Dear Families,

Teachers are starting to sort their data for student report writing. Assessment is ongoing and used to direct and inform teaching. Reports are snapshots of areas that teachers have observed the children make, say and do. It is impossible to report to every aspect of teaching and learning. Teachers report to standards of learning that are outlined in AusVELS, which is the curriculum document that sorts and combines the Australian Curriculum with the Victorian Curriculum.

The annual Parent Advisory Council (PAC) forum will be about student reports. This session will explain curriculum documents and reporting requirements, as well as student achievement in relation to standards and will be held on Thursday, 15th of May at 7pm in the GECCO. Please mark the date in your diary. If you wish to have any particular aspects of reporting addressed at this forum, you are asked to contact the school office.

Parents are reminded that reports will be sent home at the end of Term 2 and face to face interviews with students’ learning journals will be held in Term 3. Details about making appointments via online booking are provided in school newsletters.

Teachers spend an enormous amount of time writing reports. They take time to ensure that comments are in line with guidelines for legal issues and are objective, based on facts not subjective which are open to personal interpretation eg M counts from a starting number by two and M reads on when coming to an unknown word, NOT M is a pleasure to teach and M is a happy child. Teachers spend time moderating student samples against samples across the school and against AusVELS documents.

Night for Mothers
A team of parents has put great efforts into ensuring that the Night for Mothers is another wonderful event to build social capital at St Martins. It’s a time to flock up and have fun. Start spreading the news we’re leaving today…. It’s time to be a part of it, New York, New York. Please accept this invitation to attend St Martin’s special night in Manhattan.

Arts
On 22nd of May, the Senior School Concert Band is competing in an Eisteddfod at Camberwell. The School Concert Band is one of the extra-curricula activities on offer at St Martin’s. Congratulations to all the parents who have given their child an opportunity to engage in the Musical Arts. The School Concert Band is open to all children from Years 3- 6. On behalf of the school community we thank and acknowledge the work of the School Concert Band parent committee for overseeing this valuable initiative. Thanks also to the expert teachers Melissa and Andrew.
Research available at the Journal of Education website, http://psynet.apa.org, states that “Students who are involved in the Arts have higher school motivation, engagement in class, self-esteem, and life satisfaction.”

“Positive effects also resulted from home influences, such as how often parents and their children talked and participated in the Arts.”

“When engaged in the Arts children are considering, reflecting, analysing and communicating; it teaches students to think for themselves.”

All children at St Martin’s have a weekly music lesson with Miss K. Extension musical involvement is offered via lessons for piano and strings and the School Concert Band for brass and woodwind. Any parent wishing to follow up any of these initiatives is asked to contact the school office.

**NAPLAN**
Next Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (13th-15th May), children from Years 3 and 5 will undertake the annual national testing for Literacy and Numeracy. This instrument is used to assist education ministers with curriculum planning. Results of the tests are delivered in Sept/October and shows each child’s achievements against national standards. School data is also made available at that time and is used to address whole school teaching needs. This is not a time to place pressure on children. Education is about growing minds.

Every parent can support their child by ensuring time is spent at home with reading, discussing reading, writing, planning and discussing ideas for writing, enriching vocabulary, providing experiences to Scienteworks, the Museum, farms, country, beaches, rivers, rock pools, shopping, exchanging money, paying for items and checking change, digital and analogue clocks, playing card games, sharing mental computation, looking for possibilities to problems, sharing historical and scientific events and concepts.

**Working Bee**
Every contribution to the school and Parish working bee assists with the overall maintenance of school and parish buildings. Working bees build social capital and lessen the heavy financial burden of paying for day to day tasks. The next School/Parish Working Bee will be held on Saturday, 17th May, 8am-1pm and Sunday, 18th May, 11am-1pm.

**Wonder of Living**
Year 5 and 6 students and parent/s are invited to attend an information session on Tuesday, 20th May at 7pm in the GECCO; costs will be covered by the school.
Congratulations
One of the admin team at St Martin’s has served our school community for 30 years. Congratulations and thank you Mrs O’Keefe for your loyal and dedicated service. In particular she has been responsible for maintaining student and staff data bases and staff payroll. St Martin’s is a high functioning school because of the strong admin team in our school front office.

Mother’s Day Classic on Sunday
Mary our wonderful Bursar, is participating in the Mother’s Day Classic on Sunday. It is nearly a year since her diagnosis. She is being supported by family and has organised a donation page where the funds raised go towards breast cancer research. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause click the link here  https://mdc.mothersdayclassic.com.au/fundraising-team.php?id=15009

Staff Professional Development
Since the beginning of 2014, staff have been engaged in PD for First Aid, Mental Computation, Student Writing and Mandatory Reporting. The next staff PD will address Auditory Processing. Leslie Tan from Listening Works will present information about ways to identify and support students who need strategies for auditory processing. Auditory processing is a common need for primary students. Simply repeating an instruction is ineffective. Teachers restate in a different way and also ask the child for their interpretation of the request to see if the message has been relayed in the required manner. Parents wanting more information about auditory processing are asked to contact their child’s teacher who is the first port of call when addressing any concerns. Teachers refer to other staff members for follow up.

Writing: Sizzling Starts
One of the points addressed at the staff PD on the first day of Term 2 was to use a “sizzling start” when writing. Dialogue is another method to engage the audience. Parents are reminded that creativity is the most important aspect of writing and that spelling and grammar should never stifle creativity. Each time you are sharing reading with your child take a minute to reflect on the sizzling start, what, how and why it is sizzling.

Mental Computation
Parents are invited to Open School on Friday, 6th of June between 8.30am and 9.30am to witness mental computation strategies in action. Parent workshops will be presented by Bern Long at 7pm in the GECCO on Tuesday, 10th of June for Prep -2 and Tuesday, 24th of June for Years 3-6. Bern is currently undertaking post graduate studies in Mental Computation and is engaged by Catholic Education Melbourne to deliver PD to teachers about Mental Computation. In the meantime, talk and discuss strategies with your child about the most efficient and correct method to complete mental calculations; 80% of our daily Maths is mental calculations.
St Martin Panthers Under 10 Girls Basketball Team

Congratulations to the St Martin Panthers Under 10 Girls Basketball Team who participated in the Autumn Whittlesea Pacers Basketball tournament on the ANZAC Day weekend. After four games in two days (Friday and Saturday) the girls played in the finals and won. It was a nail biting finish!

Happy Mother’s day to all of our mums on Sunday, whether it is a physical or spiritual hug, we are blessed to have stood on their strong shoulders.

A mother’s love is like an ocean it reaches far and wide and has no boundaries or conditions.

Thanks to all the wonderful mums at St Martin’s who give time and talent to make St Martin’s a great place to be.

Regards

Trish Stewart
Principal