FROM THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dear Parents, Carers and Community Members,

Congratulations to Mr Kevin Billion who has been appointed to an Acting Principal position at St Ita’s Dutton Park for the last few days of this term and the first four weeks of Term 4. Following an Expression of Interest process we are pleased to announce that Mrs Marianne Ferguson (4K) will be stepping into the Acting Assistant Principal RE role. We congratulate both Kevin and Marianne on these appointments to leadership. We look forward to welcoming Mr Jamie Weinert back to St Rita’s to teach 4K during this time.

Future Authors!
We congratulate our 20 students from the Year 4/5 Book Club and Year 6/7 Writing Extension Group who will be attending the Brisbane Writer’s Festival “Wordplay” program this coming Friday. This gives our students the opportunity to meet with professional authors, publishers and illustrators and be inspired by their creativity and passion for writing.

Father’s Time
A great thank you to our many Dads and Grandads who were able to come to our Father’s Day Liturgy and BBQ breakfast organised by our wonderful Mini Vinnies team and School Parent Network. This was a great opportunity to connect with and honour fatherhood. Please find enclosed an article by Michael Grose from Parenting Ideas – “Father Time is Valuable” for your interest.

Support for St Mary’s Beaudesert
We’ve had a great response to support St Mary’s school to get back on track following the devastating fire to their main school building. Yesterday we couriered 28 computers and approximately 15 boxes filled with stationery items kindly donated by our families. We know that these will be greatly appreciated by the students and staff.

Prep Open Afternoon Session
We look forward to our open session planned for next Monday (9 September) afternoon between 3.30pm and 5.30pm. This is to encourage families who are looking for Prep enrolments for future years, to come and see our school and what we offer at St Rita’s. The majority, if not all, of our prospective enrolments come with our school’s high standing and reputation based on feedback from you - our current parent community. Thank you for your support in this competitive climate for school choice and we look forward to expanding on this with the Open Afternoon.

ARK Program
Part of our Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support at St Rita’s has been introducing our ARK (Awesome Rita Kids) Program. This is a “check in / check out” process to help students monitor positive learning behaviours to assist with concentration and class focus. Next week our SWPBS team are attending the third year of training and will be providing feedback on this program. We would greatly appreciate any evaluative feedback from parents of children who have been part of ARK to email any comments from your experience to pvictoriapoint@bne.catholic.edu.au. Thank You!

As we near the end of the Federal Election Campaign (Phew!) we are hopeful that the outcome will be positive for our Catholic Schools. The National Catholic Education Commission have provided responses from both major parties to six crucial questions for Catholic Education which are an insert to today’s newsletter.

May God’s peace and blessings with you and your family in the coming week.

Anne McKenny
Principal
New Religious Education Curriculum
Over the past few years, a number of St Rita’s staff have been part of a team planning for the implementation of the new BCE Religion Curriculum. Sometime ago it was granted the Imprimatur by the Archbishop for use in the Archdiocese and next week Fr. Leo and Ms McKenny will attend a briefing with Archbishop Mark Coleridge on its key details. The Religion Curriculum P-12 describes core content that is to be taught and that students should learn, and is therefore the starting point for planning for teaching, learning and assessing of Religion in schools. The four strands of the Religion Curriculum P-12 are interrelated and their content will be taught in an integrated way. These four strands are Sacred Texts, Beliefs, Church and Christian Life, with each strand containing three sub-strands. Teachers are currently planning to use some of this content next Term and we look forward to what these new learning experiences may bring for our children. What is particularly interesting is the sub-strand World Religions and the study of Judaism throughout the year levels. Please come and see me if who wish to discuss any information.

Have a wonderful week
Kevin

If we don’t stand up for children, then we don’t stand for much.” (Marian Wright Edelman)

This week is Child Safety week and a great opportunity for us all to reflect on how we can contribute to the safety of our Children and also to their general journey of development.

I can remember the famous rugby league coach and father, Wayne Bennett once said that being a parent can be difficult. "None of us are great parents; we'd all like to be better, I don't think there's any of us that feel we've done enough for our kids," he said.

"But sometimes you've also got to understand it's not possible to be the perfect parent but it's just creating a home where ... the kid feels it's a sanctuary, there's safety there and that somebody cares about you in that household."

