June 2014 Newsletter

Contact Details

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<th>Role</th>
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<td>Mrs T Baghurst</td>
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<td>Deputy Principal</td>
<td>Ms E Marinis</td>
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<td>Relieving Deputy Principal</td>
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Dates to Remember June/July/August

The Mitchell High School Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) meets on the second Wednesday evening each month at 7.00pm in the Mitchell High School Common Room. All parents/carers and friends are welcome to attend.

P&C Meeting
- Wednesday 11 June
- Wednesday 13 August

Parent/Carer Teacher Interviews
- Years 9 and 10
- Tuesday 24 June

Last Day Term 2 2014 (Staff and Students)
- Friday 27 June

First Day Term 3 2014 (Students)
- Tuesday 15 July

Subject Selection Evening
- Year 8 into 9 (2015)
- Year 10 into 11 (2015)
- Tuesday 22 July

Parent/Carer Teacher Interviews
- Years 7 and 8
- Tuesday 29 July

Relieving Principal’s Report

Dear Parents and Students

How time flies when you’re having fun. This will be my last Mitchell High School report as Relieving Principal. I will be taking extended leave from the beginning of Term 3  2014. During this time I will be travelling extensively, working in my artist studio on projects involving various media and enjoying Sydney’s beaches, walks, theatres and restaurants. Our son is a designer in Sweden after completing a Bachelor of Science and a Masters in Industrial Design and my husband and I hope to spend more time in the Nordic countries. Our daughter is completing a double degree. She has a Bachelor of Science and is now completing a Bachelor of Performance thus our interest in Sydney Theatre.

But enough about me. I would like to thank all of the students, staff and families that make Mitchell High School one of the most vibrant, interesting, informed and professional schools in Western Sydney. Our talented students and staff continually amaze me with their enthusiasm, commitment and positive impact. It is an exciting time. There are creative plans to further improve our library, interactive technology, arts, grounds, welfare, literacy and numeracy projects.

I was appointed as Deputy Principal at Mitchell High School in Term 3 1998. It has been quite a journey and I have really enjoyed working with the Mitchell High School community. It was wonderful to celebrate Mitchell High School’s 50th Birthday this term and it was a great opportunity for me to finalise my involvement with Mitchell High School. Mitchell High School certainly provides cutting edge learning and welfare programs.
I know that our school will be managed very capably with even further change. Ms Elena Marinis will be Relieving Principal, Mrs Lee-Anne Pares will continue to relieve as Deputy Principal and Mr Colin Campbell will relieve as Deputy Principal and Ms Michelle Cate will relieve as Head Teacher Welfare. Mr Michael Turner has taken a period allowance which will provide time for him to further engage students in learning. He will continue in his part time Careers Adviser role and take up the role of Student Engagement Officer. All of our relieving staff have extensive experience and because we have worked as a team we share common values, enthusiasm and commitment to quality public education. At Mitchell High School succession management is very much part of our management planning.

Our Head Teachers and Teachers are a great team and have worked in collaboration on our school management plan and we engage in ongoing evaluation of our processes, curriculums and systems to continually improve the quality of education at Mitchell High School. I would particularly like to thank the best school administrative officers’ that I have ever worked with. They are a team of dedicated individuals that enable the day to day functioning of such a large and complex learning community. Our learning and support team are very special individuals that assist our students with their day to day learning and encourage many students to get the most out of their education. Our welfare team including our school counsellors are dedicated to meeting the needs of students and we have some of the best welfare and support programs that are often used as exemplars.

Our PSC have been advocates for Mitchell High School students and staff and I have appreciated our candid discussions relating to improving and supporting learning and welfare programs at Mitchell High School.

I would particularly like to thank Ms Marinis for all of her hard work and support and I wish all of our students, staff and parents the best in the future.

Signing off 27 June 2014.

