Dear Parents and Carers,

I was privileged last week to be able to attend the NSW Education symposium that was hosted by Education Minister Adrian Piccoli. Educationalists from all sectors, Catholic, Independent and State, were invited to hear speakers from around the world and then contribute to discussions about future directions for Education in NSW.

Two interesting points which I picked up in the discussions:

1. Professor Pasi Sahlberg, a Finnish educator and scholar, spoke of the importance of wellbeing in our students. This was backed-up by Professor Jenny Gore from the University of Newcastle who made the point that students need to have a positive view of themselves; they need to believe in themselves in order to be effective learners.

The ideas from these speakers support Mercy College's new approach to pastoral care, that of positive psychology. You might remember that in a previous Mercy Voice I wrote about our review of our pastoral system this year and our new approach to begin next year.

2. There was also much discussion about "Digital Natives", from both educationalists and industry representatives. (Digital Natives: the new group of students enrolling in schools who are native speakers of the digital language of computers, videos, video games, social media and other sites).

Professor Sahlberg, Adam Kay (the Chief Executive Officer of Cotton Australia) and Professor Roy Green (Dean of the UTS Business School at the University of Technology) all gave the same clear message that schools need not prepare students for the current workforce, as in 10 years time 50% of the jobs that exist now won't exist then. The other message was that Digital Natives can't think and that digital immersion makes deeper learning difficult.

What needs to happen is for schools to offer opportunities for thinking and innovation.

Mercy College is well ahead of the latest research. Two years ago we began to use a new pedagogical framework that of Cultures of Thinking, where a group's collective as well as individual thinking is actively promoted and made visible.

STUDENT LEADERS: It is with great pleasure that I announce the new Year 11 Student Leaders for 2017

Mercy House Captain—Danielle Thebridge
McAuley House Captain—Isabella Johnson
Coolock House Captain—Caitlin Hester
Stormanston House Captain—Caolyn Mann
Liturgy—Zoe Coyne
Mercy Action—Mary-Ann Heaney
Environment—Grace Johnson
Creative Arts & Media—Cassandra Parker

Best Wishes

Suzanne Kavanagh
Message from the Director of Student Wellbeing

Last Friday 28th October was Teachers’ Day in Australia. The International World Teachers’ Day falls in the October holidays. In Australia it was decided the last Friday of October would be Teachers’ Day. It is a day when we thank our teachers for all they have done for us. It is incredible to think all Australians have in common, they have been taught by teachers. Every teacher is different and unique and there is something to be learnt from every teacher. Alex S the new School Captain wrote a beautiful message and gave it to each Mercy teacher saying thank you on behalf of the Mercy girls.

Dear Teachers
Australian Teachers’ Day
Thank you for sharing your wisdom everyday, building minds and futures, sparking interests and passions, always giving up your time and love and never giving up on us. We truly appreciate the special gift you have and thank you from our hearts.

Thank you Teachers
Love from all the Mercy girls

Listening to your Daughters

On Tuesday night I was invited to Sydney University Women’s College to hear Madonna King an award-winning journalist, author and commentator. She has long been known as the voice of current affairs in Queensland, heading the top rating current affairs program on the ABC for six years, and winning several national ABC awards for her journalism.

Madonna’s latest book, titled ‘Being Fourteen”, which will be released next April is about fourteen year old girls. Madonna interviewed 200 fourteen year olds, as well as teachers, Principals and parents about their daughters.

On Tuesday night Madonna spoke about the importance of conversation and talking to your daughter, as well as listening to your daughter without jumping in. If you have read any of my articles this year you would know this is something I have written about and feel passionate about. Having conversations with your daughter is also about setting up a relationship so your daughter is not afraid to talk to you about anything, try not to put many expectations on them because when they fail, they will not come to you for advice.

