Dear Parents and Carers

The term has begun with a bang and we are off and running. I have had a great two weeks moving around the school and meeting lots of students and parents. This week’s Parent Information Night provided another opportunity to meet many of you. I must say, I am taken with the beautiful manners and warm welcome the students have given me. They are polite, sincere, generous and everyone should be very proud of them. Thank you to the students, parents and staff who are making me feel very welcome to Holy Spirit. I am really looking forward to the years ahead.

BOOM GATE
As I mentioned last week, a Boom Gate has been installed for the top ‘joint facilities’ carpark.

Why? - The main reason for the boom gate is for student safety. The top carpark has always been a ‘park and take/collect your child from the school.’ It has never meant to be a drop off/pick up zone. Unfortunately, both schools, despite numerous pleas, continue to have issues with parents:
- dropping off or picking up;
- stopping behind cars;
- parking on the red curb;
- blocking traffic;
- double parking;
- letting children out wherever they like;
- over taking;
- allowing children to walk through the car park unattended; and
- calling out to their children to walk across the carpark to the car.

All of the above has resulted in a number of near misses with children nearly being hit and damage to cars. In addition, we have had a small number of parents verbally abuse and be aggressive towards staff and other parents. Both schools have had the police out on a number of occasions to warn or book parents. Unfortunately, the situation has not improved and the joint facilities committee feels this is the only option available to ensure student safety.

How will it work? The boom gate will be operational from next Monday. All staff from both schools have been asked to now park in the top car park, freeing up spaces in other carparks. In negotiation with Gold Creek, the boom gate will be open for most of the day allowing easy access for before and after school care, visitors, deliveries and those wishing to access the disabled car spaces. However, it will be closed for the following periods:

   Morning - 8.15-9.15am
   Afternoon - 2.15-3.30pm

I fully understand the complexity of the car park issues around the school. Every school I have ever worked at has issues with the carpark for 20 minutes each afternoon. We are not alone! I ask that parents continue to be patient, alert, understanding and to stagger your arrival. Staff are on duty until 3.30, so come a little later to avoid the mayhem! Student safety must come first and has to be our priority.

If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.
TOYS
This week the staff clarified our policy on toys at school. We ask you to support us in not allowing your child to bring toys to school. Invariably they are damaged, lost or are the cause of social issues. Balls for sport are allowed at the moment, but we will be monitoring this closely. Something special for news in the junior grades is allowed, but students will be asked to keep it in their school bag for the remainder of the day. Staff are currently developing different game boxes and lunchtime clubs for students to access at break times.

SCHOOL UNIFORM
So far I have been very impressed with the standard of school uniform at Holy Spirit. I tend to be quite strict with school uniform and I thank parents who are making every effort to send their children to school in correct uniform. There have been many reminders sent out already, so please remember earrings should be plain studs, and sleepers only with medical advice. Sports shoes should be predominately white, which is the case in most Catholic schools. However, if your child already has coloured shoes, please continue to wear them, but please take the predominately white factor into consideration when purchasing new shoes in the future.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE
A staff members email is firstname.surname@cg.catholic.edu.au

Communication via email is an excellent way for parents and teachers to correspond, however it is essential that appropriate email etiquette is observed by all users. The correct use of email enables parents and teachers to give and receive information, arrange appointment times and also resolve small issues quickly. When used in this way it is an effective communication tool between school and home.

It is important to remember that due to the nature of teaching, teachers will only check their emails before or after school. Teachers aim to reply to emails within 24 hours. Any urgent message should be communicated to the Front Office.

I ask parents to remember that emailing is not an avenue for venting frustration, anger or at its worst, abusing teachers. Any inappropriate emails will not be responded to and I have asked teachers to forward them to me to follow up.

If a parent is concerned or upset about an issue, it is preferable to speak to the teacher face to face. An email to a teacher to organise a meeting produces a far better outcome in these situations. Good and effective communication between home and school is of paramount importance to us here at Holy Spirit. We embrace email as an effective communication tool and we aim to ensure that we all use it in a courteous and respectful way.

HOME LEARNING
Home learning is the joy of everyone’s lives! A bit like carparks, it can be a contentious issue. In my experience I have found 25% of parents love it and want more, 50% dislike it but see some need for it, while the remaining 25% hate it and want it banned! Teachers would probably be 100% against it too!