Tanya Baghurst
Relieving Principal
Mitchell High School

Mitchell High School Celebrates Turning 50

On Saturday 24th May 2014 Mitchell High School hosted a 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner. The evening was well received by many former students and staff and current staff from Mitchell High School. Many travelled extensive distances to celebrate this special night. We had dignitaries from the community at our event including Mrs Michelle Rowland MP, Member for Greenway, Mr Ed Husic MP, Member for Chifley, Mr John Robinson MP, State member for Blacktown, Deputy Mayor Dr Russ Dickens OAM, representing Blacktown City Council and Senior Constable Lachlan McCabe, School Liaison Officer who represented the Local Area Command.

Many of our guests participated in tours of the school and listened to beautiful music whilst enjoying pre dinner canapés and drinks. During this time Mr John Robinson, assisted in laying a time capsule in our sculpture garden that will be reopened in another 50 years by the next generation of former students and staff.

The guests then entered the hall which was decorated with black and white photographs from the 60’s to the current day. An extensive video presentation played in the background during the main meal which was catered for by Sydney Functions Caterers. The 200 dinner guests received a complementary gold printed 50th Anniversary glass and over $1000 worth of memorabilia was sold at the evening by our team of volunteers. The tables were decorated by the assistance of our Hospitality classes and teachers. The students were able to gain accreditation towards their Vocational Studies in Years 11 and 12 by being involved in setting up for this major event.

After dinner a video message (sent from England) from the current Principal Mr Brett Harper was played. Mrs Tanya Baghurst, Relieving Principal, gave a short history of the school and thanked the extensive committee for their hard work. Mr Ed Husic, Mrs Tanya Baghurst and Ms Carmel Lindsay, School Administrative Officer, cut the celebratory cake and 200 beautifully decorated cupcakes, all of which were created by TAS Teacher, Ms. Emily Brown, were distributed to the tables. After dessert a former student and current teacher from Mitchell High School, Ms Tina Petroni, accompanied by “Cocktail Hour” played and sang music from the 60’s to the current day to an enthusiastic crowd.

The feedback from our 50th Anniversary dinner and celebrations have been complimentary and I believe that this was a fitting tribute to the many students, staff and families that have supported Mitchell High School over the past 50 years!

Tanya Baghurst
Relieving Principal
Relieving Deputy Principal’s Report

Road Safety
We still have a number of students who are not being safe in and around the school roads and this is not only dangerous for themselves but also other students and the drivers. Please talk to your children about how to appropriately cross the road and to be polite and respectful to people using the roads.

Homework Centre
The Homework Centre has had an excellent start with many students making use of this resource at the school. There is always a teacher present to help and support the students and with assessment tasks coming up many students should consider using it. There will also be occasions where the Deputies may call and suggest the students make use of it to complete the N-Awards they may have outstanding.

N-Awards
Students who receive an N-Award in Years 9 – 12 are interviewed and placed on a contract to get it completed. Students will receive a 0 mark for the task as it was not submitted on time, however according to the BOSTES guidelines they must complete all work and make a serious attempt at tasks and exams. Failure to do so could mean repeating a year or in the case of the HSC – not receiving their HSC. Please encourage your students to get all work completed on time and make use of the teaching staff and resources we provide to ensure success and the achievement of marks we know they are capable of getting.

IGA
IGA at St. Martin’s Village have been generous in sponsorship towards our school. They have nominated us as their community organisation to support and so each year will present us with a cheque to use towards our reward system – Vivo. This will allow us to purchase prizes and items for the students to purchase using their points they earn. The amount will vary and is based on how many people shop at the IGA. Please support them where you can, knowing a percentage will be coming back to be used for your child at the school. They can also be supported at the Blacktown Show each year where all profits are donated to Mitchell HS and Shelly Public School.

Mrs. L. Pares
Relieving Deputy Principal
Years 7, 9, 11

Parent – teacher night bookings

Parent – teacher nights are coming up for Years 9/10
24th June and 7/8 – 22nd July.

