Dear Parents, Guardians, Students and Other Parishioners,

This was a very busy week at school! We have had the Nazareth VCAL students begin their work with us, we have had the Auditors in and we have had Lane Clark working with new staff. Lane is a brilliant educator and she has been a critical friend for the last 5 years. This week she helped our new staff to understand how children think and how we as educators can assist them in their thinking.

Lane talks about the brain’s capacity to file information. If there is no file, for a new thought to latch on to, its like having a piece of information and no file to put it into. That is why we have to teach children at the point of need. The thing that they need to learn next attaches itself to what they already know. This process is working memory. If a new thought has a thought to belong to, to attach itself to, it can be stored. First in the short term memory and then, if it is rethought several times, it can be transferred to the long term memory. Once in the long term memory, it stays until the brain cells fail!

We know as teachers and as parents that children learn in a developmental process. We do not ask 4 year olds to explain how a language works, and we don’t ask 16 year olds to say their alphabet. These are extreme examples but they illustrate the point that children have stages of learning. If the learning is too hard, it cannot be taught. If the learning is too easy, it is a waste of time to teach it. Teachers today have to work out the stage of learning for each child and then deliver the learning to them just as they need to learn it! This is a really hard thing to do when the research tells us that in Yr5 and Yr6 the average range across Australian schools is 5 years. Some children are ready to learn Yr8 work and some are still working at Yr3 work. This is the normal range in all classrooms at this level.

We have finished testing and are into teaching! So now that we have moved out of what we call ‘screening time’, we have a good picture of what every child is ready to learn and we can be really serious about meeting their needs. Naturally, we cannot teach children individually. We have far too many children in each learning community to do that, but we can group them with children who need to learn similar things at a similar time. We can also teach several levels of learning by asking questions appropriate to the children in front of us even when they are all presenting with different needs. Parents manage their family all the time in a similar way. If you are in the car filling up for fuel, you can ask the 4 year old what the signs mean and you can ask the 12 year old how far they estimate you can travel on a tankful of petrol.

In the classroom we call this differentiated learning or learning at the point of need. In families it’s...
School Sport News ...

**AUSKICK AND NET SET GO!**

Last Friday, six swimmers represented our school at the Greater Dandenong Division Swimming Carnival. It was great morning for swimming at the newly renovated NPAC (Noble Park Aquatic Centre).

We had many successes in the pool with 5 out of our 6 all of our swimmers winning through to the next round - Regionals! Well done to the individual winners:
- Nam 9/10 year old boys backstroke
- Kim 12 year old girls backstroke
- Evan 11 year old boys breaststroke
- Trung 9/10 year old butterfly
- Kim (again!) 12 year old girls butterfly

Also, Jovana came second in the 11 year old girls butterfly.

Our 4 x 50m freestyle 11 year old relay team also won with Trung, Nam, Evan and Jovana whilst our 4 x 50m medley relay of Nam, Jovana, Kim and Nerise came second.

Thank you to the parents who brought the kids along and in particular to Mr Wong who greatly assisted us on the finish line.

This Thursday our mixed basketball, kanga B’s and both softball teams won through to the district finals. Particularly pleasing were the Kanga B’s who started off with a few “reluctant” cricketers but, to their credit, buckled down and improved every week. Making it to the finals for this team is a great example of persistence and getting on with it. Results will be shared next week.

Yours in Sport
Dean Andrew

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Religious Education News ...

**“Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give will never thirst”**

**John 4:5-42**

We are now half way through this Lenten Season and from next Sunday the Gospel Readings will be taken from John. These Gospels are starting to prepare us for the events that we will remember and celebrate during Holy Week; that is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. So how are we going so far with the Lenten call to reflect on our lives, to spend time with Jesus through prayer and to consciously make an effort to change something about ourselves to enrich the lives within our families and communities?

