

DIARY DATES

Friday 20 March K / Yr 5 to Parish Mass
Sat/Sun 21/22 March Eucharist – Lesson 4
Tuesday 24 March Kinder Nursery Rhyme Parade and Picnic from 1.00pm P & F Meeting, 7.00pm
Wednesday 25 March Dance Fever Challenge From 4.30pm
Friday 27 March Year 1 & 6 to Parish Mass Munch n Crunch Student work samples sent home
Sat/Sun 28/29 March Eucharist – Lesson 5
30 March to 2 April Holy Week Celebrations
Wednesday 1 April Easter Egg Raffle
Thursday 2 April Hot Cross Buns Last day of Term 1
Friday 3 April Good Friday
Sunday 5 April Easter Sunday
Monday 20 April Term 2 Begins
Friday 24 April ANZAC Day Ceremony 10.30am
Wednesday 29 April Year 3 Excursion to Homebush Wetlands First Reconciliation Parent Meeting, 7.30pm
Thursday 30 April First Reconciliation Parent Meeting, 7.30pm (repeat)
Sunday 3 May First Holy Communion 11.30am
Friday 29 May PUPIL FREE DAY

Dear Parents, Carers, Students & Friends,

There is nothing better than seeing a child's face when their parents or loved ones walk into their classroom to see their great learning in action. Excitement, pride and enthusiasm were bubbling over as I walked around the school to greet the many parents that joined us for our *Celebration of Learning* last Thursday. I was overwhelmed by the number of parents, grandparents and friends who attended our morning, visited classrooms and had a leisurely walk around the children's brilliant art exhibition.



When you really think about it, *Catholic Schools Week* is so much more than an opportunity to showcase the great learning that is happening in the classrooms. It is a time for all of us to think about what it means to be part of our Catholic Church... to be part of this community, where love, tolerance, respect and forgiveness are values that are shared unconditionally. This is something that we need to reflect on and celebrate daily.

I wish to sincerely thank the staff for the exceptional work they do each day in providing a safe, caring and engaging learning environment. Working together, we can achieve so much!

God Bless,

Mrs Sue Veling
Principal

PARENTING WORKSHOP WITH JUDY HATSWELL

Congratulations to the 70 parents who joined OLOW staff at the parenting workshop on Monday. Judy Hatswell has a ten-year history with *Our Lady of the Way* and was happy to be back and working with parents and staff to create more positive relationships with our children.

The focus was on providing practical strategies for positive parenting. Judy spoke about how to develop skills in positive parenting techniques and highlighted the importance of adults modelling respectful and cooperative behaviours for children.

Parents also learnt about 'Choice Theory' in relation to parenting. She recommended a great read called *"How to Talk so Kids will Listen and Listen so Kids will Talk"* by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish. This is a really easy read, with practical exercises for you to try and even has cartoons to sum up each concept. The school library has a copy for parents to borrow, but it is definitely a good book to purchase (available from *Fishpond*) if you want to get it for yourself as a hands-on reference and share it around with your friends.

Keep your eye out each newsletter for some more information about William Glasser's "Choice Theory" beliefs.

Rebecca Blazek



THANKYOU EVERYONE

Our raffle for the Penny family raised \$2075. Thank you to everyone for supporting this special and worthwhile cause.

Letter of thanks from the Penny Family:

To the OLOW community,

As you all know I was involved in a serious car accident with a truck around 6 weeks ago. I suffered a broken tibia/fibula, broken femur and smashed knee. I also punctured both lungs and suffered a cracked sternum....

But it could have been so much worse, Bones heal! It pretty much turned mine and my family's lives upside down and I have to say that until the accident I took for granted what a wonderful community we live in. Since I've been home from hospital meals have be brought to us daily which we are so grateful for....

They've all been delicious too I might add!

