Dear Parents

Recently, I was reading an article by Michael Grose, a parent educator, who has much to say about how we, as parents, can inadvertently undermine our children’s capacity to persevere and demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity. It is a recurring theme in his work and one I have highlighted before as it links in tightly with our own Mission Statement. He nominates five things parents do.

1. **Praising ability rather than effort**
   The research is very consistent on this: praising effort, not natural ability, is far more effective for building confidence and persistence. In other words, *praise the things that kids can control – not the things they have no control over.*

   This teaches them to persist and that improvement is possible when they make the effort. You want your child to learn that intelligence and ability are malleable rather than fixed. Then they will be motivated to keep pursuing real, lasting improvement over time.

2. **Praising results over improvement**
   The evidence is also clear that parents who over emphasise achievement are more likely to have kids with high levels of depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Your focus instead be on recognising improvement and your child’s efforts to do their best. This, again, will teach them that improvement is possible if they persist; it will encourage them to compete against themselves rather than others.

3. **Over-praising, leading to lack of impact**
   Common sense suggests that the more you praise the same thing over and over, the less impact that praise will have over time. The suggestion is that you praise *intermittently.* In this way your praise will have the maximum effect.

4. **Praising what kids automatically do already**
   Sometimes we praise kids for activities that they are doing automatically, without conscious thought. For some kids this might be keeping their room clean. For others it might be helping with the washing up. It’s fine to praise these things once in a while, but don’t make doing so a habit. All you will achieve is to make this unconscious behaviour conscious, and after a while the praise will be expected.

   It is better to show gratitude for tidiness or other automatic behaviours only very so often. Instead, focus your praise on those behaviours that are less automatic but that you would like to become habitual.
5. Making praise a very public thing
There’s nothing wrong with praising a child in front of their grandparents or other adults every now and then. It’s
great to see a child puff their chest up with pride!

However, constantly praising a child in public can have some interesting side effects including building greater
dependency on the opinions of others, avoiding the taking of learning risks and a heightening of sibling competition.

Make praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement a private matter between you and a child – at least most of the
time. This will make these things more meaningful. Leave the public praise to others – such as those grandparents.

“The key is intermittent reinforcement. The brain has to learn that frustrating spells can be worked through. A
person who grows up getting too frequent rewards will not have persistence, because they’ll quit when the
rewards disappear.”

During the week we ran several “tours” of the school with 80 new families who are considering us for Year 7 2015. I
would like to acknowledge the arrangements made by our builders, FAL, to allow us access to view some of
the Stage 2 rooms nearing completion. Our interview process for Year 7 concludes this week and once again, I would
thank the staff who met with our prospective families well into the evening to conduct the interview process during the
last three weeks. The process, by necessity, has been much more drawn out this year as enrolment applications pass
the 200 mark for the first time.

Two upcoming events I would draw your attention to: the Parents and Friends Association is holding a Trivia Night on
Saturday 26 July. Funds raised from the activities on the night plus the table entry will go towards the purchase of
Apple TVs for each of the new classrooms. This will enable students to showcase their work at a moments notice on the
large screen. The evening promises to be a fun night at the Camden Civic Centre. A flyer will come home shortly with
all the details. We look forward to seeing you there.

For Year 10 parents, we are holding an evening with the Board of Studies Liaison Officer (BOSLO) on Wednesday
June 11 in the Library at St Justin’s Primary. This is a most important evening with information about the Record of
School Achievement, and pathways to Year 11 or leaving school being canvassed.

The St Benedict’s Staff Spirituality Day is being held on Friday June 6. Fr. David Orr OSB, from the Benedictine
community at Arcadia, will be our presenter and will lead the staff in Benedictine prayer immersion experiences and
also present us with the challenges faced with Benedictine spirituality as we lead our students in a globalized world.
This is a non attendance day for students and does give them a slightly longer break in the middle of the flu season
to rest.

A reminder that it is a parent’s legal obligation for their child to attend school each day. My local Principal
colleagues and myself are increasingly concerned about lengthy student absences from school because of family
holidays or other commitments. 15 days leave (not sick leave) or under is the maximum that can be approved by the
Principal in any 12 month period. Beyond that and up to 30 days is a matter that passes beyond the College to the
Catholic Education Office and the Department of Education and School Communities. There are triggers post 30 days
that also involve reporting to FACS, parents for a new category of offence called Educational Neglect. Of grave
concern recently are the number of families who have applied for leave for extended periods during the
examination period in Years 9 and 10. Missing these important periods in school can only be detrimental to learning
and the acquisition of skills which will hold our students in good stead for Years 11 & 12.

