

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This week I have included in this newsletter a link to a website titled. ['Understood'](#) which has a number of articles on Focus.

I found this a very interesting topic as I have noticed for a number of years now that children these days have the capacity to continually 'flit' from one device to the other at incredible speed. Surfing channels on TV is another version of this impulse to continually take small grabs of information. Parents of high school children often comment on how they spend a significant period of their spare time on their devices, sometimes to the exclusion of family discussion and focusing on the people around them. I know that in my extended family the young members can watch TV at the same time as working on their laptops, as well as texting friends, checking out Instagram and posting in multiple social media channels - all at the same time. The question is - has this effected their ability to focus?

I think that we are well past the point of denying our children access to devices, especially in the teenage years, as this will often lead to social isolation and prevent them experiencing the many advantages of owning and using Information and Communication Technology. I know that I would not know myself without my laptop and smartphone as it has assisted me to manage my work and personal life in immeasurable ways.

As expressed in the website a child's ability to focus depends on their age as well as their personality and interests. At school we notice that some children have difficulty focusing on one task for a prolonged period of time. An interesting observation I would like to share is that children do not seem to lack an ability to focus whilst they are on their devices. In fact they usually get into a type of 'numb zone' oblivious to what is going on around them. There are an increasing number of research projects looking at the importance of focus as a life skill and as you can imagine a person's ability to focus is becoming an accurate predictor of success.

On the the above mentioned website a few tips to assist children to focus include:

Make sure they're actively listening.

Help kids focus by asking them to repeat back what you say. Then, follow up and make sure they remember it.

Remove distractions.

Turn off the TV or go to a quiet area away from other people who are talking. Get rid of clutter in a work space. Or have kids sit away from the window when they work.

Get focused through mindfulness

Mindfulness exercises and deep breathing are great for focus. They help people keep their thoughts from drifting — before or during a task.

Ask what would help.

Some people focus better when they're moving or standing. Others find it easier when they listen to music. Ask what works for them.

Try using a fidget.

Having something to fidget with, like a stress ball, can actually help some kids focus. For others, though, it's a distraction. So keep an eye on whether it's helpful or making it harder to focus.

Use a signal to get them back.

To refocus kids when their mind wanders, come up with a signal they'll recognize. It could be a specific word or a gesture, like touching your ear.

Added to these ideas, carefully monitoring device use is a very important part of managing focus. Hopefully the whole family will benefit from device free time in the family on a regular basis.

God bless you and your family

Bernadette Fabri.

Principal

2022 - Semester 1 SRC's

SRC Elections for Semester One,

Congratulations to these students who have been voted as SRC's. These children will receive their blessed badges this Friday.

Class	SRC's Name	Class	SRC's Name
KA	Boy: Elias Saab Girl: Isabelle Kazzi	KM	Boy: Sarkis Youssef Girl: Jacqueline Ndaira
1C	Boy: William Bazouni Girl: Grace Wehbe	1S	Boy: Joshua Sahyoun Girl: Hannah Wehbe
2M	Boy: Jamie Chiha Girl: Rebecca Black	2Y	Boy: George Bazouni Girl: Evie Grohs
3L	Boy: Noah Abu-Ali Girl: Olivia Rizk	3T	Boy: Jude Hudson Girl: Mariette Wakim
4B	Boy: Benjamin Kalouche Girl: Jasmine Rizk	4G	Boy: Michael Sunwar Girl: Araminta Jackson
5C	Boy: Zachary Aguilera Girl: Chloe Vella	5T	Boy: Isaac Wehbe Girl: Alessandra DeGuzman

These students have been nominated by their peers because they believe they have the qualities demonstrated by Catherine McAuley who was inspired by Jesus in the Gospels.

On completion of their roles as SRC, students will be presented with a certificate and they will keep their badges. The Student Representative Council member should demonstrate the following qualities which was demonstrated by Catherine McAuley who was inspired by Jesus in the Gospels :

Be Passionate

- Their positive spirit is infectious, both throughout the SRC and with the entire student body.
- They have a clear sense of purpose about what it means to represent all students and are great at motivating others to complete a task. Be Creative Thinkers
- They can look at issues and problems from different perspectives.

Be Committed

- They are willing to see things through to completion, no matter how challenging the task may be.

Be Team players

- They know that to succeed requires a team effort and are great at working with others.

