



Built on Faith, Knowledge, Respect

## SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

**Term 1 Week 4 2021**  
**Tuesday 16th February**

Rosary Park Catholic School  
 Station Street, Branxton NSW 2335

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*We acknowledge the Wonnarua people-the first custodians of this land*

### IMPORTANT DATES

**Weekly Mass Times: 6pm Saturday Branxton; 8am Sunday Greta.**

Feb		March	
Mon 15th	<b>Parent Information Night</b> (two sessions) from 5pm and 5.45pm	Mon 1st	<b>PUPIL FREE DAY</b> Vacation care available
Tues 16th	<b>ASC Swimming Carnival</b> (Maitland Pool)	Tues 2nd	<b>Kindergarten 2022</b> enrolments open
Wed 17th	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>	Wed 10th	<b>P &amp; F Meeting</b>
Fri 19th	Assembly for years 2-6 – Swimming medals only	Fri 19th	<b>Harmony Day and National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence</b> - wear orange to school
Wed 24th	Sallyanne at Catholic Schools Office-Director/Principal meeting	Wed 24th – Fri 26th	<b>NAPLAN Practice Tests</b> years 3 and 5
Thurs 25th	<b>Diocesan Swimming Carnival</b> (Lambton Pool)	April	
Fri 26th	First full school awards assembly for 2021 No parents permitted due to COVID restrictions	Thurs 1st	<b>Easter Liturgy</b> <b>LAST DAY OF TERM 1</b>

## Principal's Message

**Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.**

Mother Teresa

Dear Parents/Carers,

### **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (SIP) GOALS FOR 2021**

A significant focus for all diocesan schools is student growth and achievement. In terms of our learning agenda in 2021, Rosary Park will adopt evidence-based approaches to lift the performance of all students. Our focus encompasses three main areas.

1. Continued implementation of explicit reading comprehension strategies and vocabulary, expanding into the analysis of vocabulary in Maths.
2. Provide appropriate learning opportunities for students in Creative and Critical thinking
3. Develop and implement programs to enrich the Mercy Charism at Rosary Park

These initiatives are designed to identify and address specific need and will involve alternate methods of content delivery. Each term (three times a term) staff will be provided with release from class to analyse student data as a stage team and work together to plan and cater for student needs based on this data. So, you might hear your child say that they had a different teacher on class or they may comment that their class teacher didn't teach the class all day. This situation regularly arises when teachers are released for professional learning and for planning meetings. Professional learning for all teachers is essential to maximise impact on student learning and relies on implementing practices that have been shown to benefit students the most.

I thank you for your support of this practice, knowing that the teachers themselves have worked hard behind the scenes to plan for their release. They routinely prepare and programme work and keep the replacement teachers informed of regular practices and management strategies to ensure a smooth transition.

Clearly, ongoing professional learning promotes excellence. The consequent impact of this improvement is on student learning, student engagement in learning and student wellbeing- a goal well worth striving for.

As part of our School Improvement budget, the Catholic Schools Office has this year introduced Pedagogical Mentors (PMs) who will be used in the school to work with teachers in meetings and in their classrooms to embed our school goal of teaching reading and vocabulary. Janelle Dixon and Louise Kevin are continuing in the PM role this year. This is part of Rosary Park's involvement in the Catholic Schools Office's Leading Learning Collaborative working closely with Canadian educator Lynn Sharratt to improve students' learning outcomes.

### **Rosary Park Bushfire Survival Plan**

Our school is in a bushfire prone area. As a result, we have a clearly defined bushfire survival plan, attached to this newsletter. The plan has been developed in consultation with NSW Fire and Rescue, NSW Rural Fire Services, local Police and the Safety and Wellness team from the Catholic Diocese. Copies of this plan have been provided to these organisations.

As the plan outlines, it follows these principles in the event of a bushfire:

1. Evacuate.
2. Shelter onsite in the school hall.

3. Evacuation to St Nicholas Centre Branxton if we cannot remain in hall

4. Evacuation to Branxton Golf Club

It is important that you consider as part of this plan, how you would collect your child from Rosary Park at short notice, if this plan was to be enacted.