Parents will have the opportunity to book their interviews for Years 9/10 and 7/8 online. You will have an email and a letter sent with the details of how to do this by the end of this week. If you do not have access to the internet then the old system will be available for you to book with the teacher.

We really would like to encourage all parents to make the time to come and talk to the teachers of your students to find out how they are going and how to improve their grades and overall results in the classroom.

When you receive your email/letter it will contain a webcode that allows you access to the system as well as to the details of your child. You will initially enter preferences and then be able to open the file closer to the date to see the specific times that you have been allocated.

Steps involved:


2. Confirm you can attend the event. Go to My Details tab and enter any specific time restrictions and preferences. (Leaving it open allows more flexibility)

3. Click Request interviews tab, and drag any teacher you want to see across to the Teachers I want to see side of the table. This list is prioritised in the order of importance to you, with most important at the top. Higher priority interviews may be allocated over others if there is a high demand for some busy teachers.

4. Wait for the schedule publishing date, or advice from the school that the schedule is ready (by Friday 20/6/14). Log in using the webcode and print off your allocated schedule.

After this date students can then book in with teachers if they have not completed the online booking system. As this is a trial we would be happy to receive any feedback.
Relieving Deputy Principal’s Report

It continues to be another very busy term at Mitchell High School with plenty of wonderful opportunities and leadership programs running at our school.

School Work Project

The School to Work group is a program that we are commencing at MHS to provide students with an opportunity to engage in various school based projects. Students will learn a variety of new skills associated with landscape design, garden art, construction and maintenance etc.

The project is aimed at students both male and female in Years 9 & 10. The selected group will not attend classes on a Friday and will instead be working on various school based projects with the program coordinators (Mr Stooke & Mr Szumyn). We are excited about this new initiative and see it as being a very rewarding experience for our students. There will be ten students selected to participate in the program with the view to expand the participation rate in the future. Students wishing to be a part of this project need to return an Expression of Interest form to the front office asap.

Some of the outcomes the School to Work Project will achieve are as follows:

- Learning new skills that may encourage further study or employment
- Enhance student engagement resulting in reduced behavioural issues in the wider school community.
- Student participants enhance their overall sense of self and wellbeing.
- Ensure student participants feel more connected to the school community.
- Student participants develop a sense of appreciation of what the program is doing for them and they understand that the school community certainly appreciates what they are doing for the school.
- Improve the physical appearance of MHS.
- Whole school community begins to take pride in their ‘garden school’
- Participation in the program may lead to more positive attitudes resulting in greater retention rates.

I Track Radio Story

The I Track Program continues to be a great program which is facilitated by the Smith Family.

iTrack is an online mentoring program for high school students in Year 10. Students are matched with a supportive adult (other than a teacher or parent) who volunteers as a mentor and provides the student with advice and guidance about workplace, study and career opportunities.

Volunteer mentors are drawn from a network of corporate and community partners. All mentors are screened, inducted and then carefully matched with a student according to the student’s career aspirations and interests.

The students and mentors communicate over an 18 week period, or approximately two school terms. The students also engage in two face-to-face meetings during the program.

Recently we were approached by the 702 ABC radio station who would like to run a story about the I Track program. Our school has been approached to participate in the story due to the wonderful reputation we have established in the Sydney Metropolitan area. We are thrilled to be a part of this initiative and look forward to the interviews taking place next week.

Parenting Ideas

As another busy term draws to a close, I would imagine that as parents/carers you will be having discussions at home around achievements in semester one given feedback from parent teacher evening and school reports. Attached to this newsletter is an insightful article on ‘Why Praise can be a Double-Edged Sword’.

This article will hopefully provide some useful information into the types of praise which is useful and productive for your children. It provides examples as to the language which is most effective in discussing progress and achievement.

Colin Campbell
Relieving Deputy Principal
Years 8, 10, 12
The Maths Report

Examination Date Reminders

During June, Year 11 and 12 will be having their Term examinations on the following dates:

Year 11 General (Open page task) will be held week 8: Students are allowed to bring one hand written, double sided A4 Summary Sheet worth 2% of the 20% assessment task.