Michael Hanratty
Principal
Police have sent out a warning for parents, naming social media messenger app, Kik, as “The number one social media problem involving teenagers.” However, most parents would not have been aware of the app’s existence until recently, Kik is a free messaging app used by more than 50 million people worldwide and allows strangers to connect. It is recommended for people over the age of 17, however, experts say 11-15 year olds are its main users.

Unlike other forms of social media, Kik conversations and interactions cannot be viewed publicly, which makes it harder for parents to monitor their teenager’s usage of the app, compared to sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Australian cyber safety expert Leonie Smith, explains “Why Kik is NOT Safe for Kids” on her website thecybersafetylady.com.au/
YEAR 10 CAREERS EXPO  
Thursday 5 June  
Minto Indoor Sport Centre  
Full winter uniform to be worn, including blazer.

Permission notes are to be returned by Wednesday 28 May.  
If permission note is not returned by the due date the student will not be permitted to attend.

STAFF SPIRITUALITY DAY  
(Pupil Free)  
Friday 6 June

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VACCINATIONS
The second dose of the HPV (Human Papillomavirus vaccine) is scheduled for Wednesday 18 June. This applies to all those Year 7 and Year 9 (boys only) who have received the first dose on the previous visit.

ZOO EXCURSION
Year 7  
Friday 20 June  
Depart: 7:00 am  
Return: 2:30 pm  
Dress: Full winter uniform, including blazers and hat.  
Permission notes are to be returned by Wednesday 11 June. Copies of the excursion note can be downloaded from the College website. Students who do not return their note by the due date, will not be permitted to attend the excursion.

YEAR 10 RoSA  
Information Evening  
Wednesday 11 June  
7pm (sharp)  
St Justin's Library
This is a compulsory evening for all Year 10 students. Key information on the evening will include:  
• How the Record of School Achievement (RoSA) works  
• Eligibility requirements for the RoSA  
• HSC pathways and  
• Leaving before the HSC

PARENT /TEACHER INTERVIEWS  
Thursday evening 26 June  
Friday 27 June  
Bookings for Parent/Teacher Interviews are booked through an online site. Details will be sent home with your child on how to access the site closer to the date. If you don’t have access to the online site then arrangements can be made through the College office.  
Reports will be distributed on Tuesday 24 June, prior to the interview times.

STUDENT LEAVE DURING THE SCHOOL TERM
Parents who wish to take students on leave during normal school time should apply in writing to the Principal, Mr Hanratty. If the period of Approved Leave exceeds 15 days in the 12 month period, a form for Exemption from Attendance at School will be sent home. This should then be completed and returned to the College in time for a formal certificate to be issued.  
If the number of leave days in the period is less than 15, the College will issue a letter of approval.
sleigh loads of fun....
...santa’s super raffles
...abundant enjoyment...
Copious Christmas Cheer

Mulled wine & mince pies, yum.....

Saturday
26 JULY 2014
7-11 PM
@ Camden Civic Centre 'Undercroft'
(opposite Woolworths Camden)

Know your christmas carols?
Reindeer Crossing....

TRIVIA NIGHT
Christmas in July
Please join us...

Come along for a great night of fun and entertainment
only $10 a ticket
Form your own table of 10 or let us seat you at a table of friendly
(& intelligent) parents and friends

COUNT ME IN!!
I/We would love to come along to the trivia night on Saturday 26 July at the Camden Civic Centre Undercroft.

Name: ____________________________
Contact phone no: _______________________

Please find enclosed:
☐ Table of ten = $100 total

Child(ren)’s name: _______________________
Pastoral Class: _______________________

☐ _______ single tickets required @ $10 = $ ________ total
GET THE JOB!

WHAT? Job Preparation Workshop During school Holidays

OUTCOMES
- Set career goals
- Resume writing
- Cover letter writing
- Job applications
- Interview skills & Practice

WHO? Young people aged between 14-21 years of age

WHEN? Wednesday 2nd & 9th of July 11am-3pm (must attend both days)

WHERE? Narellan Library - Corner Queen & Elyard Street, Narellan NSW, 2567

Light lunch provided.

BOOK NOW! (Limited spaces)

Address 16-24 Queen street, Narellan NSW 2567

Phone (02) 46471283

Email info@camdenconnections.org.au