Madonna also spoke about social media. She feels the phones and computers are now your daughter’s pen and to remove or take it away, is difficult for your daughter to understand. However, I still stand firm about taking away the phones and computers for family time and definitely before bed. Teenagers need 8 to 10 hours sleep as shown in the diagram below. Phones and computers impede on sleeping patterns when used before going to bed, there needs to be some down time. An analogy Madonna used which you could use with your daughter was ‘would you allow a visitor to visit at 11pm at night, then why would you be talking to someone online at this time’. For this to work it takes clear boundaries and understanding of the reason why these family rules are put in place, meaning and purpose are important, as well as communication and listening.

Mrs G McDermott
Director of Student Wellbeing
Fairtrade is...
Fairtrade is an agreement that ensures that the product is sold at a stable price to provide the workers with decent working conditions and fair wages. It is also about the empowerment of farmers and workers around the world. For most Fairtrade products there is a Fairtrade minimum price to cover the sustainable cost of production (If the market price is higher, then producers will receive that price). By having this minimum price, farmers are given protection which ensures that they have a stable income.

How Fairtrade has a positive impact on the community:
Fairtrade helps support marginalised farmers and workers by giving them an adequate wage so that they can afford to continue working and care for their families. By having this agreement, workers and their community are ensured a fair income. The Fairtrade premium benefits their community by providing extra money to aid projects in the community.

Food products that are Fairtrade certified and where they can be purchased:

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<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Etiko, Bag People, Kathmandu</td>
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<td>Coffee</td>
<td>Oxfam, Coles, Nestle Australia, Sacred Grounds, Woolworths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>Coles, T2, Oxfam, Woolworths, Chai Tea, Qi Tea, Nereda</td>
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<td>Vanilla</td>
<td>Queen Vanilla Extract</td>
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<td>Ben and Jerrys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coconuts</td>
<td>Kai Elixirs</td>
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</table>

Mr J Bishop
Food Technology Teacher
Student News

Mercy Market Day – Year 9 Commerce working with primary students from O.L.D

Year 9 Commerce students have been working with Year 5 and 6 primary students to run their own business. The project involved writing a business plan, teaching the primary students about small business finance and selling their product. The Mercy Market day was fantastic and each business made some profit! Thank you to all the students and staff who helped make the day such a success. Here are some quotes from three students about the experience:

The experience opened our eyes to the business world – we experienced the pressure, the excitement and the buzz of it. Stalls included Spuddies, Frushie Co, Moo Moo, Photogenic and many more. The scatter of crowds and dishevelled lines expressed the good vibes for the day overall. There was excitement, stress and mess but it enlightened us all. We cannot wait for the next Market Day to come.

Market Day was a great experience as we got to do something we wouldn’t usually be able to do. Our group was called Lumiere Blanche which means white light. We sold handmade candles with three different scents – Strawberry ice lemonade, French Lavender and Caramel Vanilla. Before Market Day our group had to make the candles. This process was easy, fun and didn’t take very long. Each group had a budget of $100 to buy everything we needed to make our product. The $100 was made up of $50 from our group members and $50 borrowed from the school, which we had to pay back. Our group came across a few problems along the way, as when we were ordering the wax, scents and wicks, we did not realise how much shipping costs would be! On market Day, we sold all of our candles and ended up with cash sales of $208. Once we paid all of our expenses, including COGS, wages to the primary students and taxes (which went to charity), we still had some money left over for us to keep. Although there were a few problems along the way, it was all worth it in the end as the experience was amazing and I can’t wait to see what next year’s Commerce students come up with.

Our business, Frushie sold over 140 slushies and frappes. We also had three O.L. D. students helping us serve all the customers. Even though market Day was stressful, hot and hectic, and I was run off my feet doing order after order, we still had a lot of fun and the experience was great. This Commerce assignment was by far the most interesting and interactive marked assessment ever. It provided me a chance to work with my friends and run a stall for a day. The other stalls were also really interesting. It was cool to see all the hard work my classmates had done had paid off.

