FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Friends of St Vincent’s,

Re: School funding cuts for Catholic schools

As you may be aware the Australian government this week announced a new funding proposal that will cut funding to Catholic schools in the ACT over next ten years.

A cut of this magnitude will have a significant impact on the Catholic system and we will be faced with tough decisions to cover any shortfall including raising fees and reducing costs. Catholic education will do everything it can to hold fees as low as possible.

This week we received a letter from Education Minister Simon Birmingham that confirms our funding will be cut over the next ten years. St Vincent’s Primary School is estimated to be given an average annual per student decrease of 0.8 per cent over the ten years that will result in a total decrease from 2017 to 2027 of $348,900. I am concerned that this funding model will drastically affect our school’s ability to fund infrastructure projects; it could lessen the purchase of resources such as iPads or other ICT related infrastructure needs- the list is very long. I strongly urge all parents to consider contacting their local member, as well as the Minister of Education, Simon Birmingham, to express their dismay at the actions taken by Government in this regard.

The school funding debate is complicated and surrounded by misinformation. To support you the Catholic Education Office has produced some simple key points. I refer you to the Fact sheet attached to this newsletter for urgent reading and action.

I encourage you to:
- Take this information and share it with your friends, including on social media.
- Contact your political leaders and ask why funding for your child is being cut while other students are receiving increases. Ask how your school is expected to cover the gap.
- Explain what will be put at risk in what you value in the school as a result of these cuts.

I appreciate this is an unusual request but it is necessary in the circumstances. In conjunction with the Director of Catholic Education we will be doing everything possible to help the Australian Government understand the consequences of these changes. I will keep the parent community appraised of all information as I receive it.

Regards

Lina Vigliotta
lina.vigliotta@cg.catholic.edu.au
Catholic Schools Enrolment Period is from Monday 1 May – Friday 19 May 2017. If you know of anyone outside of our school community who has a child at pre-school, please notify them of the opportunity to enrol at St Vincent’s during the above period. Enrolment packs are now ready for collection. Existing families seeking enrolment for Kinder 2018 will need to submit an application.

Our Open Day will be on Tuesday 16 May 9.30am – 11am and from 4 – 6pm.

PARISH AND SCHOOL MASS AND PICNIC THANKYOU

We were blessed with a glorious autumn Sunday for our combined Church/School Mass and picnic. Thankyou to everyone who attended. The following is a thankyou from PPC member Colleen Meadley.

There was great participation today and it was wonderful to see so many from the school stay and foster parish school connection.

The Lord was certainly watching over us with the magnificent day he provided weather wise.

Whatever we can do to strengthen the bonds between the parish and the school we will do.

We as a PPC are keen to work with the school community in what ever ideas you have to continue strengthening parish-school connections.

Thank you and all from St Vincent’s school for their assistance and support.

Have a wonderful week.

Colleen on behalf of the PPC.

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY

On Friday 12 May our children will have an opportunity to purchase a very well priced gift for their mum, nonna, gran, stepmum or mama. Gifts are priced at $2, $4 and $6 and with over 400 items available there are plenty to go around.

All funds raised from the Mother’s Day Stall will allow the School Community Council to invest in a better school environment for our students.

For a preview of gifts at each price point, visit the St Vincent’s Primary School Community Council Facebook page (@stvincentsschoolcommunitycouncil)

Following the Mother’s Day breakfast all mums are invited to join us for Assembly in the hall for a special blessing.

Wishing everyone a great day of expressing gratitude towards the wonderful mothers in our community this coming Friday at breakfast and again at home on Sunday.
Last Friday, we held our Cross Country Carnival and the day was a great success. My thanks to our Sports Liaison, Lynne Hellyer, for the great job she did in organising the carnival. The day was enjoyed by students and ran very smoothly. I thank staff, pre-service teachers and parents for their support, and the students too, for their participation and good sportsmanship. 

Cross Country award presentations will take place at Friday’s morning Assembly.

This week students in Years 3 and 5 sat the NAPLAN tests. As Lisa Harris alerted you last week, the testing this year has not been facilitated by the use of computers and once again was conducted with paper and pencil. This is an ACT wide decision and was taken in light of technical difficulties NAPLAN organisers were experiencing. I commend our Year 3 and 5 students for approaching these assessments with a positive attitude.