As part of this plan, the school follows a strict maintenance plan where surrounding scrub (Asset Protection Zone- outside of the school boundaries) is cleared annually as well as the guttering and downpipes. Arborists monitor trees on site on an annual basis as well as ongoing grounds maintenance to reduce undergrowth fuel load on the site.

Our school practices regular lockdown and evacuation procedures (every term), as well as visits from the local fire brigade. Children are also familiarised with fire safety through lessons in the Personal Development Health Physical Education Syllabus.

Thank you for taking the time to familiarise yourself with this document to prioritise the safety of all in our school community. It is important, in particular, that you give consideration as to how you would collect your child in the event of a bushfire evacuation.

### **School Routines**

As you are aware, (during 'normal times') we do have classes attend the parish masses at St Brigid's Church. This means that children are leaving the schools grounds to go to the church and on other rare occasions our children might access the grounds across the road from our school. This is considered a normal part of our school process. If you have any concerns about your child leaving the school grounds with teachers, please contact me.

### **Thank you**

We regularly speak with our children at Rosary Park about the importance of service- in giving back, particularly to those who are less fortunate than us.

Service is one of the key values (or pillars) of the Sisters of Mercy who founded our school in 1886. It is with pride then that we acknowledge the efforts of three Rosary Park students who in recent months have cut their hair off to assist those receiving cancer treatments to have wigs made. Elsa Gray in year 3 came up with the idea and raised \$1300 for Variety: Kids with Heart whilst Tyler and Kayne Standen recently cut their hair for the Leukaemia Foundation.

Thank you also to our year 6 2020 students and their families whose fundraising end of year gift of almost \$800 to our school is assisting us with the purchase of new sporting equipment.

### **Aspire**

Our primary children have been able to watch the video of the ASPIRE performance *The Pecking Order*, screened across classrooms last week. The creative flare displayed by all involved was quite spectacular! The students loved viewing the work of all students involved in the production of this musical. Aspire is a showcase of our Catholic Schools' creative talents in singing, music, dance, and drama. Children from year 5 are eligible to audition.

Leo Ramsay (Year 4) has been accepted into the Aspire choreography project that runs on 22nd & 23rd of February in Newcastle. Congratulations, Leo!

### **Helping Kids Thrive Online**

A one-hour webinar is available through the Council of Catholic School Parents and is suitable for parents and carers of children aged 5-12 years of age. This session will cover ideas to start the chat about harmful content, contact with strangers and on-line bullying as well as skills that young people

need to protect themselves online. 12.30 – 1.30pm Thursday 25th March. Register at <https://ccsp.catholic.edu.au/webinar>

### **2021 School Fees**

In coming days, you will receive a letter from the Director of Schools explaining the change to Annual Billing of School Fees in 2021. The total School Fees for the year will be billed and sent home and Fee Payers will need to nominate their payment strategy to meet this commitment. Any families who wish to seek assistance with their fees will need to make an appointment to see the Principal to discuss their situation. If you are a holder of a Health Care Card and you have not already provided a copy to the office and filled in the accompanying paperwork please do so asap.

### **Change to Volunteering at School**

The procedure for volunteering at schools in the Diocese is changing. All volunteers will be required to have a National Police Check (NPC) registered and full clearance to be approved by the Catholic Schools Office. In the latest Volunteer Induction Handbook (version 1.5), there is a Statutory Screening Selection Tool for Volunteers in Schools. Each volunteer is required to complete this form which will determine if a Working with Children's Check is required (now only required for overnight camps if you are a close relative). The instructions regarding identification and obtaining the NPC have also changed and this is also included in the handbook. The handbook is available on Compass or from Admin office.

### **Attendance**

***All children should be at school on time each day and remain until the conclusion of lessons in the afternoon.*** This ensures a consistent routine for students which helps children feel secure, as well as allowing children to learn and grow. We ask that you try to limit appointments through the school day, we understand that doctors, dentists and specialist appointments can be difficult to organise out of school hours. These appointments are important for your child to attend. However, parents sometimes sign their children out early to go to the hairdresser or because it is their child's birthday, these need to be avoided. Frequent lateness should also be avoided, as children need to get into a good routine each morning. If you are having difficulty getting your child to school on time, please talk to their class teacher.