It is a reminder to us all that whatever we do, whatever we say, our children are watching. They hear swear words shouted at the motorist who cuts in front of us on the roundabout, they see the effects of a few too many drinks in an evening and they learn that these behaviour choices are appropriate, when this is plainly not the case.

Imagine if our children saw us offering a helping hand to a young mother or an elderly neighbour when needed, or us ignoring the queue jumper at the checkout. Our kids would learn that this was the way things were meant to be and thus we can influence a future that is more patient, perhaps kinder and maybe even a little less fraught.

All the best
Shane

SCHOOL PARENT NETWORK

Tomorrow, Wednesday 4 September, will be the next monthly SPN meeting. We are always open to new ideas about making our children's school experience better. If you have something to share then we invite you to come along to the Staff room in the Administration building at 7pm. We look forward to seeing you there!
Some weeks ago a note went home about students not returning in 2014. If you are aware that your child/ren will not be returning to St Rita’s in 2014 it would be appreciated if you could return the form to the school office as soon as possible.

**WORLD YOUTH DAY**

**Little Gus’ Big Adventure at World Youth Day**

**Pilgrim Walk**

One of the great traditions of World Youth Day is for all pilgrims to walk together to an open space for a night-long vigil and sleep out, followed by final Mass with the Pope in the morning. In Sydney pilgrims walked to Randwick Racecourse, in Madrid they walked to Cuatro Vientos (a disused airport) and in Rio, the intention was for pilgrims to walk to Guaratiba, a field at the foot of the mountains about 70kms from Rio. However, in the weeks leading up to WYD, heavy rains caused localised flooding and one place completely submerged was Guaratiba. Organisers decided it was not appropriate to send a few million pilgrims to a muddy, watery field for a sleep out. Luckily, the organisers had a Plan B!

A shorter walk through the city of Rio was organised and from early Saturday morning, a constant snake of pilgrims wound their way through Rio’s streets making their way to Copacabana Beach. By this point in our trip, most of our group had succumbed to sickness and were exhausted. As much as we wanted to walk in solidarity with our fellow pilgrims, we made a group decision not to. Instead, we decided to do our own, shorter walk and to meet the other pilgrims at Copacabana. So, on Saturday afternoon, we dressed in all the Australian paraphernalia we could find and set off for our own Brisbane Catholic Education Pilgrimage Walk.

We walked along Ipanema Beach, chatting, singing, dancing, taking photos and just generally spending time together. We walked the length of the beach and stopped at the headland of giant rocks which separates Ipanema and Copacabana. We found a cosy little cove and sat reflecting on week for a few moments. With the soundtrack of the waves crashing against the rocks, we began to sing *Lanterns* (Birds of Tokyo) and as we did, some giant sea birds came in and danced before us in the sky. Then a small pod of dolphins came close and played in the waters below us. It was a truly wonderful moment. It was as though the world had stopped for a few minutes. And for those few minutes, it was just us and God’s creation at its best.

It was a great reminder for us to stop. Sometimes our lives are so busy that we forget to stop and take time to talk to God. We could have got caught up in the excitement of walking among millions of our fellow pilgrims through the streets of Rio and it would have been awesome, but instead, something told us not to. Something guided our decision to do our own little walk. And for that, we got a few minutes of much-needed time with our God which refreshed and renewed us. I encourage you, please this week, find some time to sit amongst creation and be open to a conversation with God. You may not see a pod of dolphins, but God is waiting to show or give you something.

**ST MARY’S SCHOOL APPEAL**

**St Mary’s Stationery Appeal**

Wow! St Rita’s you are an amazing and generous community! Yesterday we sent off a number of boxes of stationery to St Mary’s Catholic School at Beaudesert to help support them in getting back ‘on-track’ after their devastating fire. The Mini Vinnies are collecting items until the end of this week, so if your family would still like to contribute, please send in your donations in this week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level Groups</th>
<th>Suggested Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preps, Yr 1, Yr 2</td>
<td>Coloured and Lead pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yr 3, Yr 4, and Yr 5</td>
<td>Rulers, Erasers, Sharpeners, Scissors, Glue sticks, Highlighters, Pencil cases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yr 6 and Yr 7</td>
<td>7mm blue lined exercise books, 7mm and 5mm grid books, Scrapbooks</td>
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NEWSFLASH!

Gus is going to Cleveland library with Mrs Tate on Wednesday 4 September at 3:30pm. Why not join him and celebrate the beginning of spring by making a cool wind sock. This is a free craft session and a great opportunity for Prep to Year 3 children to improve their oral language skills.