Then we find out that you're all putting together a raffle for us. We were gobsmacked. I cannot express how grateful we are to ALL OF YOU. So I'd like to say a huge Thank You to everyone. You've made my recovery so much easier knowing my family is taken care of and knowing that I can put my all into just getting to rehab and getting better without worrying about other things. I'd love to thank everyone by name but there are so many people who have helped and I haven't even met all of you yet, and I don't want to miss anyone. So Thank You to everyone who is helping with meals. To everyone who donated prizes or money for the raffle. To everyone who bought or sold tickets. And to everyone who just helped out with the logistics of everything. We are so so grateful.

OLOW ART EXHIBITION

Thank you to all families for supporting our annual *OLOW Kids Art Exhibition*. It was great to see the joy on the children's faces as parents, grandparents and friends 'oohed and aahed' at the wonderful art & craft designs. \$1200 was raised to help send an OLOW teacher to World Youth Day in 2016.

KINDERGARTEN 2016 – ENROLMENT PERIOD NOW OPEN

Enrolments for Kindergarten are now open – please advise family and friends of this fact. The first round enrolment period for Kindergarten closes on Friday 29th May. Enrolments after this time will be considered based on availability of places.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR WEEKS 6 & 7

Patrick Reeks, Zachary Levy, Cassandra Dixon, Seth Fullam, Jessie Lustri, Olivia Craig, Kyal Risse, Jake Walsh, Evan Hotz, Dominic Vella, Mia Kuster, Riley Burton, Charlie Thomas, Sophie Procter, Jett Cleary, Jemma Cashel, Lorcan Cullen, Jacinta Roser, Hannah Selby, Michael Gardiner, Cooper Hartstonge, Samuel Thompson, Noah Pascoe, Talisha North, Lachlan Stewart, Harrison Bennett, Jorja Tabor, Blake Skinner, Thomas Garrahy, Ethan Dempsey, Amber Dempsey, Olivia Downie.



WORKING BEE THANKYOU

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you, to all the parents and friends who helped out at our working bee: Carly Eekman, Moya Cutts, Carly Phillips, Jodie Armour, Thor Hartstonge, Luke Downey, Sarah Pereira, Kiery Pascoe, Carolyn Burton, Natalie Hooke, Sam Robinson, Regina Hawkes, Kelly Leehy, Kelly Tabor, Howard Andrews (with apologies to anybody we missed).

We had windows cleaned and gardens weeded. The big job was removing the artificial turf from the back playground. A sincere thank you to Andrew Eekman, Kevin Houlihan, Graham Hawkes and Peter Bennett for their hard work with this dirty, messy job. The children at OLOW appreciate your help.

Within the next few weeks, all exposed roots will be removed, 36 trees planted and in spring, new turf laid.

STUDENT WORK SAMPLES (Week 9)

Our second lot of student work samples will be sent home on Friday 27 March. This will be a writing sample for you to review. Please send your child's book back to school on Monday. If you would like to discuss the work sample and your child's progress, please contact your child's teacher.

WINTER UNIFORM

The last day of school for Term 1 will be on Holy Thursday, 2nd April. The children will return back to school on Monday 20th April in winter uniform. There will be a two-week change over if you feel the weather is still too warm for children to return in winter uniform.

NEW CANTEEN OPERATOR



Starting at the beginning of Term 2, OLOW will have a new canteen operator – *Total Canteen Solutions*. Total Canteen Solutions is a proven operator that manages many high profile schools throughout the Catholic and Public system. They offer a new wonderful menu with the same optional on-line ordering feature that OLOW is used to. The online ordering system will be through **Munchmonitor.com**

STUDENT MEDICAL (SICK) LEAVE & NON-MEDICAL LEAVE PROCEDURES

Sick Leave

Families are required to provide the school with a letter within 7 days for any student absences relating to illness.

Non-Medical Leave

Families are required by law to provide a letter of application relating to non-medical leave.

- 1-9 Days Leave

For all non-medical leave involving students being absent for 1-9 days families are required to provide a letter indicating the reason for this leave.

- 10-100 Days Leave

For all student leave from 10 up to 100 days families are required to provide a letter of application indicating the reason for this leave. This letter is to be attached to the leave form which is available for download from the School website.

All non-medical leave letters must be addressed to the Principal.

