

NEWSLETTER

Week 8 Term 4 – 01/12/2020

Farewell and Welcome

At the end of this year we sadly **say farewell to the following STA staff members** and sincerely thank them for their tremendous contributions to our school community. We wish them all the very best.

Ms Geneveive Smith, Miss Deborah O’Conner, Mrs Joan Noney and Mrs Joanne Toohey.

Mrs Elaine Collier will be taking Long Service Leave for all of the year 2021. We hope she has a wonderful holiday relaxing and spending time with her family.

In 2021 we welcome some new members to our school community:

Miss Tania Geracitano (Assistant Principal), Mr James West (Class teacher), Mrs Emma Anderson and Mrs Suzannah Sinclair who will join our Diversity Team.

Executive Director Summer Reading Challenge



These summer holidays, I am again launching my Summer Reading Challenge and encouraging all students to read, read, read!

Students can read anything they like to enter the challenge, whether it’s a comic, play, a piece of poetry, book, e-book or animated novel.

Taking part in the Executive Director’s Summer Reading Challenge is easy! Students just need to read something they enjoy and tell us in 50 words or less why they loved it. The more a student reads, the more times they can enter the reading challenge and the more chances they have of winning one of two Chromebooks or one of 30 runner-up gift vouchers to the value of \$30. Students can enter [online](#) by visiting the CEDP website.

Entries open on **23 November 2020** and **close at 5:00pm on 1 February 2021**. Terms and Conditions can be found [here](#).

Mr Greg Whitby
Executive Director


Change of School for 2021

To estimate enrolments for 2021, it would be appreciated if the school could be notified **in writing** of any children who may be leaving St Thomas Aquinas at the end of the year from grades other than Year 6. Thank you.

Office Hours: 8.30 am - 4.00 pm

(02) 4723 3800 

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2021 Mathematical Assessment Interviews

In 2021 we have been granted permission to commence the year with an additional Staff Development Day on Thursday 28 January so that teachers can administer the Mathematical Assessment Interview (MAI) to our students. The Mathematical Assessment Interviews enables teachers to tailor their mathematics teaching program to effectively meet the needs of their students. Being able to perform the assessment at this earlier time will mean that teachers will have valuable information about each child's learning in mathematics from the very beginning of the year. To have a large number of assessments completed before the children formally return to school will enable teachers to perform the remaining assessments in a timely fashion once the term commences and with the least disruption to class learning time.

Parents will be asked to use the online booking system that we have previously used for parent teacher interviews to make an appointment for your children on either Wednesday 27 January or Thursday 28 January 2021. Please note that there are additional days for 2021 Kindergarten students to have an interview. Information about bookings for these sessions was given to families at our recent Kinder Orientation.

This means that **school will resume for Year 1 - 6 on Friday 29 January 2021 and on Tuesday 2 February for Kindergarten.**

Christmas/Nativity Dress-up Day – Friday 11 December

On Friday 11 December students may come to school dressed in the following Christmas/Nativity character costumes:

- Kindergarten - Angels
- Year 1 and Year 2 - Nativity Animals
- Year 3 - Shepherds
- Year 4 - Mary and Joseph
- Year 5 - Christmas Around the World
- Year 6 - Wise Men/Women



We are working towards a “**Virtual Christmas Concert**” which will be made available to families from 11 December. The virtual concert will be sent out in 5 parts over several days via our Facebook page from 11 December, due to the large size of the video clips. Further details to come on SkoolBag soon.

A Message from Finance

Just a short message to say thank you for adapting to the school’s decision to become a cashless school. The feedback in response to the introduction of the Qkr! app has been very positive. We feel that this will be a much more efficient way of processing our hats, fundraising events and all other ad-hoc payments in our school. In 2021 we will also use the app for enrolment deposits along with payments for our sporting gala days. This will also include the use of a paperless method for parental permission forms. *(See how to install Qkr! on last page of this newsletter.)*

Final fee statements for the year have now been issued. Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta have issued a due date of **18 December 2020**. If you would like to discuss any outstanding fees, please contact Cheree Brown to discuss your options or a payment plan or to arrange a meeting with Marina Hardy (Principal).

Just a reminder that your school fee statement may look a little different next year. You will notice that the Resource Fee has increased and there is no longer a Family Levy as the Family Levy and Resource Fee have now merged. In most cases this has little or no impact on families. For families with 3 or more students, there will be a slight increase in the combination of these fees. For 2021 there will be no increase in Diocesan Tuition Fees or the Building Levy, therefore you will find that the total school fees increase is within the bounds of normal annual increases.

Important dates

Last day for payments at school – Friday 11 December 2020

Last day for school office – Wednesday 16 December 2020

School office re-opens – Wednesday 27 January 2021

Car Park Safety

Parents are reminded NOT to park in the staff car park at any time.

School Uniform

Thank you for your patience, understanding and support with changing over to our new uniform supplier. The uniform Pop Up Shop was very successful with many families able to purchase new items of our school uniform.

Sports Uniform

As communicated earlier we have introduced a new sports uniform to our school. We ask that all students are wearing the new sports uniform by the commencement of 2022, giving all families 12 months to transition to the new uniform.

