

From the President



Dear Families,

With Term 3 commencing, I have been reflecting over the past term and considering the unique changes and adaptations never before seen in our schools and homes. When I think about my experiences as a mother of children at school starting back in 1991 and now with a grandchild at school – the vast changes in the way children and young people are learning, the tools they are using, and the speed at which they have learned to “Zoom” into each other’s learning spaces has been incredible to observe.

It goes without saying, enormous thanks are owed to all schools and families who together, have reached out and supported one another and ensured our children and young people have continued to engage in learning. I am sure there have been bumps along the road, however, these can be great opportunities to learn, adapt and grow, knowing there is always the support, encouragement and assistance of willing teachers and school staff to help out.

As we plan our path forward, the Federation of P & F Associations is also looking at ways to adapt and better support families in the Catholic education of their children.

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A survey has been developed to seek feedback for parents and carers to help inform our work. Your help in completing this short survey is gratefully appreciated.

The link to the survey can be found in this newsletter as well as by going to our newly created Facebook page. The link for the Facebook page is to be found in this newsletter too.

As we look ahead, I offer my hopes and prayers for a fulfilling and positive Term 3 for you and your family, particularly those entering their last term at our Catholic schools before HSC written exams commence on 20 October.

With my best wishes,



CHERYL MURPHY

PRESIDENT

FEDERATION OF P & F ASSOCIATIONS – DIOCESE
OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

Federation Online

FINDING FEDERATION ON FACEBOOK

The Federation of P&F Associations has launched a Facebook page.

This page is a great place for families to learn about opportunities and find information that can support them in their parenting/caring roles.

Click on the link below and join us!

<https://mncso.news/federationfacebook>

WE NEED TO ASK YOU A BIG FAVOUR!

The Federation would love to hear your ideas and views so we can better support parents and carers across our diocese.

We would be *very grateful* if you could spare a couple of minutes to answer a few questions – it isn't necessary to write anything, just click on the link below and rate or select an option.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FederationJuly2020>

HANDY LINKS

Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP)

This is the peak representative body for parents and carers who have children enrolled in Catholic schools in NSW.

<http://www.ccsp.catholic.edu.au/>

<https://www.facebook.com/cathschoolparents/>

Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW)

<https://www.csnsw.catholic.edu.au/>

Intentional Learning

The following link to an article about intentional teaching from Noella Mackenzie's blog might be useful for parents.

<https://noellamackenzie.com/2020/07/07/parents-are-good-at-intentional-teaching/>

*Thank you so much...
this will really help us out!*



Maitland-Newcastle Virtual Art Gallery

This gallery is a showcase for the artistic talent of our students. They were encouraged to reflect on the people who mean the most to them and the experiences that have shaped their lives.

Many students responded to the opportunities provided in the visual arts project resources that were shared on the Continuity of Learning site.

Through their art, students shared their thoughts and feelings through a variety of techniques and styles, with many of the works reflecting the beauty and fragility of the natural world.

Many thanks to the school staff who encouraged the students and provided them with this opportunity.

Please take the time to explore the Virtual Art Gallery. It is a rich, creative outlet for our students and provides an insight into their lives, and perhaps encourages us to reflect on ours. Hopefully, it will brighten your day.

To access the gallery, [click here](#).

SALLY BROCK

CSO Education Officer (Gifted Education)



CatholicCare News

CatholicCare is the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Social Services agency. They provide access to a range of services including counselling support, community kitchens and behaviour support throughout the diocese from Lake Macquarie in the south to the Manning region in the north.

REACHING OUT TO BUSHFIRE-IMPACTED FAMILIES

Travelling along the highway through the Manning Valley recently, I was struck by the emerging branches and leaves on blackened trees. It was heartening to see new growth; however, the damage and scars to the landscape were still obvious.

It made her think about the impact of these fires on our families in the Manning area and whilst the immediate threat of the disaster has passed, the impact is still palpable.



CatholicCare is eager to help.

