Dear Parents

I hope all mothers, grandmothers, step mothers and carers had a wonderful Mothers’ Day last Sunday. We had the opportunity to show our appreciation for all the mother figures in the lives of the students at St Paul’s through liturgy last Friday. Thank you to all who were able to attend.

Our Mothers’ Day stall was also a great success. This P&F initiative raised $1046. Our thanks go to Bec Kennedy, the coordinator of this fundraiser, and to Lisa Bartley and Anna Pirillo who came to assist with the management of the stall on the day students came to make their purchases. Your generosity with gift donations was overwhelming. Thank you to all who contributed.

It’s with great pleasure that we welcome three new families to St Paul’s school. Braith Edmunds (Kinder), Noah Thrift (Year 1) and Stella Arnold (Year 5) have all settled in well. We have very limited vacancies in Kindergarten for 2015 so please ensure all family, friends and neighbors who may be considering St Paul’s as their school of choice to please submit an enrolment form as soon as possible. Letters providing interview times, and then subsequently letters of acceptance will begin to be disseminated by the end of this term.

Finally, I ask all families to carefully read instructions for the download of the new phone app and install it as soon as possible. All notifications will now be made through this app. These instructions can be found as part of this bulletin.

Best wishes

W. McInnes-Fogg (Principal)

PUPIL FREE DAY

Parents are reminded that Friday 30 May is a pupil free day. There will be no supervision available at the school on this day. Staff will be at the Sydney Town Hall attending a one day conference on the Mental Health and Well Being of Young People. A number of workshops will focus on Autism, Internet Addiction, Self Esteem, Bullying, Anxiety and the Impact of Technology on the Developing Brain. Wellbeing of students is an annual focus priority as the number of students experiencing social difficulties in a variety of areas increases each year. I look forward to sharing relevant information from this conference with the parent community.
SCHOOL FEES
All accounts have now been sent home. Please ensure that fees are paid up by the end of term. Those with outstanding accounts will be contacted by mail or by the Catholic Schools Office. Any parent experiencing temporary financial difficulty is encouraged to make an appointment so an agreeable solution can be established.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS
You have two weeks to purchase the Entertainment Book for 2014-15. This publication is filled with vouchers offering great savings in restaurants, accommodation and many forms of entertainment. Parents can ring Debbie and make payment through their credit card. Many of you have multiple orders for places of work or for family and friends. Please ensure these orders are finalised as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

PARISH – AUSTRALIA’S BIGGEST MORNING TEA
The MacKillop Craft Group will be hosting a Biggest Morning Tea for Cancer Research on Tuesday 27 May at the Gateshead Church Hall from 10.00am till 12.00noon. The Parish Craft Group supports the school consistently throughout the year and it would be wonderful if parents could return this support in a small way by attending this function.

WHAT’S ON
Week 4
 Tues. 20 May  NSW Uni Computer Skills Test
                 Knights Knockout (Opens)
 Wed. 21 May  Year 6 Leadership Day for Councillors and Sport Captains
 Thurs. 22 May  Joey League

Week 5
 Mon. 26 May  10.00am Parish Biggest Morning Tea
 Wed. 28 May  9.00am St Paul’s School Biggest Morning Tea
                 Primary Principals’ Assembly Day
 Thurs.29 May  Knights Knockout (Under 10’s)
                 Year 5 Excursion – Reptile Park
 Fri.  30 May  PUPIL FREE DAY

WALKATHON
Our Walkathon Fundraiser will be held on Friday 6 June. Sponsor sheet forms, which include a selection of prizes that can be won, have been sent home to all families. Students are asked to collect donations per lap walked, with each lap taking approximately 25 minutes. Parent volunteers are needed on the day at stopping points along the street, as well as assist at the water stations. The route is extremely safe and every precaution is being taken to maintain this safety. If you can assist please contact Meg Smith, Assistant Principal. All money raised will go towards the purchase of a data projector and a smartboard for our school library.

UNIFORM ORDERS
All items available from our school’s Uniform Shop are sold with no profit for the school. It is simply a service provided to make things easier for our families. However, all stocked items must have a deposit paid at the time of ordering as a large amount of stock is not kept on site. This means you must place your orders punctually when the order forms for each season are sent home. Your only other option will be to access Lowes at Charlestown Square and pay a much higher price for each item of clothing purchased. The Uniform Shop is situated in the school’s canteen.
NATIONALLY CONSISTENT COLLECTION OF DATA
Our school is participating in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (Data Collection). This Data Collection is taking place in Catholic, Government and Independent Schools across Australia, and will provide valuable information about supports required for a broad group of students. This will enable Australian and State governments to better target support and resources in schools. This in turn will help schools give students with disability the support they need.