STATE ELECTION

With less than two weeks before the state election, I urge you to contact your local MPs and candidates to talk to them about the importance of capital works funding for Catholic schools in western Sydney. Without capital works funding for Catholic schools, it will be difficult to meet growing enrolment demands for Catholic schooling. This will place an even greater burden on the tax payer if places for these children need to be found in government schools.

Recently, our Executive Director of Schools, Greg Whitby met with Minister Adrian Piccoli to urge him to consider the needs of the 25% of children and young people who attend Catholic schools in western Sydney. Although the meeting was positive, no commitment to capital works funding was made. I urge you to email your local STATE member, Stuart Ayres, and STATE opposition candidate, Emma Husar, to tell them that capital works funding is an important issue for you in the upcoming election.

PUPIL FREE DAY - STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY for TERM 2

Friday 29 May 2015



REPRESENTATIVE SPORTS

Congratulations to Aimee Wagner from Year 6 who, once again, has been chosen to represent the NSWCPSS MacKillop team at the NSW PSSA Softball State Carnival in Wagga Wagga later this year.

NAPLAN TESTING 2015

National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing will be conducted from 12 -14 May 2015 for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia. These national tests will provide information on how Australian students are performing in the areas of numeracy, reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation and will assist teachers in identifying student strengths and weaknesses. By analysing results along with information from teacher judgements and work samples, teachers can adjust teaching strategies to provide appropriate support. The aggregation of student results from the NAPLAN provides schools with an overview of current achievements for groups of students and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of their performance. The analysis of aggregated results assists school planning and can be used to monitor literacy and numeracy development over time.

	Tuesday 12th May	Wednesday 13th May	Thursday 14th May
Year 3	* <i>Language Conventions</i> (40 minutes) * <i>Writing</i> (40 minutes)	* <i>Reading</i> (45 minutes)	* <i>Numeracy</i> (45 minutes)
Year 5	* <i>Language Conventions</i> (40 minutes) * <i>Writing</i> (40 minutes)	* <i>Reading</i> (50 minutes)	* <i>Numeracy</i> (50 minutes)

For more information visit the website: <http://www.nap.edu.au/>

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Caritas Fundraiser

The season of Lent is a time in our Church year where we take time to pause and reflect on our relationships – our relationships with God, with our family and friends and those in need. Pope Francis encourages us to look after the poor and give a voice to those who do not have one.

In Week 10 the Social Justice Team is holding a fundraiser to raise money for Caritas, through Project Compassion. They would like the funds to be directed to the people of Vanuatu who have been so horrendously affected by cyclone Pam.

This week the team visited all the grades in an endeavour to give information about the work of Caritas, share their idea for a fundraiser and who they would like to help. This is what they shared:

Food is essential for all life, yet many of the world's poorest people do not have enough food to eat.



Many people live from day-to-day, not really sure when they will have their next meal.


Parents find it very hard to think about the future if they are worried about their children being hungry.



This used to be the case for Vinsen. He lives with his family in West Timor in Indonesia.



A few years ago the area that Vinsen lives in was hit by big storms and many of their crops were washed away and their animals were killed. For Vinsen's family, if you didn't have crops, you didn't have food for your family to eat.

 Vinsen wanted to learn how he could grow crops and look after the environment. He wanted to learn how crops could survive even when the weather was bad.



In West Timor, Caritas had a program that helped Vinsen learn the skills he needed to help grow food for his family.

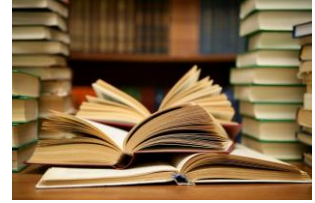
The Social Justice Team would like to encourage all of you to do something that will help the environment, just like Vinsen did.



At the same time we can raise money to help people, like Vinsen and his family, have the food they need to live healthy lives.



We would like hold a stall of recycled toys, books or DVDs. Rather than throwing them out, why not donate them. Our environment will have less rubbish and someone else can reuse the items.