SPORTS NEWS

St Rita’s Touch Football

Touch Football games will not be played this Friday night due to Redfest. Competition resumes September 13.

Training will be held on Thursdays from 3.15pm – 4.15pm for U/12’s and U/14’s. Mr Kenyon’s U/10’s team will train Wednesday 2nd break at school. Mrs Hill’s U/10’s team will train Thursday 1st break at school.

Bayside Athletics

Congratulations to our St Rita’s Representative Athletes, who competed at the ‘Bayside Combined Catholic Schools’ Athletics carnival last Thursday. St Rita’s performed outstandingly, achieving some great results. St Rita’s Finished in 3rd in overall points and 5th in percentage points. A fantastic effort by everyone, Well Done!

Mission Cup Netball

Training for the Mission Cup Netball Squad will be on Tuesday afternoons from 3.15pm till 4.15pm. Please let Mr Kenyon know if you are unable to make training certain weeks.

State Games – Special Olympics

All the best to Matthew D who will be competing in the Special Olympics State Games on the Sunshine Coast this Saturday. Matthew is a member of the Brisbane East Swimming team and he will be competing in Freestyle, Backstroke and Butterfly. Looking forward to hearing some great results!

HPE Lessons

Year 3-7 students are reminded to continue bringing their tennis racquets (if they own one) to HPE lessons for the remainder of this term.

Important Dates

Year 6 Camp – 11 - 13 September (Next Week)
Interschool Sports Day #4 – Tuesday 15 October

The following students were awarded a Gotcha from Gus. Fantastic Work!

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<tr>
<th>PK</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jialan B</td>
<td>Noah Mc</td>
<td>Leme M</td>
<td>Mack S</td>
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<td>Isaac L</td>
<td>Alex W</td>
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<td>Lachlan K</td>
<td>Kasey B</td>
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<td>Noah C</td>
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<td>Ayo O</td>
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<th>1L</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lyndon T</td>
<td>Katie J</td>
<td>Bethany</td>
<td>Sophie D</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

ASSEMBLY AWARDS

PK

Elijah T For Inspiring Learning during Maths activities with your great explanations and answers. Fantastic Elijah!

Perynese A For Inspiring Learning when conducting interviews to find out the words known by your classmates. Amazing Perynese!

PT

Baelin P For Inspiring learning by demonstrating great word finding skills. Well done Baelin.

PL

Ella D For showing respect to everyone by being kind. You always welcome others to join your games. Thank you!

Sarah M For inspiring learning by being so enthusiastic about reading our class big books. Fantastic!

Cortney K For inspiring learning by being so happy about your reading success. Well done!

1K

Tom S Fantastic Work Tom. You have been trying very hard to make good choices in the classroom. This INSPIRES others to do the same. Wonderful!!!!!!

Angelina R Great Work Angelina!! You make sure you use correct manners and polite words. This means you are being RESPECTFUL. Terrific!!

1T

Gemma D For attentive listening in class and for producing work of a high quality. What an inspirational learner you are, Gemma!

Lachlan G For being so brave during your recent illness. What a great model of resilience you are, Lachlan!
Matthew C
For your great writing this week. It was so neat and all spelt correctly! Keep up the great work!

Phoebe A
For showing respect for other people by always using your manners and treating others with kindness. Great choices, Phoebe!

Kynan B
For Inspiring Learning in 2K by making excellent progress with your reading. Keep up the good work!

Noah B
For your great thinking that you used during our science investigation today. Excellent effort!

Joshua G
For showing that you are ready to learn in class. You are making an excellent effort!!

Joshua M
For always being ready to learn and keen to participate in classroom activities. Keep up the great work!

Georgina B
For never giving up when working on your addition with regrouping. Well done! Keep up the super effort!

Bella P
For always participating in all classroom activities. You are always thinking and asking questions to improve your learning and knowledge. Well done!

Nicolas C
For always using good manners when speaking to others.

Paula O
For always presenting your work neatly. Well done.

Emma G
For a great effort with your reading and comprehension. Keep up the good work.

Jake M
For being a thoughtful and caring friend.

Harry S
For your wonderful sense of humour that keeps us laughing throughout the day.

Holly H
For inspiring learning by participating in class discussions and activities. Thank you for your contributions to our class learning.