Students are asked not to mix the summer uniform with the sports uniform. Therefore, **the sports jacket is only to be worn on sports days.**

Expectations

At St Thomas Aquinas we expect that all students wear the correct uniform with pride and follow our school uniform and grooming agreements. We are extremely pleased that the majority of our students wear the correct uniform each day. **However, we have noticed some students continue to have unusual styles of haircuts, coloured hair, excessive jewellery, various coloured socks and nail polish.**

We ask that all families **read the school Uniform and Grooming policy (included below)** and reinforce these expectations with their children. We understand and appreciate that some families are organising to purchase new items from The School Locker for the commencement of 2021. If a student is unable to wear an element of the correct school uniform a note from the parent indicating the reason needs to be presented to the teacher.

UNIFORMS & GROOMING

(From our current STA Parent Handbook)

School Uniform

Our school uniform makes an unambiguous statement of who we are and what we stand for as a school. At St Thomas Aquinas we expect our students to wear their uniforms correctly at all times. We believe that by encouraging students to take pride in themselves and their appearance we are promoting school spirit, self-esteem and a sense of belonging to our school community. Our expectations are that:

- Students wear the correct school uniform every day.
- Black leather shoes are worn on non-sport days and polished regularly.
- Shirts are tucked in at all times (except when at sport or at play).
- **School hats** are worn each day whilst outdoors and all year round – *(this is in keeping with the school's Sun Safety Procedures).*
- **Summer uniforms** are worn in Terms 1 and 4.
- **Winter uniforms** are worn in Terms 2 and 3.
- **School fleecy jacket (optional)** can be purchased from the uniform supplier and may be worn with all uniforms.
- **Sports uniform items (including sports jackets)** are worn **only on designated sports days** and **not** with the regular uniform.
- In winter any extra jackets should be in school colours.
- **Polo shirts, jackets and 'hoodies'** acquired through CEDP sporting events may **only** be worn when representing the school at Diocesan sports events or on designated mufti days.

We ask that parents reinforce these expectations with their children when they leave home for school.

All articles of clothing and belongings must be clearly marked with your child's name.

Lapses in Wearing Correct Uniform

If a student is unable to wear an element of the correct school uniform a note from the parent indicating the reason needs to be presented to the teacher. Such lapses from the correct uniform must only be temporary.

Hair and Grooming

Students should wear neat and tidy hair styles to complement our school uniform. Hair is to be kept off the collar or tied back securely. No hair should be in the way of the eyes. Hair is not to be coloured or tinted. Unusual styles or cuts are **not** allowed. These guidelines apply both to girls and boys and may assist in preventing the spread of head lice. Ribbons, scrunchies, hair slides etc. if worn, should be in the St Thomas Aquinas uniform colours of dark and/or light blue.

Students who consistently lapse in wearing the correct uniform and following the grooming policy will be referred to the Assistant Principal and a note sent home.

Jewellery & Accessories

Apart from one pair of sleepers or small plain studs and wristwatch, excessive jewellery is not permitted, for safety reasons. A chain with a cross or religious medallion may be worn under shirt or dress lines. Nails should be unvarnished, kept clean and neatly trimmed. No makeup is to be worn. No leather or bead necklaces are to be worn.

QKR! App

It's time to install the QKR! App; our **new payment platform** for all ad-hoc items for purchase. This app will now replace all cash payments and parents are able to order hats and pay for Clothing Pool items. Once you have made a purchase for a hat, the school is notified immediately, and we will then deliver the hat to the student for their recess or lunchtime play. The app is free, and your profile is confidential.



masterpass

To install →: Go to the **Google play store or Apple App store** to download for Android or iPhone, register your country of residence as Australia, search for our school by name (will appear in nearby locations if within 10km of STA), register your child's details then you are ready to make purchases and payments.

Please note:

- **Payments for school fees cannot be made on QKR!** Current arrangements for school fees have not changed.
- We cannot refund on the QKR! App. Please **email the school with any Clothing Pool orders before processing** payments, so that we can check that the items are in stock.

If you require any assistance, please contact Cheree Brown, our Finance Secretary.

PARISH NEWS

St Thomas Aquinas Parish CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES 2020:



Springwood

Lawson (OLN)

Christmas Eve, Thurs 24th Dec	5.00pm Children's Mass 8.00pm VIGIL	5.00pm Children's Mass 8.00pm VIGIL
Christmas Day, Fri 25th Dec	8.00am, 9.30am	8.00am, 9.00am
Boxing Day, Sat 26 Dec	No Mass	No Mass
Sun 27th December	8.00am, 9.30am	8.30am
Tues 29th, Wed 30th Dec	9.30am	5.00pm
Thurs 31st Dec	9.30am	9.00am
Fri 1st January	9.30am	

The Christmas Masses are filling up fast and numbers are restricted to 10 per family. **To book please phone the Parish office on 4754 1052 or email springwood@parracatholic.org**

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2020 TERM 4	Week 9	Tuesday 8 December	Swimming Carnival for 2021 – <i>competitors only</i>
		Friday 11 December	Christmas/Nativity Dress up Day
	Week 10	Monday 14 December	Zoom Awards Ceremonies – 9.30-11.00am Years 4-6 12.00-1.30pm Years K-3 <i>(details to come)</i>
		Tuesday 15 December	Year 6 Graduation Liturgy – 12.00-2.00pm <i>(details to come)</i>
		Wednesday 16 December	Year 6 Picnic Day Last Day for Students for 2020
--- CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS ---			
2021 TERM 1	Week 1	Wednesday 27 January	STAFF ONLY COMMENCE – No classes Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Years K-6
		Thursday 28 January	No classes Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Years K-6
		Friday 29 January	Year 1-6 Students Commence Term 1 Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Kindergarten
	Week 2	Monday 01 February	Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Kindergarten
		Tuesday 02 February	Kindergarten Commence Term 1 (Full days)