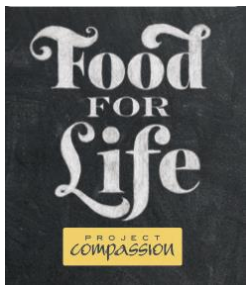
In Week 10, the last week of this term we will be holding the stall in the hall.

We encourage you to talk to your mums and dads and go through your things to find items that you can donate.

You can also start saving your money for that bargain you might find!

During the season of LENT we are called to GIVE UP something and to HELP THE POOR.

We think donating to our stall and also buying something is a great way to achieve both of these things.



We will leave a basket for your grade to start collecting.

We would like to help the people of Vanuatu who are the victims of cyclone Pam.

All classrooms have a basket ready and waiting for your donations. Please encourage your children to be part of this worthwhile fundraising initiative. It is an opportunity to do something positive in the season of Lent and become aware of social justice issues.

Parish Mass:

Kindergarten and Year 5 will be attending the Parish Mass tomorrow morning at 9:00am. Next Friday the children of Year 1 and Year 6 will be attending. You are more than welcome to attend.

Carole Day

Religious Education Coordinator

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (**PDHPE**) develops the knowledge, skills and attitudes students need to lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives. Students learn about the importance of good food and regular exercise. They learn how bodies grow and change over time. They learn skills to play individual and team sports, and the values of sportsmanship and teamwork.

Did You Know?

Children and teenagers should be physically active every day. A minimum requirement of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity per day is recommended to provide health benefits. A further benefit is achieved if children engage in three relatively vigorous sessions of activity per week of at least 20 minutes. Parents role-modelling the importance of physical activity in their daily life provide a powerful influence on children as they develop values and attitudes towards being active.

There are plenty of ways to be active - Here are some ideas to get your children started.

Be active together. Quality time isn't time in front of the TV, or eating takeaway food in the car. Plan some trips. Picnics are great at the park or the beach. Being active together will improve personal relationships and get your family communicating better.

Encourage both moderate and vigorous activities every day. As a family, aim to do a range of different activities that help children develop healthy bones, muscles and joints. Do more moderate exercise like brisk walking and vigorous activities that make everyone 'huff and puff'. A game of footy in the backyard will get the blood flowing!

Get active any way you can. Children love it when mum and dad join in their games. Throw a frisbee or ball together. Stay active by walking the children to school or riding your bike with them.

Become a team player. Team games are great fun. Play football, basketball, netball, tennis or soccer by joining a club, or just play team games with friends in the neighbourhood.

Take up active recreation at every opportunity. Enrol kids in dance classes. Or, for that matter, enrol yourself. Take up swimming, go for a gentle run or a good walk.

Get into physical education. The importance of physical education for children shouldn't be underestimated. All children deserve the opportunity to learn new skills to **be active** for life. Try a range of activities that call for different skills, like catching, throwing, balance and coordination.

Reduce inactive leisure time. Limit television viewing, cut down on video games and reduce time surfing the net.

Get the family involved in local activities. Encourage more social involvement by joining after school clubs and taking part in community events.

Be a good role model for your kids. If an active lifestyle is part of your life, you're much more likely to pass similar good habits to your children.

Explore ways to be an active family. Explore a national park, go bushwalking, hike and camp in the hills, take a walking tour of the city, bike ride together and play with your kids.

Please contact me at mmifsud@parra.catholic.edu.au if you have any questions relating to the ***OLOWCURRICULUMSPOT***.

Take Care
Michael

LEARNING NEWS

YEAR ONE LEARNING NEWS

Year One have had many visitors from our school this week to talk about their role in the community. Thank you to Mrs Veling, Mrs Masters, Mr Sharp, Mr Edwards and Mr Mifsud for teaching us about your jobs. We have also had visits from many wonderful parents. Lots of photos have been on OLOW's Facebook site. Here are some responses to their visits.



Abby G: A Maintenance Officer fixes a lot of things outside. He wears ear -muffs in case something is loud. An IT support person fixes computers if they are broken.

Noah D: A Maintenance Officer has ear muffs, a paint brush, paint and a spanner. An IT Support person has a tiny screw driver and a torch.