Carlin C
For respecting everyone by being a great friend and classmate. Thank you for supporting and including your peers.

Zac R
For inspiring learning by working hard to improve your learning and making good choices by following the school and classroom expectations.

Elliot C
For inspiring learning by creating a motivational poster to keep your learning on track and sharing this with your classmates.

Billie
For Inspiring Learning by practising her oral presentation on Digital Citizenship until she knew it off by heart.

Leilani
For Inspiring Learning by giving a very clear presentation about Digital Citizenship for the Year Threes and her peers.

Chelsea B
For Inspiring Learning while working on your sustainability website. You have clearly outlined how we are wiping out waste at St Rita’s.

Thomas J
For Acting Safe and Being Safe by always hopping off your bike or scooter and walking it through the school. It is great to see you wearing a helmet and crossing the road safely.

Riley L
For Respecting Everyone. It was lovely to see you making new friends at St Rita’s. You easily fitted into our class because of your kind and friendly nature.

Emily I
For your enthusiasm to get your work completed. Thank you. You are appreciated

Katie R
For your insightful contributions to our class discussions and your attitude to “give it a go”.

Caleb K
For your keenness to learn and do better in your school work. You always participate in class discussions.

Ethan W
Welcome to St Rita’s! We are lucky to have you join our class!

Tim D
For showing great thinking skills in Maths and working through problems well.

Piper E
For always showing consideration towards her peers and helping others when needed.

Hayley S
For listening attentively in class and participating in class discussions.

**UNIFORM SHOP**

**HOURS**

Thursday 8.00 to 10.00am
Friday 8.00 to 10.00am
Out and About.
Media Excellence Day
Imagine having the opportunity to participate in a photography session in a professional studio and learning about lighting, DSLR cameras and photographic design elements. Then, spending the remainder of the day in a professional television studio, where lighting, sound and video was brought to life through your very own live television news production! This was the invaluable enrichment experience that 16 of our year 6 and 7 students were presented with today at Victoria Point State High School as they engaged in a variety of creative and inspiring learning opportunities.

Brisbane Writers Festival
This Friday our year 4/5 Book Club and year 6/7 writing extension group will be attending the Brisbane Writers Festival at the State Library, where they will be active participants in two literary workshops that support the Australian Curriculum and have the opportunity to meet with professional authors, publishers and illustrators. It’s fantastic to see the enthusiasm shown by the students attending this event. They will be fine representatives of our school.

MUSIC NEWS
Congratulations to Junior Choir on a fantastic performance at Marebello aged-care, Victoria Point. The students singing was beautiful and their behaviour was exemplary. Congratulations to Zeph and Quinn Chambers, and Leah Lever for their performances. Apparently we had a few of the audience in tears (but for all good reasons!). If there are any parents who have any photo’s that may be useable from P-3 performances from the fete, can you let me know.

Could you please note that Iona College Choral Spectacular is cancelled for Senior Choir on Friday.

Coming up.......Marebello Aged Care Facility (Senior Choir, September 16), school song recording (Week 11)

The Great Book Swap – This event will take place on October 25. Do you have some books you no longer need? Would someone else love to read a book you have enjoyed? Send your pre-loved books to school to be a part of The Great Book Swap. “Teaching a child to enjoy books is educating a generation ahead.” Andy Griffiths - author

SCHOOL BANKING
Not long until school holidays!! Who’s doing something exciting? Good to see so many of you saving for the holidays. This week’s Banker of the Week is Brandon D. Good job Brandon, a bonus is in your account!!

Mums and Dads did you know that at the moment you can go into the draw to win $500 a day just by using you Visa Debit Card linked to a Day 2 Day Plus Account? Want to know more?? Drop in and see us or give us a call!! Have a great week.

Thank you from
Your Personal Banking Team @
Victoria Point Shopping Centre
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PH 3207 6133

TUCKSHOP NEWS
Wednesday 4th September
Tracey Knight
HELP NEEDED???