TIPS FOR HOME READING

Establish a home reading routine. Read aloud with your children everyday. Ten minutes for each child around a book of his/her choice. If English is your second language, read in your home language. If you lack confidence in reading aloud, the fact that you are reading with your child is what matters. Talk about the illustrations and contribute where you can. Share your excitement for reading and this will be the model your child will adopt.



https://www.petaa.edu.au/w/teaching_resources/parents_guide.aspx

Diocesan Gala Days - Expression of Interest

Over the past years our school has been able to enter Primary students in both Soccer and Touch Footy Gala Days. In order to allow as many interested students as possible to take part we are asking for Expressions of Interest (EOI). Each student will nominate their preference for either Soccer or Touch. Students can nominate a second choice should we need additional numbers to fill teams. Teams will then be formed based on the EOI. Once teams are formed it will be up to the parents/carers of each team member to organise a manager and a referee. **If teams cannot name a manager and a referee the team will need to be withdrawn.**

Gala days are as follows:

Soccer

Stage 3 (Year 5 & 6) Girls @ Jamison Park Penrith	Wednesday 25th May 2022
Stage 3 (Year 5 & 6) Boys @ Jamison Park Penrith	Wednesday 15th June 2022
Stage 2 (Year 3 & 4) Boys & Girls @ Jamison Park Penrith	Tuesday 21st July 2022

Touch Football

Stage 3 (Year 5 & 6) Boys & Girls @ The Kingsway St Marys	Friday 8th April, 2022 or 29th July, 2022
Stage 2 (Year 3 & 4) Boys & Girls @ The Kingsway St Marys	Friday, 9th September, 2022

Students would need to be available on the days of the relevant Gala Day if they wish to nominate.

Please complete the google form sent out via Compass Parent Portal on 15/2/22, by Friday **25th February, 2022**, alternatively your child can collect a note from the office.

No entries can be accepted after this date.

This event is subject to change depending on the NSW Health and CEDP guidelines at the time of the event schedule.

Bernadette Carroll
Sport Coordinator

St Patrick's Cross Country



It is once again time for our St Patrick's Cross Country event. This year our Cross Country will again be held for **RUNNERS ONLY**. Please complete the google form sent out via Compass Parent Portal on 15/2/22, if your child will be competitively running in this year's RUNNERS ONLY Cross Country event.

Event Details

Date: Wednesday 9th March, 2022
Time: 9.30am – 11.00am Cross Country for RUNNERS ONLY from 8yrs in 2022 and up.
Venue: Cattle Paddock, Parramatta Park
Wear: School sports uniform, running shoes and hat

Distance: 8,9 & 10yr olds = 2km 11,12 & 13yr olds = 3km

Note: Please ensure your child is able to complete the required running distance without stopping for a break before deciding if they should enter this event. Some students may need to practise to get a better understanding of just how difficult this event can be.

Bernadette Carroll

Sports Coordinator

Medical Updates

As the children return to school it is very important that students with medical conditions such as Asthma and Anaphylaxis return with their medication.

Please check the expiry dates on your child's medication and ensure it is within the date. If your child requires Claratyne or Zyrtec as part of their anaphylaxis plan be aware the school does not stock this and you are responsible for including it in their bag.

It may be a timely reminder to also ensure their Asthma Plans and Anaphylaxis Plans have been updated in the previous 12 months.

Regards

Mrs Jones



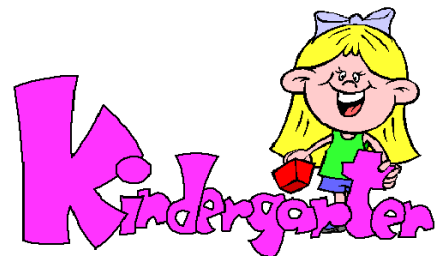
School Counsellor

Trudy Ricketts is our school-based counsellor available for students and their families on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. With a Masters and Post-Graduate Diploma in Educational Psychology, Trudy is a registered psychologist who specialises in collaborative and solution-focused approaches to help children and their families build on strengths to manage a range of difficulties. This is a confidential service and is part of our whole school pastoral care approach to assist the emotional wellbeing of students.

Trudy has been consulting in the Parramatta Diocese since 2006, and in other health/education settings prior to that, including the Diocese of Broken Bay, and the Starship Children’s Hospital in Auckland, NZ. She is married with two children (one in primary and one in high school), and her family includes a Labrador and two Guinea Pigs.