During the staff professional learning week in late January, all staff in our Archdiocese listened to a presentation from Alfie Kohn, a well-known American author and lecturer in the areas of education, parenting, and human behaviour. He is a proponent of progressive education and offers critiques of many traditional aspects of parenting, managing, society, and draws heavily on social science research. Alfie expressed his views on homework in seven words: Homework is all pain and no gain. His research indicates that no study has ever found a benefit to assigning homework (of any kind or in any amount) in primary school. In fact, there is not even a positive correlation between homework and increased achievement. He commented that there is ‘No benefit from homework until at least 15, if at all. None!’ He finished by encouraging us to ‘be willing to grapple, swallow hard and challenge traditional aspects of schooling. To ask - Is there another approach?’
Well you can imagine the teachers cheering and I am sure a few parents are too! But hold on! I am not saying I completely agree with Alfie Kohn, but he certainly has a compelling case. It has certainly been a hot topic of conversation and something that we will work through as the year continues. I think in the modern world we do need to challenge some aspects of traditional schooling - homework, classroom furniture, technology and spelling are some aspects that jump to mind. The world is changing and we cannot even imagine the future world our children will be living in. I have encouraged teachers to ‘play’ with home learning this year, to trial new ideas and to look for ‘another approach’. At some point, I also hope to engage parents into this conversation. Where this leads us is unknown just yet, but we all need to be ready to swallow hard and be challenged.

Cheers

Brad Gaynor
Principal
brad.gaynor@cg.catholic.edu.au

Messages From the Office....

gni School fee statements were sent home on Monday and are due for payment by Friday 24th February, except for those families paying their fees by direct debit.

gni Last year we introduced the Qkr! App as another option to school and other fees. Please see attached flyer on the next page of the newsletter with instructions on how to download this app to your mobile device.

gni Year 6 Leadership shirt payments are due by next Monday and can also be paid using the Qkr!

gni Student details information sheets will be sent home next week. Please check all details are correct and make amendments if details have changed. Return to the office as soon as possible to ensure our records are up to date.

With thanks

Kathy and Sally
Introducing Qkr! (pronounced ‘quicker’) by MasterCard, the secure and easy way to order and pay for school items from your phone at a time and place that suits you.

With Qkr you can:
- Pay for school fees, uniforms, excursions and more;
- See your receipts on the app and get them sent by email if required.

Getting started is easy - try it yourself today

**Step 1 Download Qkr!**
- on your Android phone or iPhone. iPad users can download iPhone app

**Step 2 Register**
- Select your Country of Residence as ‘Australia’ and follow the steps to register

**Step 3 Find our school**
- Our school will appear in ‘Nearby Locations’ if you’re within 10km’s of the school, or search for our school by name.

**Step 4 Register your children**
- When first accessing our school you will be prompted to add a student profile for your child. This allows you to make orders and payments for them.
Our spirit

Add your children’s details in Student Profiles

Select ‘Add student profile’
Add each child’s details
Manage each child’s details in Student Profiles

Purchase school items

Select a menu from our school
Select child you are ordering for
Select your items
Tap ‘Checkout’ then confirm and pay

Making payments

Add up to 5 cards to your wallet

At checkout select which card to pay with.
Pay with any cards accepted by the school.
Once your payment is approved you can continue to the home page, or view your receipt.
From the Religious Education Coordinator

Focus Assembly News

Growing, learning and celebrating life together

This week at Focus Assembly our talented teachers introduced our theme for the year, “Growing, learning and celebrating life together”. All our teachers were involved in helping present the message either by actively participating in the assembly or quietly working behind the scenes. The message conveyed to students aimed to help them understand that our potential is not fixed and that we can grow ourselves by knowing who we are, believing in ourselves and using the skills of persistence and determination to be the very best version of ourselves. Our teachers modeled for our students the importance of sharing our talents – God did not bless us with talents to hide or keep to ourselves. God gave us talents to share with and serve others.

Our assembly began with Mr Farrell leading the school in the Rock and Water Salute which helps students ground themselves, focus their bodies and respectfully acknowledge the presence of all members of our school community. The teachers set our sacred space and presented the Gospel story, ‘Jesus Calls the Little Children’ through liquid pictures. A highlight of the assembly was a story narrated by Miss Julie Jenkins and acted out by Mr Farrell, Miss Gaffey, Mr Spencer, Mrs Cambridge, Mr Camp and Mrs Bell. There was laughter throughout the hall as the story of Mr Farrell’s first day of school was told. Emphasis was placed on the importance of following Holy Spirit’s four behavior expectations:

BE SAFE  BE RESPECTFUL  BE RESPONSIBLE  BE A LEARNER

Thank you to the teachers for their help and support. It is always a pleasure to put together a Focus Assembly for our school community, however it was the work of our extraordinary teachers who brought the assembly to life.

Catherine Doig
REC
Confirmation News

Next week our Year 6 children will begin preparations for the Sacrament of Confirmation – the third sacrament of initiation into the church. We ask that everyone keep these children and their families in your prayers during this significant time.

Important Upcoming Dates:

**Parent and Child Information Session** – Wednesday 15th February at 1pm and 7pm. These sessions will be held at Holy Spirit Church, Amaroo. All parents must attend one of these sessions (with their child) to collect information packs, enrolment forms, and learn about the program.