### **Complaints Resolution and Feedback page for Parents and Carers**

The Parents and Carers Complaints Resolution and Feedback information page for the CSO can be found at <https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/complaints-resolution-feedback>. Copies of the brochure are available from our office.

The webpage holds information regarding the escalation process for complaints, the appropriate policy and procedures and the online complaints form. The online complaint form is an editable PDF document.

Parents and members of the school community can access the online complaint form should you wish to escalate a complaint through to the CSO for consideration. Alternatively, you can contact 02 4979 1127 and speak to the Parent Liaison team.

### **Social Media**

Our newsletter, our school website and Compass are the main forms of communication between home and school. Our school does not moderate or endorse any school social media. Please ensure you have your log in for Compass as we regularly send reminders about school events.

While social media and emails are great ways to keep in touch, using them to criticise or make negative comments about others is dangerous and is not in keeping with the values we teach and live by in our Catholic Schools.

The use of social media by parents or carers to engage in abusive or inflammatory remarks about staff or the school can have serious legal implications. If comments are made about the school, the school can also act, which may include responsible persons being excluded from the school.

Please remember that you cannot share photos on social media that include children other than your own. If you are setting up a class or grade parent Facebook page you are not permitted to include the name of the school in naming this page.

In your child's enrolment form, you indicated whether you gave permission for your child to be photographed or videoed for school and diocesan advertisements and promotion in newsletters. Please contact your child's teacher as soon as possible **if you do not give permission** for your child to be photographed or videoed.

### **Congratulations**

Congratulations to Caitlyn Leal and her husband Cameron on the birth of their baby boy, Lennox on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February.

### **Working Together**

Rosary Park has over 320 students with many more parents. We also have around 40 staff members. This makes us a large and growing community! It is wonderful when we can all come together for community events and celebrations. Inevitably at times, things will go wrong. To effectively work together in the best interests of the children, we need to always maintain open, respectful and supportive relationships. If at any time, you have concerns for your child, their Class Teacher should always be your first point of contact. As your child's Class Teacher is with them most of the time when they are at school, usually issues can be quickly resolved at this level. If a problem continues after discussing it with your child's class teacher, the next step would be contact either myself or Louise Kevin (Assistant Principal).

Teachers will be offering parents interviews during weeks 9 and 10 of this term. I would encourage you to make a time to discuss your child's learning with their teacher as we work together for the best outcomes for our children.

Kind regards,

Sallyanne Stanbridge (Principal)

## **Assistant Principal**

### **Reading**

As part of our School Improvement Plan for 2021 Reading is a priority and focus from Kinder to Year 6. Parents and caregivers have a very important role to play in their child's literacy development both before and after they start school. The foundations of literacy – phonological awareness, vocabulary and oral language – begin to develop in the early years of life, before children begin formal reading instruction at school.

A child's experiences and home environment during their early years of life have a strong and measurable effect on their literacy skills before they reach the classroom. Many studies indicate that children's emergent literacy skills significantly predict reading test scores in later years, reinforcing the importance of home environments on early literacy development and reading achievement.

Engaging children in play-based literacy activities encourages the development of [phonological awareness](#), vocabulary and oral language, as well as other knowledge essential for learning to read. For example, by playing word games, using rhymes to explore the sound structure of the

English language, and teaching them about the alphabet, letter-sounds and print concepts through directed, play-based activities.

Parents can also enhance their children's vocabulary and oral language through informal activities, such as providing access to books and educational toys, reading books together, and trips to the library or museums.

One of the most effective things parents can do is TALKING with children, listening, and answering their questions.

Once children start school, parents continue foster reading development by maintaining shared reading activities, ensuring children have reading material at the appropriate levels and following their progress.