Christopher E: A maintenance Officer has lots of stuff. He has a lawn mower, hammer and nails. An IT Support person fixes iPads and computers and helps teachers use them.

Alex B: A nurse helps us when we are hurt and keeps us safe. They have a mask, pen and gloves. A Garbage Recycler collects the rubbish in a Garbage truck. We can help by putting rubbish in the bin.

Jakob M: A cook cooks us food. We can tell them what we want. They use food, a chef's hat and a plate. A teacher teaches us how to do stuff. They need a computer, printer, first aid bag, hat and paper.



Cooper B: A maintenance officer has a hammer. He has ear muffs and glasses so that he doesn't get dirt in his eyes. He fixes bricks if they are falling. He works at a school.



GENERAL INFORMATION

CAN YOU HELP?

DO YOU HAVE A GREEN THUMB?

Everyday we recycle our Crunch and Sip fruit and vegetable scraps and as a result our compost heap is taking off!

We are asking for your help to turn the compost. If you are available to help please contact Dolores Grima Starkey in Year 4 or the office.



DANCE FEVER

Next Wednesday 25th March approximately 80 students from OLOW will be participating in the Dance Fever Challenge at Homebush. As part of our Hip/Hop routine we are in need of some 3D Movie glasses. If you have any spares at home could you please send them to the school office tomorrow. Thank you

RAFFLE WINNERS

Congratulation to our major prize winners in our Penny Family raffle:

- ★ 10 metres of poured concrete valued at \$2,300: Drew Carland
- ★ \$1,000 Voucher from Shuttered Blinds: Sarah Zarlenga
- ★ Sydney Swans signed Jersey & tickets to a game: Declan Casey
- ★ 3 month membership for Atmosphere Health & Fitness Club: Maria
- ★ 16" Girls Bike: Natalie Burke
- ★ Voucher for Cake by Teddydesigns for \$100: Joshua Reeks
- ★ Signature Facial from The Beauty Room Emu Heights: Mee-Sook
- ★ 2 Top Gear Tickets: Lachlan Stonehouse
- ★ Rocking Horse: Billy Trad
- ★ Alexander Paige Jewellery: Millie Brace
- ★ Tickets to Panthers v Manly game on 11th April: Hannah Selby
- ★ A number of families won various toys and paintings



EASTER RAFFLE

Now you have a chance to win one of the fabulous baskets in our Monster Easter Raffle. The more Easter Eggs we have donated the more prizes for you to win. Please send Easter Eggs to the office by Monday 30th March. Raffle will be drawn on Wednesday 1st April.

Munch n' Crunch Day

Friday 27th March 2015

It is a tradition at Our Lady of the Way that the Kinder Parents put on a morning tea for the school. So If your child would like to purchase a special treat provided by the Kinder Parents, treats will be 50 cents each.



QRT

QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS TIP

Ask yourself this question

'If I say or do this right now, will it bring us closer together or will we end up further apart?'

Scan with your
smartphone or
tablet to go to the
OLOW website.



CANTEEN NEWS

Crunchy Munchy Café Meal Deals \$ 4.50

Available for the fortnight starting Monday 23 March

Meal Deal 1

Salad Wrap, Small Bottle water, Zooper Dooper

Meal Deal 2

Hot Dog with Sauce, Juice Popper, Push Pop Ice Block

what to pack for Crunch&Sip®
here are some examples

- A bottle of plain water**
When it comes to thirst, choose water first! Give your child a bottle of water to take to school every day.
- A whole piece of fruit or veg**
Choose an easy to eat fruit or vegetable that isn't messy, such as a carrot, apple, mandarin or banana.
- Several whole, smaller fruit or veg**
Use a container or bag to pack snow peas, corn, mushrooms, strawberries or grapes, for example.
- Chopped fruit or veg**
Pack a container of bite sized pieces of fruit or vegetables such as watermelon, mango, broccoli or cauliflower. If needed, remember to include a fork or spoon to avoid sticky fingers.
- Veggie sticks**
Cucumber, capsicum, celery and carrot are great options.
- Canned fruit**
Fresh fruit and veg are best, but fruit canned in water or natural juice is OK every now and then.
- Dried fruit**
For example, apple, mango, apricots or sultanas, a maximum of once a week.