**Confirmation Enrolment Masses** – Weekend 18th and 19th March – All candidates must attend one of the Masses on this weekend: Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9:30am or Sunday 5:30pm. Enrolments forms and baptism certificates (if your child was baptised in another Parish) need to be brought along to as well.

**Help Needed**

We are looking for a number of volunteers to help sew the Confirmation stoles for our Year 6 students. If you are able to help please email catherine.guthrie@cg.catholic.edu.au or phone the school on 62418640 and leave me a message.

Working with you in faith,
Catherine Doig
Religious Education Coordinator

Opening School Mass

**NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE**

**Tuesday 14th February at 9.30am in the school hall.**

Holy Spirit School community will open the school year with mass in our school hall at 9.30am on Wednesday 15th February. **All Year 6 students will receive their leadership badges at this mass.** We warmly welcome all our families to be part of this celebration and to join us for morning tea afterwards in Shakespeare’s Corner (the grass area behind the school’s administration block).
Hello! And welcome to the new school year. This year we are fortunate enough to have myself, Kathy Talbot, Atina Hrstic and, our Library Assistant, Mary-Ellen Bakker in the Library. We are looking forward to ‘Exploring New Worlds’ with you children.

There are a few things I would like to bring your attention to for 2017:

**Library Bags:**
All students from ELC to Year 4 need a library bag. This can be a shopping bag, pillow case or a canvas bag. Alternatively, I will be having a make your own Library Bag session in the Library at lunch in the coming weeks. So if you have any old, clean t-shirts you don’t mind donating to be repurposed please send them in with your child, that would be lovely.

**Borrowing:**
ELC – Kinder: 1 book a time
Year 1 – Year 2: 2 books at a time
Year 3 – 6: 3 books at a time
Borrowing time is two weeks, students can return and borrow weekly if they wish.

There is a Senior Fiction Collection, which continues to grow, that is available to the Year 5 & 6 students.

Finally, there is a wonderful free app for ebooks and audiobooks called BorrowBox. It links with your Public Library membership where you can borrow digital books on your devices. This is a wonderful app for the whole family.

**Scholastic Book Club:**
This is a marvelous fundraiser for our library and are so grateful for your continued support. We will be sending home Issue 2 in Week 6

There are 4 ways in which you can pay for your orders:

- **Credit Card: Online or Phone**
  Return Order form with receipt number to the Library, in a sealed and clearly labelled envelope with your child’s name and class.

- **Cash**
  Place cash and order form in a sealed and labelled envelope and return it to the Library.

- **Cheque or Credit Voucher**
  Make cheques payable to Scholastic Australia.
  Attach cheque or voucher to a completed order form and return to the Library in a sealed and labelled envelope.

- **LOOP! The easiest and the best J**
  First create a profile for your child
  Select “GOLD CREEK & HOLY SPIRIT” then follow the prompts.
  Place order

NOTE: there is also an App for your chosen device.

Thank you for your continued support of the Library at Holy Spirit.

Kathy Talbot, Atina Hrstic & Mary-Ellen Bakker
Program Update

Back for another school year. The Children are getting settled back in. Our routines will be the same as last year, Monday and Tuesdays we are in our separate rooms, the rest of the week we mix up at 4pm. These three days as the children are in different room, can mean it takes a few more minutes to get them to the main room. So far the children have been enjoying painting, cooking, ropes and outside games.

The groups are broken up this year as follows

Comets (kindies): In the room off the library and the Coordinator is
Rockets (year 1 and 2): In the hall and the Coordinator is Sandra
Magicians (year 3): In the main room and the Coordinator is Stacey
Wizards (years 4,5, and 6): In the library and the Coordinator is Luke

If your child or children are not attending ASC can you please ring or text us on the number below, if you don’t we have to then try to find out why they aren’t here. If we cannot get onto any of the contacts, we then have to ring the police and treat it like a missing child.

This is time consuming for us, and for the police.

Our lost property is becoming huge already, if your child has lost something, our lost property is located on shelves outside our main room.

This fortnight’s Activities

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<td>Before Care Activities</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Fairy wand</td>
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<td>Rocket</td>
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<td>Make a sea monster</td>
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<td>patterns</td>
<td>Octopus</td>
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<td>Jelly fish kite</td>
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<td>After Care Activities</td>
<td>All about me</td>
<td>Glitter slime</td>
<td>Card tricks</td>
<td>Apple puff</td>
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<td>posters Chocolate slice</td>
<td>Lego competition</td>
<td>Dodgeball</td>
<td>pastry</td>
<td>painting Musical statues</td>
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Parent Information

OSHC program phone: 0402 611 484
Program Manager: Kathleen Rigby
Coordinators: Sandra, Luke and Stacey
OSHClub Head Office: 03 85649000

All families must be enrolled to attend the program, remember this is Free!! Please create an account online at www.oshclub.com.au all bookings and cancellations can also be managed via your online account. For on the day bookings please contact the Coordinator direct at the program.
Join the Dollarmites on a savings adventure into the future with School Banking!