School Band commences this week. Current band students will have rehearsal on Friday's from 2:30-3:10. Students who currently play an instrument and would like to join the band are invited to come to an audition on Friday May 12 at 2pm. Band lessons will take place in the Resource Room.

At St Vincent’s, we support the End of May is Hats Off Day initiative from the ACT Cancer Council. Students continue to be welcome to wear a royal blue beanie if they would prefer. The school beanies with crest are available from the Front Office for $10.
FROM THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Fuelled by an exceptional pavlova prepared by Leanne Dann in honour of Madame Secretary’s 29th birthday, the 3rd Council meeting for 2017 was a cauldron of creative thinking. Amongst the big ideas and mud maps, however, were expressions of heartfelt thanks to the wider St Vincent’s community for the times when people have turned up, helped in and worked together:

- To the families who sent such an extraordinary number of wonderful books for Mrs Harris’s book castle, thank you.
- To the families who came and toiled so generously at the working bee, thank you.
- To the children and their families who were such good sports at the Catholic Schools Soccer Carnival, thank you.
- To Louise Georgiadis and helpers for organising the chocapalooza that is the Easter Raffle, thank you.
- To the Defence families whose ran the Defence Appreciation Day, thank you.
- To Helen Walker and helpers for organising the most elegant Mother’s Day stall in the history of Mother’s Day stalls, thank you.
- To those who have prepared meals for families in our community who have needed extra support over the last few months, thank you.
- To the parents and carers who are acting as Class Coordinators – bringing us together and reminding us that we are part of a community – thank you.

With news of funding cuts that will have a real and profound impact on the education of Australia’s children, these are the things that make our schools unique, important and necessary. They deserve to be preserved.

For those of you who haven’t benefited from a St Vincent’s Mother’s Day Stall, you are in for a treat. Professional shopper, Helen Walker, has scoured the globe for gifts to make your heart sing. Go to the St Vincent’s Community Council Facebook page for a taste of the delights on offer at this Friday’s stall and, perhaps, drop some hints to the junior shoppers in your household about where they might wisely invest their dollars.

The money raised from the Mother’s Day Stall goes back into improving the School’s learning and playing environment. For example, at last week’s meeting, the SCC was able to approve a substantial contribution towards the School’s purchase of a class set of ukuleles to be used during weekly music lessons. Whatever your ears might tell you, there are immeasurable benefits to a child in having guided access to a musical instrument. We can all take pleasure in being able to assist the school in providing that opportunity for our children.

As always, the SCC works on your behalf. As representatives of you and your children, all members of the Council are ready and happy to talk – don’t hesitate to get in touch with questions, comments or suggestions.

Justine Molony
SCC Secretary
justinemolony@bigpond.com

Nude Food Wednesday

Next Wednesday St Vincent’s students are encouraged to come to school with Nude Food lunch boxes. This means minimal wrappings and packets. We are also encouraging foods that are considered GREEN LIGHT FOOD. The children have been learning about Green Light food in their classrooms. We will continue with Nude Food Wednesday for the rest of the term. Hopefully we will also see a reduction in our landfill bins on these days.
FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

Term 2 is always a big term at our little school. There are a number of wonderful activities coming up on the school calendar and these are just a few that will be happening over the next week. I look forward to meeting prospective families at our Open Day next Tuesday, please spread the word about our fabulous little school. We know that ‘word of mouth’ is the best source of advertising!

FOOD ALLERGY AWARENESS WEEK

Did you know that 1 in 10 babies born today will develop a food allergy?

Next week is Food Allergy Week. The primary aim of the week is to raise awareness about the prevalence of food allergy and help keep those with food allergies safe. At St Vincent’s, we have a number of students with food allergies and food intolerances. We take a number of precautions to minimise the risk of allergic reactions occurring and all staff are fully trained in knowing what to do should an allergic reaction happen.