Thursday 5th September
Maria Kease
Trish McNamara

Friday 6th September
Louise Lowcock
Nigel Wright
Leila Winterburn
Brenda Owbridge
2ND Break
Nicola Taylor
We are always looking for Volunteers to help in the tuckshop, it is also a great way to meet other families. If you can spare anytime at all please fill out a form in the office.
Renee Saleh 0411 523 969
email:rsaleh@bne.catholic.edu.au

FROM THE PARISH

Thank you from Fr Leo:
A big thank you to all the parents who brought their children to mass over the weekend. We had a wonderful celebration on Saturday night when Kim Heironymus was received into the church and was Confirmed and received Holy Communion for the first time. Kim has been preparing for this event for 8 months and it was wonderful to have the Parish Junior choir there to provide us with lovely singing. We had one of our biggest crowds for Children’s Liturgy and we blessed all the father’s present with our prayers and with a special father’s day bookmark. We concluded the mass with an invitation to join us for a bbq at the “Meet and Eat” outside the church. A special thank you to Fran Connors and the Parish Council and all her helpers who provided the yummy food! We appreciate all the ministers who give of the time and talents to build our parish community and make it a more welcoming place. God Bless you all :>

Altar servers – More volunteers needed urgently:
Thanks to those children who came to altar servers training last week. Fr Leo is happy to run another session this month after school for anyone interested. For more details contact us at the Parish Office on 3207 9177

Date Claimers - Sacrament of Reconciliation 2013
The preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will begin with a ‘Parent Information Evening’ on Tuesday 15th October at 7pm in the church. This is an important meeting and one parent is requested to attend if you wish your child to be involved this year. This is usually for the children in Grade 4 in preparation for the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation in Grade 5, 2013. If you have an older child who would like to receive First Reconciliation in preparation for Confirmation and First Eucharist in 2014 please come to this information meeting.

The children will be enrolled at mass on the weekend of 19th/20th October. Parents can attend either Saturday 19th October at 6pm mass (enrolment ceremony is during the mass) or Sunday 20th October at 9am mass. Children will be given Reconciliation lessons during Saturday 6pm mass or Sunday 9am mass on the following dates: 26th/27th October, 2nd/3rd November, 9th/10th November

The Rite of Reconciliation will be held on Tuesday 12th November at 6pm or at 7.30pm again in the church. Contact Angela at the parish office on 32079177 if you have any questions.

Aria Angels
Music, art, hospitality and prayer! These 90 minute sessions are an excellent opportunity to develop the social, emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual domains of children through music, art, hospitality and prayer. For children birth – 5 years with parents, grandparents, caregivers and friends. We gather in the Ruby room next to the parish office on Thursdays from 9.00am to 10.30am THURSDAY Sept 5, 12. The cost is $5 for one child, $8 for two children and $10 for three children, including morning tea. For more information call parish office on 3207 9177.

Serendipity
Xmas Art Block
Enrolments are now open for the last Art Block for 2013!
New students are always welcome however vacancies are limited so act quickly!
Information and enrolment forms are available from the office foyer.

Yours in Art - Jenny Randall

NEW SWIM SQUAD AT THE YMCA
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Home & Business Security
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Call Jim 0428 351 511
“Little Lifesavers” School Holiday Program
Where: Raby Bay Foreshore Park
When: Mon 30 Sept to Fri 4 Oct 2013 (8 to 10am)
Who: Children Aged 5-11 years
Contact: Stacey Ferreira at Surf Life Saving Queensland
Phone: 5566 1008
Email: sferreira@lifesaving.com.au

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Coochiemudlo Island Surf Life Saving club
SIGN ON DAY For the 2013/2014 Season
NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME
(Birth Certificate Required)
Sunday, 8th September, 2013 10am and 2pm
28 Yeo Street, Victoria Point
Call Des on 0468 525 844 or Russell on 0409 619 516
e-mail coochieslsc@bigpond.com for an info pack

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Catholic education has approached both major parties about their education policies and how they will affect the 735,000 students educated in the 1,706 Catholic schools across Australia. Both major parties were asked six questions, and their responses are provided below.

**AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY**

**How will your policy support parents to choose the education they want for their children and ensure religious freedom for Catholic schools is preserved?**

"Federal Labor’s Better Schools Plan will deliver an extra $1.6 billion in additional funding for Australia’s 1,650 Catholic systemic schools over the next six years if every state and territory signs up. Of this, more than $1 billion will flow from the Federal Government under the Better Schools Plan.

Federal Labor has the utmost respect for the integrity and autonomy of the Catholic education system, and the Better Schools Plan preserves the religious freedom Catholic schools enjoy.

Federal Labor recognises the significant role Catholic schools have played in the Australian education sector for more than 150 years, serving some of the most disadvantaged communities in Australia.