In 2017, School Banking is getting children excited about the future with a brand new look for the Dollarmites. As Future Savers, students will join the Dollarmites on a journey to reach the Savings Hover Park, an amazing playground up in the clouds of a hi-tech city.

There are 8 new reward items for 2017 from the Future Savers range:

- Cyber Handball
- Colour Change Markers
- 3D Chalk Set
- Tablet Case
- Smiley Emoji Keyring
- Volt Handball
- Pencil + Tech Case
- Epic Earphones

WIN a family adventure holiday at Tokyo Disneyland!

This year, School Banking is running a Future Savers Grand Prize competition that will take one lucky School Banker all the way to Tokyo, Japan. The winner gets an unforgettable family trip, for up to two adults and three children, where they’ll explore Tokyo Disneyland with its amazing attractions, including the futuristic Tomorrowland, plus enjoy the fun rides at Tokyo DisneySea.

Students who make 15 or more School Banking deposits by the end of Term 3, 2017 will be automatically entered into the draw. This is another great way to motivate students to save regularly and reach their savings goals.

School Banking is also a great fundraiser for our school. Our school receives from the Commonwealth Bank $5 when a student makes their first ever School Banking deposit and 5% on every deposit made through the school (to a maximum of $10 per individual deposit).

If you would like to know more about School Banking, please ask for a 2017 School Banking program information pack from the school office or visit commbank.com.au/schoolbanking to register.
Sports Shorts....

Welcome to Week 2 Term 1 Sport and Fitness at Holy Spirit School.

Term One Sporting Events at Holy Spirit

Every few weeks we will attempt to update the list of events coming up during the term. The dates confirmed for Term One are listed below:

**Holy Spirit Swimming Carnival - Friday 24 February 2017**

This year’s carnival will again be held at Gungahlin Leisure Centre. The carnival is for Grades 3 - 6 only. Races are held for proficient (ribbons awarded) and non-proficient (no ribbons awarded – 20 metre races) swimmers, with novelty events held for those still learning.

Permission notes will be handed out tomorrow (Friday 10 February) and are due back at school Wednesday 15 February.

Zone Swimming – Monday 20 March 2017 (Qualifying times must be met)

ACT Swimming – Monday 1 May 2017 (Very competitive swimmers only)

**The Meninga/Daley Legends Gala Day – Wednesday 8 March 2017**

**Tackle Option**: The Meninga/Daley Legends gala day is a 7 a side competition for boys and girls in years 3 & 4 and 5 & 6. The gala day is designed for participants to play Rugby League in a different format. Seven players per side are allowed on the field.

**Touch Option**: In 2016 we will also be joining with NRL Touch Football to run a non-competitive gala day for boys and girls on the same day. The day will run in a Round Robin format. Six players per side are allowed on the field.

Full information on the day will be sent home shortly.

**Holy Spirit Cross Country Carnival - Thursday 23 March 2017**

This carnival is a whole school event for all children. We will even have the ELC children running. Again full information will be sent home as soon as children begin training.

**Catholic Schools Soccer Carnival - Sunday 26 March 2017**

This carnival is a single day event for Years 3 - 6, with mixed boys/girls teams participating. The carnival will be held at University of Canberra. An Expression of Interest Note will be handed out tomorrow (Friday 10 February) and are due back at school Friday 17 February.

If you have any sports announcements or news to share in this section, please email office.holyspirit@cg.catholic.edu.au

Have a great weekend!

Mr Seamus Farrell
Sports Coordinator

My email is James.Farrell@cg.catholic.edu.au
2017 St Vincent de Paul Doorknock Appeal will be held throughout February.

To support the work of the St Vincent de Paul, Gungahlin Branch, Holy Spirit School has volunteered to collect money in different allocated areas of Ngunnawal, Nicholls and Casey.

We are hoping to get both our families and staff involved and make it a community event.

More details will be sent home next week, but please take some time to think seriously about giving up an hour of your time to support this an important charity.

If you would like to be involved or have questions please feel free to contact Catherine.Guthrie@cg.catholic.edu.au

Keep an eye out for more information to be sent home next week.

The home of Aussie Rules in Gungahlin

The Gungahlin Jets is a family friendly community club providing you with an opportunity to have fun, get fit and play Australian Rules Football.

New and experienced players welcome in all grades, Junior and Senior.

⇒ Auskick: Girls and boys aged 5 to 7 years.
⇒ Juniors: Girls and boys U8 to U14, boys to U17
⇒ Youth Girls: U10, U12, U15 & U18
⇒ Seniors: Rising Stars, Men and Women.

Registration details at:
www.gungahlinjets.com.au