In this week’s gospel, the discussion between Jesus and the Samaritan woman is lively and forthright on both sides. She becomes a missionary for Jesus when she goes to tell the other Samaritans of her encounter with Jesus. Interesting that the Samaritan was at a well! Water presents us with such strong images. Water is life giving. The image of “living water” is used throughout the scriptures as a symbol of God’s wisdom, a wisdom that imparts life and blessing to all who receive it. Would you give water to somebody who snubbed you or treated you like an enemy? Would you be persistent and constant to bring God’s wisdom into your home, workplace etc? Jesus did just that and more! Jesus broke through the barriers of prejudice, hostility, and tradition to bring the good news of peace and reconciliation to Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles alike. I’d like us to remember that no one is barred from the love of God and the good news of salvation.

*Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman who many people did not like.*

*Are there times when we don’t want to talk to someone because we do not like them?*

*Jesus shows us how to treat others.*

*How can we treat others with kindness and pray for Jesus to be with us this week?*

All classes are continuing to keep before the children the Lenten focus on Project Compassion in their work of bringing hope to those in other countries who are in need of our help and our support. The Yr5 & Yr6 students had been giving the importance of the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation as part of their own Lenten journey.

*ST PATRICK’S DAY MASS*

This week, Mrs. Caia and myself had the absolute pleasure of taking our 4 school captains and 4 Mini Vinnies Captains; Emily, Kim, Andy, Jonathan, Jarrod, Holly, Aneka and Tass to the St Patrick’s Day Mass which was held at St Patrick’s Cathedral. We travelled to the Cathedral together with school leaders from Holy Family and St Gerards. The Mass was followed by a wonderful concert at the Treasury Gardens. I speak on behalf of all the captains that we had a terrific day celebrating St Patrick’s life of service. Thanks you captains for a wonderful day.

*SACRAMENTAL NEWS*

**Reconciliation:**

There is a $25.00 cash Sacramental levy for this Sacrament. The levy covers the cost of their books and ALL resources needed to prepare your child. The levy must be paid through the office as soon as possible. Thank you to the families who have already paid. Dates and times for First Reconciliation times will be sent next week.

Maria Popowycz
Catholic Identity Coordinator (CIC)
popoma@sedandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

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Principal’s Message (continued) ...

called good parenting!

We are still finding our way as educators in managing differentiation as it requires complex planning and continuous assessment. The paper work is immense. I hope that many of you noticed this week that the Gratton Institute, a very sophisticated think tank in Australia, called on the government to free up teachers and principals from the paper work, yard duty and meeting overload to help give teachers and principals time to focus on what they are supposed to be doing—teaching and learning. Amen, Amen, Amen!

**AGM—INCORRECT DATE PRINTED**

The AGM is on **Tuesday 25th of March** - not Wednesday 26th of March, which was written in Agenda.

Christine Ash / Principal
1. **Children do as you do.** Your child watches you to get clues on how to behave in the world. You’re his/her role model, so use your own behaviour to guide him/her. What you do is often much more important than what you say. If you want your child to say ‘please’, say it yourself. If you don’t want your child to raise her voice, speak quietly and gently yourself.

2. **Show your child how you feel.** Tell him/her honestly how his/her behaviour affects you. This will help him/her see his/her own feelings in yours, like a mirror. This is called empathy. By the age of three, children can show real empathy. So you might say, ‘I’m getting upset because there is so much noise I can’t talk on the phone’. When you start the sentence with ‘I’, it gives your child the chance to see things from your perspective.

3. **Catch him/her being ‘good’.** This simply means that when your child is behaving in a way you like, you can give him/her some positive feedback. For example, ‘Wow, you are playing so nicely. I really like the way you are keeping all the blocks on the table’. This works better than waiting for the blocks to come crashing to the floor before you take notice and bark, ‘Hey, stop that’.

4. **Get down to your child’s level.** Kneeling or squatting down next to children is a very powerful tool for communicating positively with them. Getting close allows you to tune in to what they might be feeling or thinking. It also helps them focus on what you are saying or asking for. If you are close to your child and have his/her attention, there is no need to make him/her look at you.

5. ‘I hear you.’ Active listening is another tool for helping young children cope with their emotions. They tend to get frustrated a lot, especially if they can’t express themselves well enough verbally. When you repeat back to them what you think they might be feeling, it helps to relieve some of their tension. It also makes them feel respected and comforted.

6. **Keep promises.** Stick to agreements. When you follow through on your promises, good or bad, your child learns to trust and respect you. So when you promise to go for a walk when he/she picks up his/her toys, make sure you have your walking shoes handy. When you say you will leave the library if he/she doesn’t stop running around, be prepared to leave straight away.