If you would like further information about student counselling, please contact Miss Fabri, Mrs Standing, or your classroom teacher.

ENROLMENTS FOR 2023
KINDERGARTEN ARE NOW OPEN



Enrolment packs for Kindergarten 2023 are available as follows:

- Packs can be sent home with your eldest child. Please send an email to stpatricksparra@parra.catholic.edu.au with the subject line Kindergarten 2023 Enrolment. **Please include your K2023 child's name and DOB**
- Enrolment forms are also available from the school between the hours of 9am -3pm Monday to Friday.
- The enrolment forms can be downloaded from our website: <https://www.stpatsparra.catholic.edu.au>

As we are still working under COVID restrictions you are able to email the application through to us at stpatricksparra@parra.catholic.edu.au , along with any supporting documents. Please retain the original application form as you will be required to submit that at a later date.

Enrolment forms are required to be returned by 31st March 2021.

Term Dates

Term 1 - Friday 28th January to Friday 8th April

Term 2 - Tuesday 26th April - Friday 1st July

Term 3 - Monday 18th July - Friday 23rd September

Term 4 - Monday 10th October - Tuesday 20th December

** Please note: Every year the NSW Government allocates 6 days to each school to be used for Staff Professional Development. These can be used for the gathering of essential data on students

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY DATES

Day 1 Friday 28th January 2022

Day 2 Monday 30th January 2022

Day 3 TBC

Day 4 TBC

Day 5 TBC

Day 6 Tuesday 20th December 2022

SDD's will be communicated to you as soon as possible when confirmed



Facebook @stpatricksparramatta.

St Patrick's Primary School enjoys sharing the great things that happen at our school via our official School FACEBOOK page. A copy of the User Policy relating to our page, can be found

through this [link](#).

Our Facebook page is for promoting a sense of community and is used to provide families with information about past events and activities and positive achievements within our school. The page doesn't replace regular communication modes, rather, it will communicate through social media many of the interesting, exciting, fun and terrific learning of our students, giving you the chance to interact with "likes" and comments.

To find our page search for @stpatricksparramatta.

We look forward to sharing the great learning of our students this year.

[CONVERSATION STARTERS ABOUT CYBER SAFETY \(link\)](#)

These questions are designed to be used in a family to start everyday conversations about online safety. The questions cover topics such as identifying online risks, using technology safely and reporting unsafe behaviour. Use them together with the information at eSafety kids, and empower kids to take control of their online experiences.

Can other people see pictures you post of me online?

Your personal information is like the key to your house

When you are online, information like your full name, date of birth, contact information and where you live are like the keys to your house. Be careful with them!

[eSafety Day](#)

Parent Webinar - <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/webinars>

2022 dates (Australian Eastern Daylight Time)

Wednesday 23 February 7.30 to 8.30 pm

Follow the link register for the upcoming parent webinars. This term the webinar will offer tips about how to support children 5-12 while they socialise, learn and have fun on line.

Funeral Details for Mrs Margarita Samar, Mother of Lara Samar (6P) and ex student Zoe Samar.



Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers.

Date: Saturday, 19th February 2022

Viewing: 12:15pm

Mass: 1:00pm

Venue: Holy Family Church

Address: Lot 32 Willowdene Avenue, Luddenham



'I encourage everyone to be committed to the cause of peace and to respond concretely to the problems and needs of the least, the poor and the defenceless. Our resolve is to walk side by side, "brothers and sisters all", in order to be effective artisans of peace and justice, in the harmony of differences and with respect for the identity of each. Sisters and brothers, let us press forward on this path of fraternity!'

[Pope Francis](#)

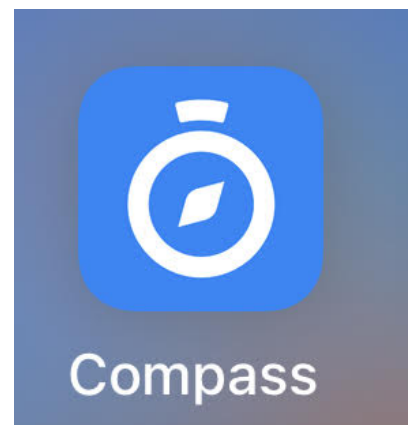
Compass Parent Portal

Have you had a chance to download our new Compass Parent Portal App?