COMMUNITY NEWS

McCARTHY CATHOLIC COLLEGE - Academic and Trade Training Centre (TTC)

Enrolling now for 2016

Open Morning: Sunday 22 March 2015, Time: 9.00am to 11.30am

- Meet the Principal, staff and students
- Tours of the College facilities
- TTC information for senior study
- Enrolment packages available

Enquiries: 4735 3211
Email: mccarthy@parra.catholic.edu.au

Address: 75 Mackellar Street, Emu Plains
Website: www.mccarthyemuplains.catholic.edu.au



Faith, Courage, Tolerance

Caroline Chisholm College, Glenmore Park
provides Catholic Education for girls in Years 7 – 12

Enrolling now for 2016

Applications close 2 April, 2015

For further information contact the College on 4737 5506.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

The next Session of CCSS Solo Parent Services Bereavement Support Program for those whose spouse or long term partner has died is on **Tuesday 17th March**, Venue: 51-59 Allawah St, Blacktown, **from 10.00am – 12.00pm** Topic: *"The Social Effects of Grief"* Registration: Eileen or Rita Ph. 99330205 or soloparentservices@ccss.org.au See Flyer on Notice Board

YOUNGER WIDOWED SUPPORT GROUP

CCSS Solo Parent Services' Younger Widowed Support Group is held on the 3rd Tuesday of this month. The Support Group is for men and women widowed at a younger age with or without children. **Next gathering: Tuesday 17th March**. Venue: CCSS Centre, 51-59 Allawah St Blacktown. **Time: 7pm – 9pm** Cost: \$5.00. Registration: Eileen or Rita Ph. 9933 0205 or Email: soloparentservices@ccss.org.au Flyer on School Notice Board



Scout Shout Out!

1st Emu Plains Scouts

CUB RECRUITS NEEDED!

We need more CUB recruits for Emu Plains Scouts which is actually situated at Lapstone Scout Hall 175 Explorers Road, Lapstone

www.emuplainsscouts.org.au

Cubs is for Boys and Girls aged 7.5 to 11. We meet Tuesday nights, 7.00-830pm.

If you like fun activities including bush games, craft, understanding camping, having fun and being part of a troop, then Scouting is for you. You make friendships for life, have many happy memories of the scouting movement and earn rewarding badges as you go. Learnings from Scouts helps build confidence, respect, positive attitude and sets these young boys and girls up for life with their future endeavours.

Did I mention **YOU CAN TRY CUBS FOR FREE for the first 6 weeks!!!!** We would love to see you there next Tuesday night (during school terms), you are more than WELCOME! Let's have fun! Parents are welcome to watch, assist and discuss the term's agenda of activities.

For more information please contact **Tony Henry 0488 669 143** E-mail: thenry555@gmail.com

Keeping Kids In Mind



A Course for Parents Experiencing Conflict After Separation

PARRAMATTA

Parents love their children and want the best for them. However, after separation, parenting often gets much tougher.

Keeping Kids in Mind is a 5 week course for separated parents who are experiencing on-going conflict. The course is designed to:

- assist parents to see through their children's eyes the experience of parental separation.
- develop greater understanding about how to support children following family separation

The course covers the following topics:

Grief and Loss after Separation
The Hidden World of Children
Rebuilding Resilience
Bridging the Gap
Looking Back, Moving Forward



KEEPING KIDS IN MIND • CatholicCare Sydney | Centacare Broken Bay | CatholicCare Parramatta | CatholicCare Wollongong

Dates: Term 2 2015 Evening group

Over 5 Wednesdays
6 May to 3 June 2015

Time:
6:00pm to 8.30pm

Venue:
CCSS Parramatta
2A Villiers Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150

Fee:
\$100 includes handbook
(Concessions can be negotiated)

Bookings Essential:
02 9933 0222

All participants must register their interest in attending the course and participate in a pre-group interview prior to the course.