This link will inform you more information about reading

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6RjKmJa51w&feature=youtu.be>

Shared reading is different to guided reading – listening and helping your child practice read aloud.

While it is not the case that children learn to read simply by being read to, shared reading is one of the essential literacy experiences that contribute to children becoming good and willing readers. Books contain words, grammar and language structures that are different to conversational language. Shared reading activities is largely about nurturing a love of reading and books but there are some things that will make the experience especially beneficial for children. Shared reading is important for children of all ages. It needn't stop when they are able to read independently.

One of the keys is to read with your child, rather than to your child. Involve children in the reading experience by letting them choose books, discussing the story and the characters, talking about the sounds and meanings of the words, and talking about the pictures.

#### **Simple tips for shared reading that will enhance children's literacy development:**

- Make time to read together every day – the longer the better, but even 15 minutes is better than not at all.
- Read together in a place without distractions like television or computers.
- If it is a new book, look through it together first and discuss what it might be about.

#### **With younger children:**

- Explain how books 'work'. Explain that all books have a title and an author, how to hold a book, that we turn the pages from the front to the back, and we read the words from left to right down the page. This seems obvious to us, but not to children!
- Point out letters in words and talk about their sounds. Start with the first initials of the child's names and their family's names.
- Include books with rhyme or alliteration to help development of [phonemic awareness](#).
- Include books with an interesting variety of words to develop vocabulary. Talk about the meaning of new or unfamiliar words and try to use those words in conversation over the next few days.
- Include classic fables and fairy tales from a variety of cultures to develop children's cultural literacy.

#### **With older children:**

- Choose books for shared reading that are more challenging than children are capable of reading on their own, which will expose them to words, ideas, themes, and concepts that will contribute to their vocabulary, and general knowledge.

- Alternate books by contemporary authors with books by classic authors like Rudyard Kipling, CS Lewis, and Robert Louis Stevenson. This will open up new worlds to children and extend their literacy. The National Cultural Diversity database lists children's books by authors from many different cultural backgrounds (<https://www.ncacl.org.au/ncacl-cultural-diversity-database/>).
- Encourage children to be more adventurous in their own book choices, especially at the library.
- Don't insist on finishing a book if they are not enjoying it after the first few chapters. Put it aside and maybe come back to it another time.
- The link below will provide more information about developing reading skills and what parents can foster to develop your child's reading.

This link below will take you to some wonderful parent resources.

<https://youtu.be/n6RjKmJa51wMultiLit Pty Ltd>



## Save the date... Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

**Children are asked to wear something orange on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 as we will be celebrating Harmony Day and the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.**

The National day of Action against Bullying is an important day to mark Australian school communities standing together against bullying and violence and School communities across the nation are the key drivers of the NDA and proudly represent eleven years of positive action. (<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>).

Harmony Day celebrates Australia's cultural diversity. It is about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. As part of this day we encourage students to wear to school something orange to school for the day, for example orange socks, orange t shirt, ribbons etc.



### What is Harmony Day?

Harmony Day is a time to celebrate Australian multiculturalism, and the successful integration of migrants into our community. Australia is one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world and we should celebrate this and work to maintain it. The message of Harmony Week is everyone belongs. It is about inclusiveness, respect and belonging for all Australians, regardless of cultural or linguistic background, united by a set of core Australian values. These celebrations create opportunities for all of us to think, talk about and recognise how our differences make Australia a great place to live.

## Religious Education News

### Opening School Liturgy

Rosary Park's Opening School Liturgy was held today. We thank Father Thomas for his attendance and I congratulate the students for the reverence they displayed during the Liturgy. Congratulations once again to the School and Sport Leaders on receiving your badges today.



### Ash Wednesday: 17th February 2021

Our Ash Wednesday Liturgy will look a little different this year. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, schools will refrain from distributing ashes. Years 3-6 students will attend a small Liturgy in the hall in the morning. K-2 students will share a prayer in their classrooms.

### Ash Wednesday Mass: 17th February 2021

St. Brigid's Branxton at 8am.