Primary Health Network Hunter New England and Central Coast is partnering with CatholicCare Clinical Services to deliver counselling services for bushfire victims. This includes anyone who has been impacted in any way and lives in the region.

The service can provide up to 10 sessions of free counselling that focus on goals you set. The sessions can be delivered face to face or via telehealth (phone or video call).

For enquiries about accessing this new service, please contact the CatholicCare head office on 02 49791120 for booking information.

KELLY PAVAN

Kelly Pavan is Manager Counselling and Clinical Services at CatholicCare and a champion for delivering accessible mental health services for communities



ASSISTANCE FOR COVID-19 IMPACTED FAMILIES

Clinical Services at CatholicCare received funding recently through a partnership with Newcastle City Council to deliver mental health support for issues related to or prompted by COVID-19.

If you or someone in your family needs to access some counselling support, no referral necessary, contact CatholicCare on 02 4979 1120 for free assistance.

CATHOLICCARE WINTER APPEAL

12 degrees and it is only 5pm

Tonight across the Hunter-Manning there are individuals sleeping rough, experiencing homelessness, and families who cannot afford to pay for heating or food for the table.

Winter coupled with the impact of COVID-19 means people need help and they need it now. To help, be it \$2, \$5 or \$50 tax deductible donation, head to the CatholicCare website.

Click on the link to learn more

<https://bit.ly/3j9gjZi>

We thank you for your
generosity





First Look at St Nicholas Early Education in Medowie



A few years ago, the [Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle](#) undertook a major study into the future provision of education across the Hunter region, which encouraged engagement from every family, student and staff member in the diocese.

The results showed an abundance of support for additional educational opportunities in the Port Stephens area.

Medowie in particular has experienced steady growth in recent years and is expected to welcome an additional 7000 residents within the next decade.

With this in mind, the diocese announced plans for a high school ([Catherine McAuley Catholic College, opening 2021](#)), primary school and early education centre, all conveniently located on one campus to offer parents of children attending two or more of these services a simple one-stop drop-off and pick-up.

The aim was to create a unique educational community and pathway for children aged 8 weeks old, all the way through to year 12.

Set to open its doors early 2021, [St Nicholas Early Education Medowie](#) will be a 104-place early education and care centre for children aged 0–5 years.

SOME UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE MEDOWIE CENTRE

The St Nick's Medowie centre will feature a range of purposefully designed indoor and outdoor spaces, all intended to excite and engage children's natural curiosities.

Inside the centre, large open-plan rooms with huge windows will provide plenty of natural light to allow for a warm and inviting environment, supporting children's sense of welcome and belonging.

Medowie's shared outdoor play spaces can be accessed from every room in the centre, complete with plenty of natural elements to allow children to experience, explore, examine, discover, take risks, derive meaning and solve problems.

With plans for a Catholic primary school to be built alongside the centre, St Nicholas will be offering its highly regarded Transition to School program for preschool children.

As part of this program, preschool children are given the opportunity to go on excursions to the

centre's neighbouring primary school, with a chance to check out the school's canteen, library, kindergarten rooms and playground. This allows preschoolers to see, hear, feel and experience what the primary school environment is all about prior to starting 'big school'.

Our Transition to School Program ensures that by the time children are ready to transition to kindergarten they have grown into confident and capable young learners and have a sense of belonging to the primary school environment.

Being co-located with the school will also provide a one-stop drop-off and pick-up for parents with children attending both places.

Note: Images are artist's impressions only

To learn more about **St Nicholas Early Education Medowie**, including information on how to enrol your child, [click here](#).



New HSC Disability Provisions Guide



New HSC Disability Provisions Guide for teachers & parents

**DO YOU HAVE A CHILD WITH DIVERSE LEARNING NEEDS?
THIS IS A MUST-READ!**

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE NEW GUIDE](#)

Survey for Parents/Carers of Children with Diverse Learning Needs

Positive Partnerships are seeking to consult with parents and carers of children with diverse learning needs to inform their understanding of the Australian Disability Standards for Education (DSE) (2005). They are requesting support from education and community agencies to assist with this consultation through sharing a survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DQLTP9B>

On behalf of the Australian Government, Positive Partnerships will then develop online content about the DSE, particularly for:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- multicultural communities
- those who have experienced disadvantage
- people who prefer (or find it helpful) to access information using Easy English.