Mrs T Franklin
HSIE Teacher
Student News

News from the English Department

On Friday 28th October, Years 9 and 10 English students had the opportunity to watch a performance of *Macbeth*. Four actors from Bard on the Beach presented one of Shakespeare’s bloodiest plays, giving our students another insight into the themes of uncontrolled ambition, fate, the supernatural and revenge. The actors commented on how open our students were to asking questions that explored both the meaning of the play as well as the finer details and aspects of stage craft and performance.

This performance has capped off some varied learning opportunities outside of the classroom for our English students this year. Year 8 went to see The Bell Shakespeare Company’s version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at the Opera House last term and were excited to see the play they studied in class come to life on stage. During Book Week, Year 7 had the opportunity to listen to Australian author John Larkin tell them about his experiences of being a writer, while Year 10 students and Year 12 Extension 1 had a chance to hear author KJ Burke explain her approach to the writing process. Year 11 students also gained an insight into the novel *Jasper Jones*, which they read as part of their Area of Study, when Head of Design for Performance at NIDA, set designer Michael Scott-Mitchell, talked about the creative process that underpinned the stage design for the original Western Australian production of the play, adapted from the novel.

*Mrs T Munro*  
English Teacher
Student News

History Incursion Newsletter - Alessia I

Last Thursday, all of Year 9 had the privilege of watching an amazing re-enactment of a World War 1 soldier performed by the talented theatre-in-educator, Brett Hunt. He took us on a fascinating journey with great insights to what World War 1 soldiers would’ve experienced during and after the war, focussing on the devastating aspects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The fifty-minute play was very informative with a focus on the suffering of Australian soldiers in both Gallipoli and on the Western Front. The treacherous experiences and conditions that soldiers had to endure to protect our country were also constant themes in the presentation, adding a very emotional side to the play. To say that most of us were tearing up at the end would be an understatement.

Watching the presentation Mr Hunt performed was eye-opening and shocking, so hard to imagine that soldiers as young as us would endure the horrors of war. To watch Mr Hunt’s performance brought the war to life. No textbook can prepare you for the horrors until you witness such a re-enactment, just as Mr Hunt did. We walked away with a deeper understanding and respect for the commemoration of ANZAC Day, and we must never forget. Empathy, sorrow and pride is what this presentation conjured inside the Year 9s, and overall, the play was extraordinary, strengthening our honour and pride we hold for our Australian soldiers.
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

On October 19, a balmy Wednesday morning, 50 Mercy explorers met at Palm Beach wharf for the final Duke of Ed adventure for 2016. 35 Bronze students, 10 Gold girls and 5 staff arrived excited and geared up for encounters with hills, rocks, wallabies and whales.

We enjoyed a brief ferry ride then set up camp on the picturesque Pittwater shores of the Basin. As soon as the tents were up the wallabies descended, posing for photos and scoping out which tents to break in to when our backs were turned. And shortly they indeed turned, towards the Basin Track, otherwise known as the ‘Hill of Death”. After instructions, prayer and a few sound offs we faced the hill and slowly but surely trudged up it, with stops along the way to admire views, rest aching calves and explore side tracks. The two groups (speedy and scenic) met up for lunch at some intriguing Aboriginal carvings near West Head road before heading down Mackerel Track to a glorious view over Mackerel Beach and Barrenjoey headland. After a helpful First Aid session involving a stick impalement we thought we’d see if we could re-enact it by tripping and slipping down ‘Cuttler Track’ – a barely visible track covered in slippery pine needles ending in someone’s backyard. For some girls this was a highlight of their day, for others something they’d rather not revisit, but we all enjoyed the stories while actually applying our first aid skills to the scratches. We marched down Monash Road for our next thrill – rock hopping home!

I do love one of the journal entries that pondered whether they should have asked what rock hopping actually meant – she thought it was a tame hop over small rocks, rather than a challenging few hours of wading and climbing, weaving and helping each other over boulders, some covered with oyster shells and slippery algae. Yet again it was a highlight for many as they hadn’t encountered it before and wanted to go back for more. At least they returned to camp for some well-earned free time – resting in tents, chatting on the beach, writing log books or taking on the staff at cricket – before map work and dinner. As it grew dark there was the obligatory night walk and campfire tales/dodgy dad jokes before we all headed off for a sleep, interrupted only by wallabies invading girls’ tents at 4am (after it decided that trashing Mr Robbo’s tent that afternoon didn’t yield the required results.)