The Data Collection is not limited to students with diagnosed disabilities. It uses a very broad definition of disability, taken from the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Disability Standards for Education 2005, which describe a broad range of health and learning conditions for which schools are required to provide “reasonable adjustments” to support students to participate on the same basis as other students.

The Data Collection will take place every year and will commence in Term 2 2014. We are in the process of identifying students for whom we make adjustments and will be in contact with you to discuss the adjustments we are making for your child if he/she is part of the identified group. No personal or identifying information about any student will be included.

Parents will have the right to decide whether or not they wish their child’s information to be included in the national reporting activity. Permission forms will be sent home before this process commences at St Paul’s school.

VOLUNTEERS
At St Paul’s we have many parents, grandparents and carers who are volunteers at different times and for different reasons. The Uniform Shop, Car Park and Canteen are just some of these areas. It always a sad and disappointing situation when one of these volunteers is treated with disrespect by another adult. Not only is this a bad example for students, it is also unfair for a volunteer to be upset or embarrassed by the way they have been spoken to. Please come and see me if you have an issue with any person or any situation.

NEW PHONE APP
St Paul’s has changed to Skoolbag as the preferred App. This is an Australian program and therefore times and dates will be correct. Previously messages were shortened and android phones did not always receive notifications. Skoolbag works efficiently on both smart phones and smart devices such as iPads and Android tablets.
Parents are encouraged to use this app to let us know if your child is ill and will be absent from school. School events, bulletins, term calendars and important notifications are all sent to parents via this app. Reminders of upcoming events, in particular, are beneficial to parents. This means much paper usage has been eliminated as hard copies of most information is no longer sent home.
To access Skoolbag, firstly delete the previous app. Then go into your App Store, type in St Paul’s Gateshead Skoolbag and install as directed. Please ring Debbie if you need assistance.

BIRTH, BAPTISMAL and IMMUNISATION CERTIFICATES
A review of missing forms is almost complete. Thank you to all parents who have provided the missing information on request. Your application is not complete unless birth and immunization records are provided. If your child has been christened a Catholic, then a baptismal certificate is also needed. If you have been contacted about missing forms, please make a concentrated effort to supply us with the missing information.
EASTLAKES FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE
Eastlakes Family Support Service at Gateshead offers lots of parenting skills, programs and support as well as group programs for children. One on one family counselling is also available at no charge.
Parents needing assistance in any way are asked to call 4943 9255 to make an appointment.
Parents may also use the drop in time between 9.00am and 1.00pm on weekdays and discuss their situation with a worker on duty. This service has been associated with St Paul’s for a number of years and is highly recommended.

STUDENT ABSENCES
Parents are reminded that all student absences must be explained within seven days. Late notes cannot be accepted and the child must be marked as an Unexplained Absence. You may email, phone, write or text using the school app to make the notification.
Any student who has missed 30 days of school, and this does not have to be sequential, in a 100 day period or two terms, will be investigated. This will involve a conference with parents, Principal and the Assistant Director.
If your child is absent for three or more school days, due to illness, a doctor’s certificate must be provided upon their return to school.
Parents are also reminded that they must apply for an exemption from school if they are planning a family holiday for more than 10 days. An application form is available from the school office and an exemption form issued once details are recorded.
These legislative changes have been in force for some time and must be adhered to at all times. Please remember all school attendance rolls are legal documents which are kept at the school until the student is 25 years of age and can be subpoenaed at any time.

CANTEEN ROSTER
Week 4
Mon. 19 May    Christine Leyshon    Amber Charman
Tues. 20 May   Rhiannon Newby     Kylie Delaney
Wed. 21 May    Melissa Archer     Ashley Fraser     Janine Fenton
Thurs.22 May   Josie Pirillo      Julie Clifford     Michelle D’Amico
Fri.    23 May    Erica Keating    Julie Fox    Nedine Harland

Week 5
Mon. 26 May    Jill White         Marilyn Goodrum    Maxine Fraser
Tues. 27 May   Jasmine Johns      Anne Johns        Cath Anstee
Wed. 28 May    Nat Sharkey       Anne Pritchard
Thurs.29 May   Felicity Hynes     Kellie Harrison
Fri.    30 May    PUPIL FREE DAY – No Canteen

HUNTER VALLEY MARSHALL ARTS CENTRE
The Hunter Valley Martial Art centre is situated on Hillsborough Rd. Students can access the centre for a month of classes which is eight lessons, and also receive a karate uniform. The cost is $99 which goes entirely to the P&F as a donation.
The Martial Arts centre specializes in teaching self defence awareness and assertiveness to children, as well as promoting the life skills of respect, honesty, confidence and self control.
There are programs for 3-5 year old (Kindymites), 6-8 year old (Dynamites), 9 – 14 year old (Dragons) as well as Adult programs.
This offer is only available for the month of May so please make contact immediately if you are interested. The e-mail address is sales@huntermartialarts.com.au