This content may include translation of the DSE Summary and Fact Sheets into Easy English and multiple other languages, including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander languages.

Positive Partnerships will be developing these resources based on consultation and feedback that we receive from community members and their advocates through the survey responses.

Beyond the Gates

GREAT NEWS FOR THE UPPER HUNTER AND MANNING REGION

The **Beyond the Gates** project is a program that has been running at St Mary's Catholic College Gateshead since 2017. It is a collaboration between CatholicCare Social Services and the Catholic Schools Office Maitland-Newcastle.

The project aims to support the students that fall through the gaps of regular supports offered by schools. We case manage students and their families, extending our supports beyond the school gates in the hopes of improving wellbeing.

Most recently the program has undergone expansion to the Upper Hunter and Manning regions, supporting students at St Claire's at

Taree and St Josephs at Aberdeen, the expansion also includes supporting Years 5 and 6 of the feeder primaries of all 3 high schools in the hopes of providing early intervention to family struggles, mental ill health and school drop-out.

The data that has been collected on the program has been incredibly positive, seeing fantastic improvements in school attendance and student wellbeing. Parents/carers have also reported being overwhelmingly satisfied with the program and its high level of effectiveness.



Beyond the Gates Leader - Lucy and her much loved companion Ollie

Alternative Dispute Resolution

A NEW APPROACH TO RESOLVING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is a set of processes which enable those involved with a concern to resolve the issues between them without the need for a formal inquiry. ADR at the Office of Safeguarding (OOSG) is designed to assist participants to resolve safeguarding concerns that involve or adversely impact upon children or vulnerable adults engaged with the Diocese.

There is a certain class of safeguarding concern that will not be eligible for resolution by ADR (criminal conduct, Risk of Serious Harm - ROSH and notifiable reportable conduct). To be eligible for ADR a concern must involve a diocesan worker (including an authorised carer), adversely impact upon a child and relate to a service being conducted by the Diocese.

Participation in ADR is voluntary. The written consent of each participant to a concern is required for ADR to be applied. The discussions in the ADR process are confidential and each participant will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. The only exceptions are the report to participants provided on completion, and as required by law or diocesan safeguarding policy.

Before a joint ADR conference is held the ADR practitioner will meet with each participant separately at the preliminary conference. The preliminary conference is an opportunity for the ADR practitioner to individually listen to the experience of each person and better understand what they would like to achieve at the joint ADR conference.

After the preliminary conferences the joint ADR conference may be held. This is an opportunity for the participants, with the assistance of the ADR practitioner, to identify the issues for resolution, develop options, consider alternatives and work towards an agreement which is in the best interests of the child or vulnerable adult involved.

To learn more, click on the link below:

<https://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/adr/>



From the Family Engagement Officer...

Well, that's about it for this edition of Parent News.

It's been a busy start of the term with plenty of new initiatives and exciting projects happening around the diocese that can benefit our children, young people and families.

Make sure you take advantage of the opportunities CatholicCare are offering if you're in need in the Manning area and look out for the Beyond the Gate project too.

The Virtual Art Gallery will warm your heart too so take time to check this out as well.

I would also be so very grateful if you could take some time to complete the **Federation of P&F Associations survey**. It will only take 3 minutes – I promise – and will really help to shape the work of Federation moving forward.

Finally, as we get busy with Term 3 – I want to offer my very best wishes and prayers for all students and their families who are preparing for HSC exams.

It has certainly been a year unlike any other!

If you would like to make contact, don't hesitate to call or email – my details are listed below.

With my very best wishes for the term ahead.

Cath

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