Dear Parents & Carers,

Swimming Carnival
We are still coordinating a new date for the carnival. Hopefully the weather will be kinder to us next time.

Class selections
A great deal of thought, planning and research goes into choosing classes and teachers for each new year. Academic ability, personalities, friendship groups, previous combinations and previous teachers are all taken into account before finalising on the class for the year. If a parent has a particular reason for asking for a special provision for class selection (rather than personal preference) it is important that this is put in writing to the Principal prior to the Christmas holiday break and it will be considered.

Christmas Concert
Thursday 28th November, 2013
Our school concert is only two weeks away and rehearsals and auditions are well under way, so it's time to start thinking about costumes!

We like to keep things as stress-free as possible for mums, dads and carers at this busy time of year, so here are the themes for each year group and some suggestions for simple yet effective costumes…

Year Level
Theme Costume Ideas
Kinder, Year 1 and Year 2
  Prehistoric times Anything dinosaur!
  Cavemen/women outfits (think the Flintstones)
  Bones in hair, animal prints
  Tarzan-type outfits
Woolly mammoths (if you’re feeling brave) and sabre-toothed tigers
Year 3 and Year 4
  Under the sea Octopi are always easy
  Seaweed (crepe paper and cellophane is your best friend here)
  Starfish
  Mermaids
Deep sea divers
Year 5 and Year 6
  Outer space Aliens with lots of arms (use stuffed stockings)
  Flying saucers
  Robots (break out the foil and use ice cream containers for helmets)
  Space junk (raid the recycling)

Tami performing at the Mullum Show
Dear Parents

As the year is ending I would like to give a big thanks to all parents and students who participated in the Sacramental programs this year. It has been a joy and honour being part of your child's special day. Thank you also to the ladies who cooked food to support those in need at our school and community. Your generosity and time is truly a blessing and we are lucky to have you as part of our school community.

Upcoming events.

From the 11th of November to the 22nd of November we are collecting non-perishable items to give to people in need in our community. The thought is that your bring in food that you would like for Christmas. Please always check the date on the item as we cannot distribute food out of date. Baskets will be placed in each classroom for two weeks. On the 22nd of December we will present these baskets to our St Vincent De Paul Representative Sylvana Smith. Also if you would like to give a Christmas Present to a needy child in our community then please do not wrap the gift but hand it to the office there will be a special box. Your generosity this year has been amazing and I thank you in advance.

Thinking of 2014

A letter will be going out to the children who will be
* continuing their sacramental development
* starting their sacramental development or
* one parent has stated that they are Catholic on the enrolment form

This is to look at numbers for next year and support anyone with questions and information about the Religious Education programs at our school. If you do not receive a note and would like to talk about your child becoming a Catholic or continuing the sacraments, or just want to have a chat about your own faith development. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Amanda Bottle
Leader of Catechesis and Evangelisation
St John's Mullumbimby
abottle@lism.catholic.edu.au

A huge thanks to Lynette Kee for her driving force behind our eye-catching scarecrow at the Show last week

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Fitter Children achieve better literacy and numeracy

Schools with fitter children achieve better literacy and numeracy results, according to Australian research. The study by physiologist Dr Dick Telford, of the Australian National University, and colleagues, was published in a recent issue of the journal Pediatric Exercise Science. “A school that has, on average, high fitness levels will have, on average, higher literacy and numeracy levels,” says Telford.

Previous research in animals and humans has suggested greater fitness and physical activity leads to changes in the brain activity and better performance in cognitive tests and concentration. “It took scientists by surprise to a certain degree that there was a consistent relationship,” says Telford.

Telford and colleagues followed 800 children from age 8 to age 12 in 29 schools to see if physical fitness and activity affected academic performance. The study measured physical activity, physical fitness, and body fat percentage of each child. This was then compared to the children’s academic performance in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test.

The study found a relationship between academic performance and the fitness of the child, confirming findings from other studies. But, uniquely, this study found that the relationship between fitness and academic performance was particularly strong at the school level.

Tolerance: a vital ingredient for your child's success

Want your child to be successful way past the confines of the school gate? Then you need to make sure your child is tolerant of individual differences and accepting of children and adults who look and act differently to them. There’s no doubt that success in today’s world depends on the ability to understand, appreciate and work with others. The child who is open to differences is likely to have more opportunities in school, in business and in life in general.

Schools are diverse places
Walk into any school ground in Australia and you’ll witness diversity firsthand. You’re likely to see children from many different cultural, racial and family backgrounds. You’ll also see kids with different needs and diverse ways of expressing themselves. Some kids will wear their hearts on their sleeves, while others will be taciturn and quiet. Tolerant kids are accepting of these differences. They make friends with children and young people who may look and act differently to them.

Intolerance breeds bullying
Intolerance, or prejudice, is at the heart of a great deal of the bullying that occurs among children and young people. Kids who look and act differently or who are more isolated often experience bullying for no apparent reason other than the fact that they are ‘different’. Whole-hearted acceptance and even appreciation of differences is a preventative bullying measure that we can all support.