7. **Reduce temptation.** Your glasses look like so much fun to play with - it’s hard for children to forget not to touch. Reduce the chance for innocent but costly exploration by keeping that stuff out of sight.

8. **Choose your battles.** Before you get involved in anything your child is doing - especially to say ‘no’ or ‘stop’, ask yourself if it really matters. By keeping instructions, requests and negative feedback to a minimum, you create less opportunity for conflict and bad feelings.

9. **Whining: be strong.** Kids don’t want to be annoying. By giving in when they’re whining for something, we train them to do it more - even if we don’t mean to.

10. **Keep it simple and positive.** If you can give clear instructions in simple terms, your child will know what is expected of him/her. (‘Please hold my hand when we..."

Nan Perazzo
Wellbeing Coordinator
Learning and Teaching ...

Working Memory

WHAT IS WORKING MEMORY?

Working memory is the ability to keep information in your mind for a short time, focus on a task, and remember what to do next. It’s not just storing data, but the ability to keep information active for long enough to do something with it. Working memory supports many of the activities that children routinely engage in at school including:

- Controlling attention
- Remembering instructions
- Organising information
- Focusing
- Resisting distractions
- Complex thinking

WHAT CAN WE DO AT HOME TO IMPROVE WORKING MEMORY?

- Get Enough Sleep. You may not know it, but your sleeping time is when your mind organizes and files away what it has learned during the day. When you sleep you solidify new knowledge and in a way you empty your working memory so that it is ready for a new day.

- Treat your brain like a garden. This means your child needs to drink water, juices or something healthy to remain hydrated and to remember optimally. Provide nutrition (or fertilizer) for the brain through memory-boosting vitamins, such as Vitamin B12, Folic Acid, and food such as salmon and fruits.

- Assign a designated place for your child to put important stuff. As soon as he gets home from school, make sure he puts those things where they belong.

- Create a reminder checklist to make sure your child has everything she needs to bring to school. In the beginning, watch as she goes through the checklist, to make sure she’s putting every item in her backpack. Do not repeat what’s on the list, but ask her to tell you (this helps to transfer the information from your working memory to hers). Have your child use the checklist when she finishes her homework the night before, to avoid rushing around in the morning.

- Make, and use, to-do lists yourself, so that your child sees this is a lifelong coping strategy. Life is too complicated to expect kids to commit everything to memory!

- Reconsider video games: you might want to take a second look at the value of video games your child is playing. Of course, playing several hours a day isn’t healthy. But games with lots of navigation through different scenes have been shown to improve working memory scores because you have to execute an action without guidance and remember the consequences of the action.

Rebecca Gage
Learning and Teaching Leader
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### Contact Details...

**St. Elizabeth’s Out of School Hours Care Program**  
111 Bakers Road, Dandenong North  
Ph: 0422 803 709 / 0426 282 721  

**Before School Care**  
Permanent: $12.00 / Casual: $13.00  
7:00am to 8:55am Monday to Friday during school term, excluding all Victorian public holidays.  

**After School Care**  
Permanent: $13.50 / Casual: $14.50  
3:15pm to 6:15pm Monday to Friday during school term, excluding all Victorian public holidays.  

**Vacation Care / Pupil Free Days** - Per Day: $45.00  
7:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday.  
(No vacation care available in January.)  

**Late Pick Up Fees** - Per minute: $3.00

For enquiries or further information, please contact Elarine on 0422 803 709 or 0426 282 721 during session times.

### Weekly Activities...

**Beginning:** Monday 24th March, 2014

**Monday**  
Scrap Booking, Paper Craft, Cops & Robbers, Bocce, Cricket

**Tuesday**  
Flower Making, Art Gallery, Marbles, Magnetic Darts

**Wednesday**  
Stamping Challenge, 40/40, Ball Tippy, Kick Ball, Poison Ball

**Thursday**  
Card Making, Fun Loom Making, Octopus, Skipping Ropes

**Friday**  
Curriculum Day to the movies to see Lego at Reading Cinemas, Dandenong  
Movie & Lunch - $20

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