It is an educational system with a proven track record - from educating some of our best and brightest, to taking on some of the most disadvantaged students.

The Rudd Labor Government and the National Catholic Education Commission worked constructively and respectfully over many months to secure agreement on the Better Schools Plan funding and reforms.

The additional funding under the Better Schools Plan will enable Catholic systemic schools to implement the signature reforms of the Better Schools Plan including initiatives around quality teaching, quality learning, meeting student need, empowered school leadership and better data collection and research to drive improvements within schools.

Federal Labor has set an ambitious target for Australian schools to be in the top five in the world in reading, maths and science by 2025 – this goals can only be achieved by working together with Catholic schools. The Better Schools Plan will ensure that every Australian child, irrespective of where they live, which school they attend or their family background, goes to a school with the resources required to deliver a great education."

**LIBERAL-NATIONAL COALITION**

**How will your policy support parents to choose the education they want for their children and ensure religious freedom for Catholic schools is preserved?**

"The Coalition appreciates the vital contribution that Catholic schools make to Australian society by educating almost 750,000 children.

We believe in that parents should be guaranteed the freedom to choose an education that best suits the needs of their children and their personal beliefs.

We strongly support the rights of Catholic schools to conduct and govern themselves in every respect in accordance with their religious beliefs and values. This includes curriculum, school practice and enrolment."

**How will your policy affect the ability of Catholic education systems and schools to distribute funding according to locally-identified needs?**

"The Better Schools Plan recognises local Catholic Education Commissions as the system managers of schools within local Diocese and provides for distribution by the Catholic education offices based on locally-identified need."

"The Coalition strongly supports the ability of Catholic education systems to flexibly and responsively re-distribute funding according to local need.

We do not support policies which seek to impede or restrict this capacity. We will remove any administrative requirements in the Australian Education Act 2013 that reduce system autonomy."

**How will your policy deliver additional government funding to support student needs and ensure funding keeps pace with the real cost of educating a child?**

"The Better Schools Plan Federal provides an indexation rate of 4.7 per cent on Commonwealth funding from 2014. This generous indexation rate is locked in, providing certainty for schools through to 2019. In return, state and territory government have been asked to commit to 3 per cent indexation. This generous indexation rate will ensure schools continue to receive real funding increases through to 2019 as well as the additional funding that will flow based on the needs of individual students."

"The total amount of Commonwealth funding committed by the Labor Government over the forward estimates will be maintained and will be indexed each year to meet rising costs. This means that if the Coalition is elected, the Commonwealth will spend an additional $2.8 billion to 2017 on all schools."
How will your policy support the needs of students with particular disadvantage, students with disability and other special needs to receive funding to meet their needs, regardless of the school they attend?

"At the heart of the Better Schools Plan is a new, fairer school funding approach based on the needs of individual students. This new fairer funding approach is based on the core recommendations of the independent Gonski review, which includes extra money for disadvantaged schools and students. Under the Better Schools Plan all students will receive a base amount of $9,271 for primary students and $12,193 for secondary students. The Better Schools Plan needs-based funding model then adds loadings based on the individual circumstances of the school and its students for: Students from low SES backgrounds; Indigenous students; Students with low English language proficiency; Students with disability; school size and location. More information about how much additional funding each of the loadings will attract can be found at www.betterschools.gov.au"

"The Coalition will commit to the same quantum of funds provided over the forward estimates which includes funding for students with particular disadvantage, including those with a disability. We believe extra support for these students should be made available, regardless of school attended.

The Coalition will also ensure that Catholic systems will have the ability to use Commonwealth funding to support locally-developed programs that improve the educational outcomes of students with additional needs."

What government funding for the capital needs of Catholic schools do you have planned? Does this funding recognise Catholic education’s support of disadvantaged communities and willingness to establish in new growth areas?

"The Rudd Labor Government recognises the increasing demand for new schooling facilities in high growth areas and recognises Catholic education’s willingness to establish new schools in growth areas. Federal Labor will continue the non-government capital grants program with around $140 million in 2014 and more than $772 million through to 2019. This funding will assist Catholic schools serving some of our most disadvantaged communities address growth and expand. This investment builds on the $16.2 billion Building the Education Revolution that transformed schools across the country, including Catholic schools."

"The Coalition will establish, when the Budget allows, a new Capital Infrastructure Fund that can be accessed by Catholic schools, in addition to government and other non-government schools.