Having witnessed firsthand how quickly an allergic reaction can become life-threatening, you cannot afford to take any risks when you are in the company of a person who has a food allergy. It’s up to all of us to be allergy aware – to know how to minimise the risk of a reaction, to know what to do if a reaction happens, and to understand and support family, friends and colleagues living with food allergies. For more information about Food Allergy Awareness go to http://www.foodallergyaware.com.au/

MATHS OLYMPIAD AND MATHS GAMES CHALLENGE TEAMS

I am pleased to announce the following students will participate in the APSMO Maths Olympiad or Maths Games Challenge this year:

Harini, Escha, Harry, Sarah, Maria, Matilda & Anika (Year 6), Sharadda, George, Harry, Emma, Sean’Hope, Annie, Aniketh, Marcelo, & Flynn (Year 5), Ava, Farrah, Reuben, Bronson & Josh (Year 4), Mia, Tobias, Peter, William T, Hilmi & Eliza (Year 3)

If there are any parents who have a background in Mathematics and would like to assist with the coaching of these teams in the lead up to their monthly competition, I would love to hear from you!! The first Olympiad and Games competition will take place next Wednesday, 17 May.

INTER-SCHOOLS SNOW SPORTS COMPETITION

The St Vincent’s Snow Sports team is looking for entrants into the 2017 ACT/Southern NSW Interschool SnowSports Championships. If you are interested in registering your child into the competition, please let me know and I would be happy to provide you with further information. The event takes place in Week 1 of Term 3, Wednesday, 26 – Thursday, 28 July at the Perisher Ski Fields.

With best wishes,

Lisa

lisa.harris@cg.catholic.edu.au

AWARDS

We congratulate the following recipients of this weeks awards

KINDER YELLOW: Anik F, Alex J
YEAR 1 BLUE: Ella N, Lily R
YEAR 2 YELLOW: Zoe W, Achiik K
YEAR 3/4 BLUE: Eliza B, Chloe P
YEAR 3/4 YELLOW: Reuben W, Eleni M, Olive H
YEAR 5 BLUE: Flynn R, Sharadda S, Sakthi P
YEAR 5 YELLOW: Elijah S, Lucy M
YEAR 6 BLUE: Delany C, Angela G

BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to the following students celebrating their birthday over the coming week:

Jacob D, Elijah S, Bronson M
‘You are Called…’
Jesus said to them, “Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people.” At once they left their nets and went with him.
(Matthew 4:19-20)

Mini Vinnies @ St Vincent’s

We were very excited this week to begin the recruitment drive for our 2017 Mini Vinnies group. Mini Vinnies is a program of the St Vincent de Paul Society which exists in many primary schools. The Mini Vinnies program creates awareness among young students about social justice issues that exist around them, whether that is in their community or beyond. It reinforces the mission of St Vincent de Paul and instils in them the opportunity to be compassionate and run simple, yet effective initiatives with their school peers so together they can make a difference.

Our Mini Vinnies program is open for students from Yrs. 3-6. We had 25 enthusiastic students attend the information session and take home packs to discuss the program with their family. It is not too late for child to join – please direct them to me and I will give them all the necessary information and forms.

About Mini Vinnies

What does a Mini Vinnies Group do?
The actions of a Mini Vinnies group generally involve three components:
‘See’
Education and Awareness. ‘Seeing’ means becoming aware of some of the community’s social ills and knowing that whilst there are many beautiful things in this world, it can always be made a little better by good works.
‘Think’
Formation. ‘Thinking’ means forming a Mini Vinnies group and through that group participating in spiritual activities, personal development and discussions.
‘Do’
Community Service and Fundraising. ‘Doing’ is an opportunity for children to do something about the issues they have seen, thought about, and discussed.
(Mini Vinnies Kit, Youth Team and the Community and Corporate Relations Team of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, 2009)

Important Dates – Term 2
Prayer Celebration - True Disciples – 2 Yellow – Friday, 19 May at 9:00am in the Church.

Peace and best wishes,
Luke Maher
Religious Education Coordinator

FROM THE PARISH

Children’s Liturgy will be held during 10am Mass, next Sunday, 21 May in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

CANTEEN
Order your children’s lunches online – www.flexischools.com.au
The week’s soup will be Sweet Potato and Bacon Soup-$1
This week’s special is Macaroni Mince-$4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CLASS 9.30am-2.00pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 May 2017</td>
<td>Year 2 Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May 2017</td>
<td>Year 5 Blue</td>
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</tbody>
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In Science we have been exploring the viscosity of liquids.