Year 11 Mathematics (Open page task) will be held in week 9: Students are to bring one hand written double sided A4 Summary sheet worth 2% of the 19% assessment task.

Year 12 General (Project) is due in the 8th week. This is 20% of the assessment task.

Year 12 2 Unit Exam is also due in week 8 which is 18% of the assessment task.

Students must ensure that they are using the MathsOnline and My Maths websites for their learning and preparation for their examinations.

Australian Maths Competition:
Maths competition entries are now closed. There has been a great response this year. We expect to keep the tradition of getting good results.

Australian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiads (APSMO)
The Maths Olympiad is an Australian Problem Solving Mathematics competition funded by the Mathematics department. The Olympiads comprise of five separate tests held between May and September. The participating classes are BM1 and BM2. All contests are held in class. All students who participate in the competition achieve a certificate of participation.

Free After school Tutoring Classes
Free tutoring class for year 12 and year 11 General Mathematics students is available to students every Wednesday after school. While Thursdays are open to all years. Students are encouraged to join the group and make most of the opportunity.

Careers @Mitchell

Where can you find Careers Info? Your school email address, the “Careers at Mitchell High School “ Facebook page, Daily Communicator, MHS website, Careers Notice Boards.

Year 12
You have a very busy term if you want to apply for uni degrees.

Open Days (Also a good idea for years 10 and 11).
All universities and Private colleges have started to have their open days (check online at individual Uni or UAC ). Please take the opportunity to go and experience the different campuses and get as much up to date info as possible so you can make the right choice for you. Take your friends/parents etc. It’s a great day out.

UAC News-Please visit the UAC website
University preferences will be open early mid Term 3. You should already be making choices of which Uni degrees you’d like to choose. You have 9 choices in your online UAC application. Please make sure you put them in order of your preference, no matter whether you can get the target ATAR or not. The on time applications will close 30 September, 2014.

Early Entry to Uni
Universities have programs for early entry, some call it Schools Recommendation Scheme, or Principle Recommendation Scheme. This means you get a guaranteed entry to university before you sit your HSC, and the ATAR to get in to the course is lower than the one needed after the HSC exams (not all courses are included). Please check the requirements for application. The following universities have an online application through UAC, they are; ANU, CSU, GU, LTU, MQ, SCU, UC, UNE, UTS and UWS. The applications will open mid Term 3 and will close 30 September. All other Universities and colleges have their own application system; please see their website ASAP as they may close earlier.

Equity Scholarships (ES)
Are available at some Universities for financially disadvantaged students (this includes you if you receive Austudy, Abstudy, or any Centrelink payments). Applications online at UAC website, open early mid Term 3, close 30 September.
Educational Access Scheme (EAS)
Most of UAC’s participating institutions have Educational Access Schemes (EAS) to help students who have experienced long-term educational disadvantage gain admission to tertiary study. Please check the conditions.

There are seven broad categories of disadvantage:
- disrupted schooling, financial hardship, home environment, English language difficulty, personal illness/disability, refugee status, school environment.

Please use time during your school holidays to plan your Uni needs.

*Remember if you need help, see the Careers Adviser.*

Thank you.

*Mrs. Rumi Badger*
*Careers Adviser*

Masterchef Experience

On the 3rd of June, twelve students from Year 11 and Year 12 Food Technology and Hospitality classes were chosen to participate in a one day Masterchef cooking experience with Jay Huxley. Jay Huxley was a contestant on Masterchef in 2011 and now is a successful restaurateur. Students were able to gain a firsthand experience and ask many questions about his career. They also took part in cooking his signature dish, Chicken Mushroom Risotto. Jay also took his ute onto the main quadrangle where he cooked a barbecue for the rest of the school to enjoy. I would like to thank the School Canteen for organising and allowing Mitchell High School students to participate in this great experience.