Day 2 started early for many, with tents packed up and breakfast polished off by 8, leaving time for rugby and rubbish clean up before Bronze departed on the ferry for a hike up Barrenjoey headland. It was challenging with dry sand and full packs but the views were worth it and they did earn an early mark. “I can only imagine what the public were thinking as the bus was overrun by an army of smelly, weary and ultimately proud young women carrying 12kg packs”. (Sarah B’s logbook entry).

However, the Golds still had two more days and so headed in the opposite direction, back up the ‘Hill of Death’ and along West Head road and Towlers Bay track in the drizzle. They did insist on lengthening the pain by missing the shortcut and taking wrong turns but eventually we arrived at the rustic Pittwater YHA, one of the most delightfully situated YHAs in the country. We ate lunch while planning our afternoon, which was then filled with exploring local tracks, deserted houses and shorelines. We raced back for showers, turns in the hammock, rice dinners and games in the lounge before a better night sleep.

We began Day 3 with gusto – collecting our kayaks and hitting the glittering waters by 7.30am. Mr Bishop thought the peg game would be fun, but it only meant that we trusted no one and so our team work took a bit of a dive. We still raced, laughed, explored and photographed our way around the bay before checking out of the YHA and catching a ferry to Church Point and the bus to
Narrabeen for a weary walk to our last campsite for a late lunch. That afternoon’s walking plans were mellowed by some injuries, but we still found time to explore headlands, do more First Aid, scale playground equipment and surprise some Year 12s jumping out of the bushes in their bikinis (as you do). We headed back to write log books and utilise different planning and research skills - hunting and gathering for dinner. We settled on local Thai for our final celebration and what a treat it was! The night was topped off by trivia and hitting the sack just as it started to rain (thankfully the thunder stayed away). The rain only stopped as we awoke the next day, giving us time to eat breakfast around our picnic table and pack up before the rain returned. The girls all went home to a weekend of rest (or probably schoolwork) while the staff were picked up by loved ones for some local fun.

Huge thanks and congrats to all the students for being such champs (despite some bruised legs and egos), to the Gold girls for planning their own adventure (well, most of it) and to the staff for keeping up morale. To old timers Mr Bishop, Mr Cuttler, Mr Robertson and our rookie Ms MacDonald – I couldn’t have done it without you (and slips, scary stories, dad jokes, cricketing skills, path finding, tent re-enactments, games.......!)

Ms Dorey & 49 other Mercy hikers

I’ll leave you with a few excerpts from the newly marked Bronze log books – this is why I think Duke of Ed is so worthwhile.

“Bronze Duke of Ed has been such a rewarding experience for me personally. I truly feel I have strengthened my teamwork, social skills, confidence, fitness and independence. I would 100% recommend it to anyone.” Eleanor B

“I have had such an incredible time participating in Duke of Ed. I feel that I have been given the opportunity to develop my leadership and preparation skills in an environment much less restrictive than a classroom can be.” Sarah B

“The hike was memorable and provided a great sense of achievement, which was a great learning experience and it depended solely on everyone working together – a skill that can be used throughout your life. I have learnt to resolve challenges and complications, and that simple things can be fun and memorable.” Arabella S

“Overall Duke of Ed was so much fun and I enjoyed every minute of it! Even though at times it was hard, it made me love it even more as I know I can push myself and prove that I can do it.” Tayla S

“The hike was definitely challenging and tiring at times, but I found it rewarding to know what I’ve completed. Doing the Duke of Edinburgh award this year has challenged me and taken me completely out of my comfort zone. I have learnt that I am capable of doing anything that I put my mind to. I am looking forward to Silver next year.” Natasha R