Tolerance starts at home
Kids learn attitudes such as tolerance from those around them. Children in primary school usually reflect the attitudes of their parents. While adolescents are strongly influenced by their peers, parental attitudes still have a significant impact on their attitudes to other people. In short, if you want your child to be accepting of differences – whether they are racial, cultural, behavioural or in sexual orientation – then make tolerance a family trait. Here’s how:

Help your child feel accepted, respected, and valued. When your child feels good about himself, he is more able to treat others respectfully.

Model acceptance. Kids learn what they live so make sure you welcome differences in others, and be sensitive to cultural or racial stereotypes. It also helps on a practical level to discuss prejudice and stereotypes when they occur in the media.

Challenge prejudice or narrow-minded views. Sometimes kids, knowingly or unknowingly, can say the cruellest things about others. As a parent respectfully remind your child or young person about the impact that a narrow view can have on his or her own behaviour as well as on those it may be directed towards. Intolerance of diversity is an attitude that parents should make a stand against.

Answer kids’ questions about differences honestly and respectfully. Teach your kids that it is acceptable to notice and discuss differences as long as it is done with respect.

Respect individual differences within your own family. Your ability to accept your children’s differing abilities, interests and styles will go a long way towards establishing an attitude of tolerance in the children themselves. By valuing the uniqueness of each member of your family you are teaching your kids to value the strengths in others, no matter how diverse. Modern Australia is such a wonderful culturally-rich place. This diversity is part of its magic. One way to make sure our children fully appreciate this richness is to fully embrace tolerance in everything we do.

Michael Gross parentingideas.com

Come and see our brilliant choir at the Mullum Music Festival!
Saturday 23rd 12.00 at the High School.
Special thanks to Jessie and Rochelle

Daniel Hend Art Exhibition
Human Nature Charity Exhibition
Uniting Church Dalley St
Mullumbimby
Thursday Nov 21-Sun Nov 24 11.00-11.45pm daily
The NEW strict parent - is this you?

‘Your parents are so strict’!

Some parents in years gone by wore the label of ‘strict’ parent like a badge of honour. It signified parents who were willing to stand their ground with kids.

Strictness was reserved for parents who put boundaries in place and made sure they were adhered to, such as being home on time, or not watching too much TV.

There’s a now a NEW definition for a ‘strict’ parent.

A ‘strict’ parent today is now someone who makes children do things for themselves and insists they help at home. They insist their children put their dirty clothes in the laundry, and maybe even wash their own clothes. They insist kids make their own lunches in secondary school. They insist that their kids set the meal table without giving them a cent in return.

‘Strict’ now refers to getting kids to help rather than placing restrictions on them.

Many parents tell me that they get funny looks when their children help them with the supermarket shopping. When their kids walk a kilometre home from sports or a leisure activity they are made to feel like neglectful parents. How bizarre!

New normal

The new parenting normal is for parents to do a lot for your kids, rather than kids do things for themselves. Anyone who strays from this new normal and develops real independence in their children can be made to feel guilty … because they are strict!

Nobody feels like doing chores, but tackling hard things such as doing chores when you don’t feel like it builds character.

It develops a bit of grit that kids can draw on later when they will really have to push against adversity.

Do less, not more

The job of parents is to make themselves redundant for their kids – not in a relational sense, but in a managerial sense.

There is nothing revolutionary about this idea. It’s been the aim of parents since the dawn of time. That means we spend a lot of time teaching kids self-help skills (now known as life skills), which are the ordinary gist of life.

These include teaching young children to tie their shoelaces and helping primary-aged kids to ask for what they want from adults. They also include coaching teenagers to negotiate their way safely on public transport and to problem-solve relational issues they may have with teachers at school.

These are not the activities of ‘strict’ parents. Rather they are the activities of parents who understand that one of their key roles is to equip kids to stand on their own two feet in the world outside the family home.

The fact is that the best place to do this is within the family. And the best time to start developing independence is from a young age … when kids are up for it developmentally.

Don’t wait until your children are 18 to develop self-help skills.

If you introduce self-help then, my bet is they won’t think you are strict … they’ll think you’ve been a soft touch all along and they’ll now battle you all the way!

But that’s a story for another day.

In the meantime, if the definition of ‘strict’ has changed then I urge you to be strict! Your kids will thank you … later on, when you’ve equipped them with the problem-solving and independence skills needed to negotiate the wider world without you. parentingide- as.com

Canteen News

Don’t forget to come along to our Canteen meeting next Tuesday at 7pm in the staff room. A chance to plan for 2014 and help our canteen operate smoothly.

Any donations of bananas or oranges gratefully received as the children love the banana smoothies and cut up frozen oranges.

A big thank you to Adam at Retravision for a substantial discount on our new popcorn machine.

Robyn Eden 0402758971

Next week is our last week of Junior Johnnies for 2013. A big thank you to Erin Moores for the fantastic work she has done with the children.