifts. Just bring your enthusiasm and openness to help. We are there because we care about our children and their school. Thanks for allowing me to represent you on the council for the last few years.

Thanks to Julie Ogden for all her support with paperwork and the finances. She works tirelessly and is caring and cheerful with everyone.

And thanks to the other members of the council, past and present. I have enjoyed catching up with you each meeting even if it has been just to look over the latest columns of finances.

So if you haven't yet, please consider joining the School Council at some time. It is a great way to help your school community and your children.

Catherine Gabbitas
Community Council Member

2017 SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

At STM we have a School Community Council. The Council's role and functions are a combination of a School Board and P & F. The members of the Council are: Father Julian; Mrs Wiley; Miss Mikkonen; a Parish representative; a teacher representative; and up to 8 parent representatives.

Council makes decisions in a number of areas including, approving and monitoring the school budget and levies, developing strategic plans and capital maintenance programs, pastoral care strategies, enrolment and promoting the school. Council meet 8 times a year (in week 3 and 8 of term). Council is a fantastic way for parents to become involved in our school community, to participate in a number of important decisions and influence the direction of our school.

There are many ways in which you can be involved in your child's schooling. Everyone has something that can help – whether that is a skill, knowledge or perhaps the energy and enthusiasm to help with a task or lead an event.

If you would like to be involved in our Council or would like more information please contact me on 0424 578 933 or genevieve.mick@internode.on.net

Genevieve Cuddihy
Council Chair

Community News



Details of all school and regular bus services are now available for parents and students to begin planning their journeys. We ask that parents and students familiarise themselves with the most suitable route, times and stop locations for their children before the school term commences.

School bus services are available to school students only however, parents with young children may apply to travel on these services for a few weeks to help their child get used to bus travel. Please use the links below for further information on our bus services:

[School bus timetables](#)

[Regular bus timetables](#)

We are urging parents and students to check MyWay cards and top up if required. MyWay cards can be topped up automatically using the handy autoloading service, online, over the phone via the Transport Canberra information line (13 17 10), or in person with a MyWay recharge agent. Passengers who top up using Autoload attract a further 5% discount on all fares.

New bus fares came into effect on 14 January 2017. Single trip concessions cash fares cost \$2.50 and MyWay fares are now \$1.16. School Students are almost \$60 a month better off when using MyWay rather than paying a cash fare to and from school. Parents and students can find more information at transport.act.gov.au or by calling 13 17 10.



Majura Tennis Club in Dickson is holding a **Free Tennis Day for primary school students** living in the northern suburbs of Canberra. Tennis Canberra will have a free coaching clinic for players new to the game and the Majura Tennis Club Committee will be hosting a BBQ. If you can place the following information in the upcoming newsletter it will inform those who are interested.

Free Tennis Day - Play Tennis North Canberra

- When: Saturday 11th of February
- Where: Majura Tennis Club, Rosevear Place Dickson (behind the Dickson Pool)
- Time: 12am - 2pm
- RSVP: www.tenniscanberra.com.au/book-online
- Contact: play@tenniscanberra.com.au or 0416 186 121

To prepare our coaches an RSVP would be helpful so we can get the right amount of help on the day.

Players who would like to participate in our term coaching program you can sign up at anytime via the website. We have coaching outside school times at the following venues and days:

Term Coaching by Tennis Canberra

- Tuesday at Turner Tennis Club
- Wednesday at Reid Tennis Club
- Thursday & Saturday at Majura Tennis Club, Dickson