### Weekend Mass Times

It is always lovely for children and their families to attend Mass in our Parish. Currently Mass is celebrated at 6:00pm Vigil (each Saturday) at St. Brigid's Branxton and at St. Catherine's Greta at 8:15am (For February only).

### Important Days:

### Shrove Tuesday: Tuesday 16th February 2021

Shrove Tuesday began as a way to use up rich foods like eggs, milk and sugar before the 40 days of Lent and has turned into a worldwide tradition.

### Ash Wednesday: 17th February 2021

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Church's season of Lent. The marking of the ashes on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday is an expression of our faith and a sign that we are asking God for forgiveness.

Have a lovely week and may God bless you always,

*Amber van Duuren*

Acting Religious Education Coordinator

### **YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND MASS**

Mass is being said in St Brigid's Church, Branxton and St Catherine's Church, Greta and you are welcome to join us! With a maximum of 150 people permitted in Branxton and 90 in Greta, there are good seats available at each Mass!

Mass is said in Greta on Tuesday at **9.20am**, in Branxton on Thursday at **9.20am**, Branxton on Saturday at **6pm** and Greta on Sunday at **8.15am**. You are also invited to arrive a little earlier in Greta at each Mass to say the Rosary.

If you are planning to attend Mass in St Brigid's Church Branxton or St Catherine's Church Greta please read the conditions of entry below:

✘ If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 please DO NOT attend Mass. You are advised to be tested and stay home.

🙏 Please pre-register for Mass when you are able by contacting the Parish Office on 02 5507 4048.

🕒 To assist with getting everyone into the church on time please ensure you arrive at least 15 minutes early to Mass.

📱 The Parish is using the Service NSW QR code system for checking-in, so if you have a smart phone, please do this when you enter the church and show the Welcomer the green tick  . If you do not have a smart phone, please ensure your name, and phone number are placed on the registration sheet.

😬 The NSW Government are highly recommending the use of masks in places of worship. You will need to provide your own mask to wear.

👐 Sanitize your hands before entering the church.

👤 Maintain 1.5m physical distancing from those you don't live with. Sit in the marked spaces.

📄 Please collect your own bulletin and take it with you when you leave.

👉 Thank you for helping to keep our community safe and free from COVID-19 by following these conditions of entry.

Baptisms and Weddings are still being celebrated at both churches. Enquiries and bookings are through the Parish office on 02 5507 4048.

Details about this year's Sacramental Program will be circulated in the coming weeks. Those children who commenced the program last year should have received an email to complete a survey questionnaire. If you did not receive email, please contact the Parish Office.

You can find more information on our Parish website [www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au](http://www.singletoncatholicparish.org.au)

God Bless  
Fr Thomas Chirackal  
Parish Priest

## Weekly Awards

Friday 5 February, 2021

<b>Class</b>	<b>Class Award one</b>	<b>Class Award two</b>	<b>MJR Award</b>
<b>Year 1 Blue</b>	Levi Cousins	Luke Healy	Charlize Lott
<b>Year 1 White</b>	Noah Linton	Ellie Ayscough	Matthias Kelly
<b>Year 2 Blue</b>	Nevaeh Diebert	Evie Smith	Hudson O'Connor
<b>Year 2 White</b>	Madden Tipper	Lockie Blanch	Boon Engel
<b>Year 3 Blue</b>	Sam Richards	Jonah Martyn	Tayla Menchin
<b>Year 3 White</b>	Nicholas Lang	Bryce Bogacz	Rae Killick
<b>Year 4 Blue</b>	Ashton Pople	Brody Billington-Sarina	Joel Charnock
<b>Year 4 White</b>	Shonoa Applekamp	Bailey Collier	Cohan Young
<b>Year 5 Blue</b>	Kade Tipper	Lilly Allgood	Xavier Thomas
<b>Year 5 White</b>	Alice Lawler	Ava Davies	Oliver White
<b>Year 6</b>	Callan Lyttle	Kayne Standen	Benji Matt

Friday 12 February, 2021 (Kinder awards to begin next fortnight)