“Overall I have learnt a lot, pushed myself past my abilities and made everlasting friendships. I have learnt how to use a trangia, set up a tent, how to rock hop, communication and mapping skills and how to be more independent. I recommend Duke of Ed to all Year 8 and anyone else who plans to do it (and even those not planning to. I’ll definitely do Silver.” Marie D
Duke of Edinburgh..continued
Parent News

Digital Citizenship & Cybersafety Education for Parents

Parents of children in systemic schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay are invited to join a free online Digital Citizenship and Cybersafety Education webinar that will be held from 8:00 pm – 8:40 pm on Wednesday 23rd November 2016.

The webinar will be hosted online by the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Broken Bay and will be facilitated by Greg Gebhart from the Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner.

**Time:** 8:00 – 8:40 pm

**Date:** Wednesday 23rd November 2016

**Technical Requirements:** Any internet enabled device

**Registration:** Register to attend the webinar at [https://goo.gl/dvqzXb](https://goo.gl/dvqzXb) before 8:00pm 23rd November 2016

Download the free Parent’s Guide to Online Safety from the Office of the Children’s eSafety Commissioner at [https://goo.gl/k5kCHD](https://goo.gl/k5kCHD) or the free Parenting Online Infographic at [https://goo.gl/xDO4Pl](https://goo.gl/xDO4Pl)
School Student Transport Scheme
Applications open 10 October 2016

From Monday 10 October 2016, parents, guardians and students over 16 years, will be able to apply for a 2017 School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) travel pass by visiting www.transportnsw.info/school-students

Information for parents and students
School travel passes only need to be updated when a student:
- changes address, or
- changes school or campus.

A new application is required when:
- applying for an SSTS pass for the first time,
- enrolling in Kindergarten,
- progressing from Year 2 to Year 3,
- progressing from Year 6 to Year 7, or
- requesting an additional pass as a result of a new shared parental responsibility situation.

For more information on planning your school travel, visit www.transportnsw.info or contact your local operator.

Passes for 2017 travel
Opal network: Please remind ALL your students to keep their School Opal cards for travel in 2017. These cards will be automatically deactivated for school holidays and then reactivated for school travel in term one. Students’ current School Opal cards can be updated with changes of school, home address or operator.

Rural and regional travel: Students travelling with operator-issued passes will receive a new pass in the new school year.
Parent News

Parent Gathering – Term 4

It was a lovely, yet tiny gathering on Wednesday night at The Willoughby Hotel.

Year 7 (2017) Information Evening

Thank you to the parents of Year 9 students who have volunteered to help with this function.

Phillipa Sobb

President P & F
perrysobb@gmail.com
0411 429 629

HELP US CREATE A SUSTAINABLE GARDEN

We are seeking donations for plants, soil, irrigation equipment to create a sustainable garden.

If you are able to donate any items or alternatively want to donate money please contact
nicole.clancy@dbb.catholic.edu.au | 9419 2890
Canteen Roster

If you are unable to attend Canteen on your rostered day please try and swap with another volunteer.

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CAFE NEWS

NEW PRODUCTS - **GLUTEN FREE** Pies 2 varieties. These new products are now available at the canteen but must be ordered at Recess for your lunch requirements.

**Curry Vegetable Pie** - tender medley of vegetable in an authentic creamy coconut sauce and carefully selected curry spices. This product also suitable for a meat free choice. This is also a great way of getting nearly 2 serves of vegetables in your diet.

**Beef Pie** - A traditional beef pie and gravy a great way to warm up on a cold day.

Toasted Sandwiches are also a great way to warm up on a cold day only $3.00, these are only available on request so put in a lunch order at recess.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please help us to serve your daughters!

Volunteering at the canteen gives you the opportunity to meet other parents, your daughter’s classmates also to put a face to a name of a teacher.

No previous experience required and tasks are very simple.

We welcome fathers, mothers, carers and grandparents. If you can help in anyway please contact us ASAP 9419 2890.

Thank you

Anna, Angela and Nancy