Thank you to the many parents who have logged onto our new Compass Parent Portal. If you require your password to be resent or you need your username please email the school at stpatricksparra@parra.catholic.edu.au.

Compass will be our primary communication tool that will facilitate effective communication between home and school. Using the Compass Parent Portal you will be able to:

- Be informed of important updates, events and reminders
- View your child's timetable
- Review your child's attendance
- Provide explanations for periods of absence
- Update your contact details
- Book Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences
- Download Semester Reports



 SCHOLASTIC

Book Club

Dear Parent,

The best gift any parent can give a child is the love of books and the joy and benefits of independent reading for fun. Children who read at home, or are read to, have a head start on reading success in school.

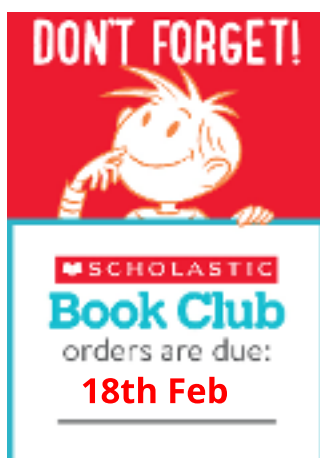
Our class is participating in **Scholastic Book Club** this year. Up to twice a term, during the school year, I will send home a Club catalogue with a different selection of books offered for all ages.

You'll find award-winning books and bestsellers, as well as old and new favourites. I recommend them because the books span a wide range of children's reading levels and interests and because they are inexpensive (some books cost as little as \$2).

It is easy to order. The **Book Club LOOP** platform for parents allows you to pay by credit card. Your child's order is submitted directly to school safe and sound and the books will be delivered to class. You can place your child's order at [scholastic.com.au/LOOP](https://www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP) or using the **LOOP** app, which can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play.

Owning your own books is something special! I hope that you will encourage your child to order books this year. Each order helps earn free books and teaching materials for our classroom, however there is never any obligation to order. I know of no better way to encourage reading than to allow children to choose the books they want to read.

Sincerely,
Mrs Jones



We do not accept any cash and all orders must be placed through the LOOP platform. If you need help ordering books please come into the office and see Mrs Jones

SCHOOL WELL-BEING COUNSELLING SERVICE

The wellbeing of children and young people in Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta schools is of paramount importance. A sense of well-being and connectedness in schools promotes optimal development of the person and contributes to academic success.

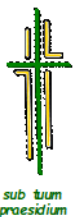
Access to counselling services can be made by contacting your child's classroom teacher or Ms Fabri, who will then put forward a referral. Mrs Ricketts will then contact you for further information. Further details can be found in previous newsletters.

FEEDBACK and COMPLAINTS

St Patrick's Parramatta staff always welcome feedback and ideas from the parent community. If you have any feedback, concerns or complaints please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher, Mrs Standing (behaviour) or Miss Fabri through the school office (8832 4600), school email address stpatsricksparra@parra.catholic.edu.au, or through Skoolbag App. The school follows the CEDP Complaints Handling Policy.

<https://www.parra.catholic.edu.au/About-Us/Policy-Central>

For the telecast of Weekend mass follow this link:
[St. Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta - Facebook](#)



Our **VISION** is to be a child centred faith community within an innovative, interactive learning environment.

Our **MISSION** is to –

Live out the Gospel Values in a visibly Catholic tradition

Nurture students for Christian Leadership

Create a range of learning experiences which allow children to progress at their own level

Assist our students to develop into independent thinkers with a deep sense of responsibility and justice

Lead each individual towards reaching his/her potential

Generate a sense of community and compassion in which all

Experience belonging.

Opportunity for all

MASS TIMETABLE FOR ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL PARRAMATTA

Weekend Masses

Saturday 8.00am, 6.00pm (Vigil)

Sunday 8.00am, 9.30am (Family), 11.00am (Solemn), 6.00pm, 7.15pm (Arabic)

Weekday Masses

Mon to Fri 6.30am, 12.30pm Public Hol 8.00am

Pastoral Team

Dean & Administrator:

Very Rev Fr Robert Riedling

Assistant Priests:

Rev Chris del Rosario, Rev Chadi Ibrahim SDB

Parish Secretary:

Pat Preca

Sacramental Coordinator:

Meg Gale