Basketball skills in PE

Our giant game of Monopoly from our Term 1 Economics unit is going strong.

Fun with numbers.

Patrick and Lucy are busy researching what life was like for the early settlers in our History unit—His Story, Her Story, Oz Story.

In Religious Education we are enjoying learning about other Religions from Australia and around the world.
COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

GET YOUR DISCOUNT CARD FOR FRUIT & VEGIES

Our school is making healthy food and drink a part of everyday life at school with the help of Fresh Tastes and partner, Toms Superfruits, located at the Belconnen Markets (www.belconnenmarkets.com.au).

Toms Superfruits are offering all our families and staff a discount card for 5% off purchases for the first year, 7% in the second year and 10% in the third year (one card per household; discounts available Wednesday to Saturday - not Sunday).

Purchases made by our families and staff earn our school points! We can use these points to get free fresh fruit and vegetables for our school from Tom's Superfruits.

If you would like to receive your discount card, here's what you need to do:
1. Email info@tomssuperfruits.com.au with the subject line: FRESH TASTES ST VINCENT’S PRIMARY SCHOOL.
2. In the email, write your full name and mailing address.
3. Toms Superfruits will deliver requested cards to our front office after four weeks.
4. Our front office will put a notice in our newsletter to let you know your card is ready for collection from the front office.

If you have any questions, please contact our school's Fresh Tastes coordinator [insert coordinator contact details].

SAVE THE DATE

Help us make the School Hall SHAKE at the St Vincent’s Bush Dance

Friday 2 June, 6.30 pm
Tickets: $10 per family
Bring a plate of food to share (details to come)

Polish your boots, saddle up the horses and come on down to Strip the Willow!
Make a Buddy, Keep a Buddy

Our children have been learning about thoughts and behaviours that will help them to make and keep friends. They are learning skills that will enable them to initiate friendly behavior and respond to other people in a positive way. It is great to make a new friend. When we make new friends, we do not have to give up our old friends. One way to make new friends is to show people you are interested in them by asking questions about them. Asking a question is a good way to start a conversation and get to know someone better.

Here are some more friendly actions which can initiate friendships:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draw a picture for your new friend and give it to them.</th>
<th>Find out three things you did not previously know about your new friend.</th>
<th>Help someone clean up their desk or carry their books.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notice a time when your new friend is doing something well. Tell them they are doing a good job.</td>
<td>Ask a new friend to join you and your friends at lunch or to do something after school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help someone clean up their desk or carry their books.</td>
<td>Find out what things your friend is interested in.</td>
<td>Offer to help a new friend with a homework assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give your new friend a compliment.</td>
<td>Let your new friend decide what game you will play.</td>
<td>Smile at your new friend and say hello. Talk to them.</td>
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</table>

Compliment Cavalcade
Compliments are comments we make to others that let them know we have noticed something good about them. They are a good way to begin a conversation with a new friend. It is also important for us to accept compliments and respond to friendly behaviour in a positive manner. If we respond negatively every time someone says something nice to us, eventually people will not want to say anything to us at all.

Needing Approval
Sometimes we want to make friends but we don’t because of feelings of worry and shyness. Many people of all ages are shy and there is nothing wrong with being that way. But, it is good to try to be less shy. Especially if it comes from a negative way of thinking called Needing Approval (needing to be liked). People who are shy feel very hurt when someone is not nice to them. Thoughts that are not sensible or true can cause us to feel very shy and worried. We need to try and overcome these thoughts with true and sensible thoughts that will cause us to feel confident in social situations. We need to have a way of thinking called Being Independent. Students who have this way of thinking do not need everyone to approve or like them all the time. They can accept it (and not put themselves down) if someone does not want to play with them. Because of this, they have less fear and are less shy.

Be Tolerant
Students will be able to identify how non-accepting, judgmental thoughts towards others (a Being Intolerant of Others way of thinking) may lead them to dislike or avoid other people. We need to replace non-accepting, judgmental thoughts with accepting, non-judgmental thoughts and develop a positive Being Tolerant of Others way of thinking. If we have an unfriendly thought, we should try to replace it with a friendly thought.