Keeping Kids in Mind is facilitated by qualified and experienced educators and counsellors.

Certificate of Attendance provided



THE BEST HOLIDAYS HAPPEN AT CAMP

- ✓ Relaxing
- ✓ Fun
- ✓ Great value
- ✓ Safe

Entertain the kids this school holidays with a Sport and Recreation camp. Our popular Kids' and Family Camps offer a range of exciting activities to keep even the biggest kid entertained. Try your hand at over 40 different activities, including fishing, slip'n'slide, abseiling, crafts, kayaking, cooking and more. Led by qualified instructors, you can rest easy knowing your kids are in safe hands.

Kids' Day Camps start from \$47. Family Camp weekends start from \$63 per day for kids and \$96 per day for adults (kids under 5 attend free; cost includes accommodation, meals and activities).

Bonus! Residential Kids' Camps include supervised transport from:

- Central Station, Sydney
- Penrith
- Lithgow
- Bathurst
- Orange
- Wellington
- Brooklyn
- Mooney Mooney.



dsr.nsw.gov.au/kidscamps

dsr.nsw.gov.au/familycamps

13 13 02

facebook.com/nswsportandrecreation



**Office
of Sport**
Sport & Recreation



Catholic Education: responding to demand

We have a strong history of using evidence-based practice to improve our student outcomes. Through certainty in State government capital works funding, we can efficiently respond to demographic demands of a Catholic education in high growth areas.

1. CATHOLIC SCHOOL FUNDING

- In the Diocese of Parramatta, Catholic schools educate around one quarter of the total school age population.
- It would cost NSW taxpayers \$3 billion more each year if all Catholic school students were accommodated in government schools.

2. CAPITAL FUNDING

- NSW Catholic schools need to add 80,000 student places by 2031, requiring 20 new schools in addition to refurbishments and expansions of existing schools.
- To keep up with demand, the Diocese of Parramatta will need at least \$19.3 million in 2015-17 to build new schools and learning spaces in Marsden Park, Rouse Hill and Stanhope in response to growth. The Diocese will need an additional \$7.1 million to upgrade schools in Merrylands and Marayong.
- Local Council infrastructure charges are placing an unfair burden on Catholic schools, incurring substantial additional costs.
 - Over the past three years, the metropolitan-based dioceses paid \$18.5 million in levies and bonds - almost cancelling out the entire capital funding provided by the NSW Government for all Catholic schools.
 - Local council infrastructure charges for developments at Westmead have been quoted at \$464,000. This is money that could have been invested in the schools themselves e.g. the cost of nearly five teachers.

3. LEARNING SUCCESS

- Since 2012, we will have trained 105 reading recovery teachers and provided over 600 students access to early intervention literacy programs through the State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan funding. An additional 500 Year 1 students have reached or exceeded Diocesan wide benchmarks since 2012.

4. REIMAGINING SCHOOLING

- We are responding to the changing nature of schooling and learner's needs by partnering with business, Church, community and parents, to move beyond existing models of stand-alone schooling to a connected learning community so we can use school funding more effectively.
- Delany College, Granville has partnered with Telstra to provide students with collaborative learning spaces that utilise education-specific technology.
- The Centre for Deeper Learning at Parramatta Marist High School opened this year and is designed to support teachers to continue their learning, share evidence based practice with other interested educators and continue to promote innovation and change.

5. CATHOLIC ETHOS

- NSW Catholic schools have provided quality, faith-based education for Australian children since 1806 and are open to all families who seek an education based on Catholic teaching and values.
- Governments must remain vigilant about legislation that will impact upon religious freedom and the right of Catholic schools to deliver on that commitment through appropriate employment, enrolment and curriculum policies and practices.

Any future NSW Government must support the choice of Catholic school parents through certainty in capital works funding for Catholic schools for the next three years.

Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta employs over 4,500 teachers and staff and provides quality Catholic schooling for over 43,000 students in 56 primary, 22 secondary schools and four early learning centres in greater western Sydney.



Catholic Education
Diocese of Parramatta
www.parra.catholic.edu.au