The Coalition has taken this approach because it recognises that Catholic schools are often some of the first infrastructure developed in new growth areas. These schools may not be built without government support potentially depriving parents of a choice of education for their children.

The Coalition also recognises that Catholic school communities need to refurbish classroom and other school facilities. This can often be difficult for some school communities. This fund will also be available to support Catholic schools upgrade their existing facilities."

How will your policy deliver funding certainty for schools?

"Federal Labor’s Better Schools Plan delivers an extra $1.5 billion in public funds over the next six years, if every state and territory signs up. The plan provides certainty about the additional funding that will continue to flow to schools through to 2019."

"The Coalition remains committed to supporting parents choose a Catholic education for their children. The total amount of Commonwealth funding for Catholic schools over the forward estimates will be exactly the same as committed by the Labor Government and indexed over those four years."

Australian Labor Party responses as authorised by G. Wright, 5/9 Sydney Avenue, Barton ACT 2604

Liberal-National Coalition responses as authorised by B. Loughnane, Cnr Blackall and Macquarie Streets, Barton ACT 2604
Father time is valuable time

On Father’s Day it’s worth reflecting on how good fathering matters. It matters to mothers. It matters to men. And importantly it matters to children.

“He’s a bit of a rascal!”

This is how Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge described his new born son in a recent televised interview.

Watching the interview it’s apparent that Prince William is totally smitten by his son. He is a changed man. As any dad knows, there’s no turning back.

Early indications are that the Duke of Cambridge is going to be a modern, hands-on dad who wants to be an active participant in the life of his son. It was he who carried the baby from the hospital to greet the media pack, and it was he who put the baby capsule in the back seat of the car before heading home. “I’m a hands-on dad” was the message beamed around the world. Good on him.

Building up frequent father points

Prince William is typical of many modern dads. Gone are the days when the only relationship many men had with their children was through their wives. Men, increasingly, recognise that their effectiveness is dependent on first-hand interactions with their kids. That means their presence is needed far more than any presents they may provide for their kids.

For some dads first-hand interactions with children are easier said than done. Family separation, work circumstances and busy lifestyles are all factors affecting their capacity to become involved in their children’s lives.

In these circumstances it’s important that men maintain an emotional attachment to their kids; do their best to know what’s going on in their children’s lives; and respond appropriately to the developmental imperatives of their children.

The impact of fathering on children

Good fathering matters.

It matters to mothers as a supportive father makes a mother’s life easier.

It matters to girls. Good fathering has been linked to higher confidence levels in girls, particularly during the tricky adolescent years. The notion of a father who is present, available and attentive affords a sense of security to a girl, which is necessary for healthy development.

Dads are also the first introduction to the world of men for girls so it’s important that fathers treat their daughters with gentleness and respect, but also encourage them to be assertive. In a sense, fathers teach their daughters how
they should expect to be treated by males as they get older.

Good fathering matters to boys. They learn their first lessons of manhood from their dads. Early primary-aged boys usually want to spend a great deal of time with their dads. Steve Biddulph, author of *Raising Boys*, describes this phenomenon as ‘father-hunger’ and suggests that dads need to be around their sons in the primary school years so they can ‘download the software’ of how to be male.

The father-son relationship during adolescence can be problematic. While teen boys seem to be hard-wired to challenge their fathers, most desperately want their dads to be proud of them. Teen boys need a dad who can be firm when needed as they don’t always make great decisions. They need a dad who remembers the awkwardness and insecurity of being a teenage boy themselves. And they relate best to dads who don’t take themselves too seriously. The judicious use of humour, particularly with boys, is a great fathering strategy.

**Fathering matters to men**

And, of course, involved fathering matters to men. Most health scales state a healthy relationship with their children is a predictor of good health and longevity for men, as well as of life satisfaction levels. I suspect there is something relaxing and de-stressing for a man to get into a child’s space and time. There is a big kid in most men just busting to get out.

Parental well-being would be the last thing on Prince William’s mind as he attends to his young son’s needs. It is through these early forays into parenting that Prince William, like countless other men, will find his feet as a dad, and also discover his place in the life of his son.

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**Five fathering tips (whether you live with the children’s mother or not):**

1. Go on dates with your daughters.
2. Have adventures with your sons.
4. Change as your child changes.
5. Discipline with firmness and compassion.