STUDENT ABSENCES
SMS Messaging

Parents are asked when they send an SMS Message to the school for student absences that they include the *Students Name*.

The number to send an SMS Message to is:

0427 463 129
Photos from the Mitchell High School 50th Anniversary Dinner
COMMEMORATIVE PATH

Dear Parents / Carers

As part of our 50th Anniversary celebrations we would like to construct a commemorative pathway made of individualised pavers to feature in the Rose Garden area. The pavers can be purchased for $25 each and can be individualised in two styles. You may choose a printed format with a maximum of 17 characters (including spaces) on each line to a maximum of 3 lines. You must complete the form in capital letters. The second option is a hand written, hand drawn paver. The drawing must be simple and you need to follow the instructions regarding the pen type and use the size template provided. Your paver could commemorate an individual past or present student, or a family connected with the school currently or in the past.

All orders need to be placed and paid for by Friday 20 June 2014. Order forms are to be given to Mrs Mahony in the English Staff Room and payment is to be made to the Front Office. All orders will be checked by Mrs Mahony prior to the order being placed, however, it is essential that all writing is clear and conforms to the requirements of the paving company.

We are very excited about this initiative which will become a part of the history of our school. We look forward to your involvement. If you require any further information, please contact Mrs Mahony on 9662 9944.

Regards

Tanya Baghurst
Relieving Principal
9 May 2014
2 June 2014

Dear Parent/Carer(s)

Nationally consistent collection of data on schools students with disability – 2014

Our school is participating in the collection of nationally consistent data on school students with disability.

We will be collecting information already available in the school about the support that is being provided to students with disability. Better data will help the Government plan for students with disability.

The data collection will have no direct impact on your child and they will not be involved in any testing process.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities will provide data to the Australian Government from all NSW public schools in such a way that no individual student or school will be able to be identified. In this way, we will ensure the privacy and confidentiality of all students.

All information is protected by privacy laws which regulate the collection, storage and disclosure of personal information. Information about the Australian Government’s Privacy Policy can be found here: http://education.gov.au/condensed-privacy-policy. Information about the NSW Government’s privacy policy can be found here: http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/

If you do not want your child to be counted in the data collection you must complete the attached form and return it to the school by Friday the 20 June 2014. A decision to exclude your child will not affect the support they currently receive.


If you have any questions about your child being included in the data collection please contact the school.

If you need help with English to make an enquiry contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. The operator will call the number you provide and get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Kind regards

Tanya Baghurst
Relieving Principal
PLEASE RETURN THIS SLIP TO THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

If you do not want your son/daughter to be counted in the data collection, please complete the attached form and return it to the schools administration office before Friday 20 June 2014.

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability – 2014

I / we Parent/Carer 1 __________________________ name of parent/carer

Parent/Carer 2(optional) __________________________ name of parent/carer

Do not wish my son/daughter (full name) __________________________

In Year__________ to be counted for the purposes of the collection of nationally consistent data on school students with disability.

Parent/Carer 1 Signature: __________________________

Date: ______/_____/_____

Parent/Carer 2 Signature (optional): __________________________

Date: ______/_____/_____

Respectful, Engaged and Active Learners
Why praise can be a double-edged sword

The way we praise our children, even from a very early age, can have a lasting impact. When done effectively, it can really promote resilience.

It seemed to come out of nowhere. One day we had a happy, confident, thriving daughter who was doing really well at school and the next she was alternating between a quiet sullenness and loud arguments, telling us, “I just don’t care”.

The problem appeared to lie with her maths. She had previously found maths quite easy, and had got good enough marks to be put up into the higher level with the “smart” kids. The result was a unhappy drop in her and a significant slump in her performance.

Putting on our best parental hats, we tried to work out what had happened. Our daughter’s response to our gentle probing was “I should never have been put into the smart kids class because I’m dumb” and “My teacher just thinks I’m not trying”.