<b>Class</b>	<b>Class Award one</b>	<b>Class Award two</b>	<b>MJR Award</b>
<b>Year 1 Blue</b>	Jackson Lacey	Amarlie Kiem	Elke Bereza
<b>Year 1 White</b>	Evie Corry	Lachlan Bartley	Hudson Wyatt
<b>Year 2 Blue</b>	Liam Pike	Indi Morgan	Samantha Foot
<b>Year 2 White</b>	Owen Gough	Tayla Bishop	Ellie Young
<b>Year 3 Blue</b>	Lachlan Milgate	Nevada Adamthwaite	Sienna Marr
<b>Year 3 White</b>	Louis Dodd	Riley McLaren	Aria Brenton
<b>Year 4 Blue</b>	Owen Simpson	Emily-Rose Ayton	Xander Utjesenovic
<b>Year 4 White</b>	Layla Hedger	Kai Mueller	Cooper Thomas
<b>Year 5 Blue</b>	Amelia Dagg	Sam Gray	Ari Samuelson
<b>Year 5 White</b>	Hayden O'Donnell	Bella O'Conner	Charli Cole
<b>Year 6</b>	Hannah Norton	Will Heggart	Kiara Hedger

# Good for Kids good for life

## GET SET FOR HEALTHY SNACKS!

Healthy snacks are important to keep kids' energy levels up and meet their nutritional needs.

Choose snacks based on vegetables, fruit, milk, cheese, yoghurt and wholegrain breads, crackers and cereals.

Some tips to make choosing healthy snacks easy:

- Include a vegetable and fruit snack each day.
- Keep a range of healthy snacks in the fridge and pantry e.g. vegetables and fruit, pikelets, popcorn, yoghurt and cheese.
- Cut up vegetables and fruit so they are easier to grab for snacks during the week.
- Get your kids to help prepare snacks.
- Add vegetables into homemade snacks (muffins, scones and slices).
- Show your kids you enjoy eating healthy snacks.



**Health**  
Hunter New England  
Local Health District

[HNELHD-GoodForKids@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:HNELHD-GoodForKids@health.nsw.gov.au)  
<http://www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au/>



# Share the care with schools

Changes in your child's mental health can affect their schooling and relationships, however support is available for school students experiencing mental health concerns.

**Please let your school know if your child has presented at or been admitted to hospital for mental health issues so they can discuss further support.**

You or an advocate can talk to the Principal, Assistant Principal or School Counsellor/ Psychologist to develop a plan.

## Ask your school for help with:

- Keeping your child or young person safe.
- Returning to school following a mental health crisis.
- Identifying school staff your child or young person can talk to.
- Developing an individual support plan to help stay connected with school during tough times. This might include flexibility around school hours, homework or catching up with school work.
- Accessing support from the school and outside agencies.



Health  
Hunter New England  
Local Health District



**How can I learn more about ways to help my child learn?**

So, you're wondering how you can find out more about Cybersafety? Maybe you want to listen to national and international experts on anxiety, building resilience in children and young people and learn more about keeping your kids safe or listen to experts share tips on supporting young people approaching the HSC?



**You need to join the Federation of P & F Association Facebook page.**



**What does the "Federation of P & F Association" do?**

The Federation works to strengthen the participation of all parents and carers in Catholic schools in the Diocese and to promote and advance Catholic Education and its excellence. Along with our work in advocacy and supporting Catholic education generally, we regularly invite you to events (currently via Zoom) where you can build your understanding of lots of issues that impact our children....and it's all **FREE!**

**Use this QR code to get onboard!**

**For further information E: [cath.garrett-jones@mn.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cath.garrett-jones@mn.catholic.edu.au)**

**Registrations NOW OPEN!**

**Are you interested in playing RUGBY LEAGUE?**

**ALL WELCOME ♦ ALL AGES ♦ MALE & FEMALE**

**Come and join your local club Greta Branxton Colts**

**COME JOIN OUR TEAM!**

For more info please email [gretabranxtonrlfc@gmail.com](mailto:gretabranxtonrlfc@gmail.com)

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