Connecting with the Community in the 21st Century

In order to improve communication with our community, Ave Maria College has recently purchased a smart phone “app” called Skoolbag. This app is currently being used by a number of local schools.

We have been disappointed with the troubles experienced in accessing the College Newsletter via the Parent Portal. You would have noticed that we are now sending out emails containing a link to the College Newsletter. This service will continue for the remainder of 2014.

We have recently sent home with your daughter an updated “Permission to Use Image” Form. With the recent changes to the Privacy Act, a need to re-issue these forms was needed.

All students aged 15 years and over must now also sign this form. The scope of the new form has also been expanded to specifically include the Skoolbag app. Please sign and return this form to the College promptly.

Methods of Communication:

- Traditional forms of communication and contact via letters, phone calls and emails to parents and families will continue.
- College website www.avemaria.vic.edu.au
  - Contains general information about the College
  - Provides access to the Parent Portal (student attendance, teacher contact details, timetables, private information, fees and school reports)
  - Provides access to AveSpace. You need to use your daughter’s login and password.
  - Provides access to PTO (Parent Teacher Interviews online booking)
  - Access to a variety of online resources / policies.
  - From Term 3 2014 the Newsletter will be available.
- SMS Messaging via mobile phone for specific information such as student absences, information regarding particular events or notes being sent home. Please note that these SMS messages are sent out using an external service provider. Please do not store the number in your phone. A number of local schools use this same service. By storing the number you may become confused as to which school has actually sent the message.
- Skoolbag
  - A smart phone app which allows you to access up-to-date school information such as the College Newsletter, calendar events, key contact details, via your smartphone (Android and iOS)
  - Details on how to obtain the app will be provided closer to the release date.
- Twitter
  - You need a Twitter account – easy to set up and it is free.
  - Find us at @avemariacollege and then “follow” us.
  - Key event reminders will be updated to Twitter.
- Facebook
  - You need to have a Facebook account
  - Find us via Facebook at Ave Maria College Aberfeldie. “Like” us and then you will be able to follow our activity.

Sometime after 2015, all Catholic Schools will be moving onto a new Student Management System. With this there will be a new parent portal facility. Details of how this new facility will operate will be released closer to the release date.

Allan Thompson
Business Manager

Using devices in class for non-educational activities

Part 1a of the Student Use of ICT Agreement states that devices may only use the College network for educational purposes. Using devices in class for playing games which are not educational, for social networking, or for any activity which is not connected to the class is an unacceptable distraction from student learning.

Any student found to be using their device in such a way will be issued a demerit through the usual Conduct Card process. As per the Student Use of ICT Agreement and Computer Rules for Students, students who demonstrate a pattern of misusing their device in class face the prospect of:
- having their access to the College intranet and internet disabled for a period of time;
- having their device confiscated for a week.
- Having their access to the College intranet and internet disabled for a period of time.

Downloading or storage of illegal video

Rule 13 of the Computer Rules for Students states that students may “upload/download onto the computer music, images, and video and other data files provided [they] have a license or ownership of such files.” A number of students’ devices have been found to have illegally downloaded music, movies or TV shows on them.

Any student found to have such material on their device will face the prospect of:
- A complete laptop re-image and the subsequent deletion of all files and applications beyond those provided by the standard College image
- Having their access to the College intranet and internet disabled for a period of time;
- Having their device confiscated for a week.
Year 7 Reflection Day

On Friday, 16 May, the Year 7 students accompanied by their Religious Education teachers, Patrick Jurd and myself, walked down to Maribyrnong Bowls Club to celebrate Reflection Day. The day provided the girls another opportunity to continue in strengthening their ties with each other and the Ave Maria College community. Structured around the theme of ‘Belonging’, students participated in a range of interactive workshops that helped foster team building and trust. The day concluded with a liturgy and reflection focused on ‘Together We Are One’. Here is an account of the day from Bianca Tanti and Kiara Mitchell, 7E.

Reflection Day was a great experience bonding with all our friends and having a great time. There were many activities throughout the day that we got to participate in. We loved the banana activity chopping it into equal parts and then being a doctor to fix it and put it back together. This taught us that at times things such as trust and friendships can be easily broken but putting them back exactly how they were is very difficult.

Another activity was a blindfolding activity. We had to put a blindfold on four people who were in our group and one girl who was not blindfolded was the leader, telling the other girls where to go to collect supplies for the task. It was a fun activity and you had to trust in your friends. We then wrote positive affirmations about our classmates and decorated a paper bag from magazines to put them in. The day finished with some quiet reflection during our liturgy.

I extend my thanks to Patrick Jurd, Director of Faith and Religious Education and the Year 7 Religious Education teachers for their contributions to a very successful day.

Jessica Hall
Year 7 Team Leader

SEASONS Program

The SEASONS Grief and Loss Program will no longer be taking place during Term 2 of this year. Instead, it will be taking place during Term 3 of this year. Carolyn Mills will be managing the program, with the assistance of another member of staff. Later on this term, an Expression of Interest Newsletter regarding the program will be sent to all families.

Carolyn Mills
Year 8 Level Team Leader

Absolute Maximum – Help for Mathematics and Science students

Every Tuesday lunchtime, your daughter is able to attend the Absolute Maximum group to get some help with their homework, test or SAC preparation or to ask about a concept that they may have missed. Please encourage your daughter to attend if they need some extra assistance.

Carmel Anile-Saade (Domain Leader Science)
Joseph Papaleo (Domain Leader Mathematics and IT)