Kids (and adults) learn best when feeling confident and motivated to do well, even when the work is hard. The problem is that in many instances our education system is set up to award clear marks or strictness before effort. Those who excel in learning and passing exams often enjoy a lowered status and are held up as the example for others to emulate. There is much less recognition for effort alone.

The problem with this is that it potentially damages the confidence and self-belief of some children around the nation.

As parents it is natural to want to see our children do well. When we see our kids reaching those first milestones, we smile and celebrate their brilliance. It turns out the words we use to praise our kids at the age of five years or three years will determine the mindset conclusions for challenges that show itself five years later, when they start school. This can even affect the way we think about our future right into adulthood.

When we praise intelligence – “You are so smart,” “You are so clever” – we are using language that suggests these are the traits that cause the most, and that make our children different from others.

In contrast, when we praise effort – “Wow, you tried hard with that.” “We’re proud of you for doing all that work.” – we are setting up progress and intrinsic motivation. That promotes a “growth” or “possibility” mindset...

Unfortunately for our daughter, somewhere along the line she had come to believe that she was only doing well if she consistently got an A. Belonging in a class designed to stretch her capability resulted in the opposite occurring as she no longer received those high scores. She now felt like a failure and, not liking being made to feel stupid, had decided it wasn’t worth going the harder try.

What we needed was more of a growth mindset. Helping our children to develop a "growth" versus "fixed" mindset is what makes the biggest difference in determining our level of self-confidence, resilience and motivation.

Professor Carol Dweck, in her book Mindset, describes how by choosing to develop a growth mindset, you can learn from your mistakes, and feel free to choose which lessons we learn from. It’s all a new skill or piece of learning that has been challenging or difficult.

Our mindset is not something we are born with, it is formed and shaped through experience, and we who we hang out with. We used to think that intelligence was innate, a fixed quality, and we now know that is simply not true.

Tips for encouraging a growth mindset:

1. Look at learning as a way to stretch and grow through challenge. Learning new things is great, but it means seeing new possibilities as ways of doing things. It encourages imagination and creative thinking.

2. When congratulating your child, use words that praise the outcome that has resulted from their putting in the work and effort.
Parenting Insights

... why praise can be a double-edged sword ...

Building parent-school partnerships

1. When things go wrong, ask, “What could you do differently next time to get a better result?” Failure and making mistakes is normal. Learning to deal with them effectively helps build resilience.

2. Use the power of “yet.” If your child tells you, “I’m no good at...” or “I can’t do that,” your response could be, “You’re just not there... yet.” This implies that it is work in progress and success may come through perseverance. It’s not about false hope, but encouragement.

Other research is now uncovering additional benefits from adopting a growth mindset. It can:

- encourage a student to want to stay at school longer
- facilitate transition to university
- diminish bullying or aggressive behaviour
- develop resilience in the face of adversity
- help seize challenges as an opportunity
- develop tenacity in persevering to overcome obstacles
- help see effort as the route to mastery
- build the ability to use criticism as something to learn from
- promote inspiration and new learning from sharing in the success of others.

We all want our children to do well and one of the best ways we can help is to promote growth mindset so they become more positive in their outlook and see their own capabilities, based on their perspective of the world and elevate their resilience levels.

Dr Jenny Brockis is a brain health specialist. Her focus is on promoting optimal health and function for all brains. She is also an author and speaker, and mum to two young adults. www.drjennybrockis.com

Jenny Brockis


parentingideas.com.au
Attention Yr 11 Science Students @ MHS

- Are you in Yr11 and studying a Science Subject?
- Are you interested in attending an overseas Excursion to NZ for 7 days?
- Then see Mr Debrincat in Science to collect an EOI (Expression of Interest) before the end of Week 6 T2.
- The Excursion will cost approximately $2800 and will take place in the first week of the Easter School holidays (Sun 5th April – Sat 11th April 2015).

Don’t miss out!