

St Mary's Diocesan School



Newsletter

Issue 1 ~ March 2018



It does not seem that we are reaching week 6 in the term, the time has flown by, we have already had half of the school out at a variety of camps in gorgeous summer weather, a wonderful swimming sports and athletics day, basketball and netball trials, our blessing of the campus and

leaders induction service, a cyclone where the senior girls in boarding offered a reassuring atmosphere to the juniors by joining them in Robertson for the night and a major power cut.

This week our Year 11 students will have their introduction to the senior school seminar day and our Year 12 and 13 students will have their "Loves Me Not" relationships seminar as a component of their holistic preparation for our upcoming ball at the end of term.

This is a busy campus and we are incredibly excited that we are offering unique and individualized learning programmes ranging from 3 senior girls attending TOPEC to complete Outdoor Education qualifications through to our Home Economics girls completing a course through the Kura for their theory and having a one day a week 2 hour practical cooking experience to support their theory learning.

We strive to provide opportunities for our girls to become confident and connected and in fact we actively encourage our Year 13 girls to take a subject that is not offered face to face so that they can become independent and self-managing learners before they take their place in the world beyond our gates.

We are now about to have our parent student and teacher interviews where you will get to meet your daughter's teachers for the first time in 2018.

The Board of Trustees have a bold strategic plan going forward and have commenced looking at what our community believes are the core essentials that students need to prepare them for their future. We will have the opportunity for you to answer questions at the Parent Teacher interviews.

We have also hosted Sarah Taylor, the Ministry of Education Property Advisor, on our campus and she has affirmed our current building plans so we look forward to working with the Board of Proprietors and Board of Trustees to plan the next phase of providing a first class physical environment for your daughters.

Education is at a cross roads at present with many changes in structures and qualification reviews mooted in the media; we believe our school is extremely well poised to adjust to the changes. Our staff are well qualified, well read and already share their best practice, this has resulted in another set of outstanding NCEA results that will be celebrated at our Academic Assembly.

We are spending quality time looking at what we offer in assessments and topics but also looking outwards in what is happening globally and locally. Stuart Trundle, Chief Executive of Venture Taranaki joined us this week to talk with staff around the national economic trends as well as the Taranaki economy and what skill set our learners may need to have in the future.

Education is so much more than just gaining NCEA, it is about managing yourself and being able to take responsibility for your behavior choices and their consequences. The key to this is that our girls holistically need to be flexible and resilient. Resilience is often described as the ability to bounce back but we believe that in fact being resilient means that you develop strategies and attitudes that allow you to bounce forward from disappointments.

Much of my sabbatical was spent looking at places in education where we could grow resilience and I have really enjoyed reading the work of Dr Judith Locke. Locke in her book "the Bonsai Child" says much of today's focus is on children's wellbeing and self-esteem and that many families completely centre their lives on their children. She is particularly concerned about parents who spend time and energy trying to improve their child's immediate mood and says that often parents' actions to help the child feel better can inadvertently make the child feel worse. Parents' actions to resolve their child's issues means the child does not develop their own skills in facing issues, accepting the situation or resolving the difficulties and a child who has been given a perfect childhood often can't cope with the less than perfect but completely normal realities of adult life.

As a component of this our pastoral staff are exploring resilience programmes for each year level and our pastoral staff will be attending ongoing professional development throughout the year to build up our capacity in this across the school.

P. M. Sreen

Introducing our new staff



Mr Kieran Browne comes to us from Sacred Heart Girls' College and is our new Learning Area Head of Mathematics and also is overseeing all matters in regards to NCEA.

"I arrived in Taranaki from London 26 years ago, my wife Claire is a practice nurse and we have two adult sons. I also love cooking Indian food"



Ms Katrina Ward is our new visual arts and digital technology teacher, having previously worked at Marist College in Auckland and most recently with MindLab here in Taranaki. Katrina is a practicing artist and designs textiles and wallpaper. Katrina's work is featured in "The Collaboration Exhibition" at 22 Devon Street in New Plymouth until March 18

"I love painting, designing textiles, running, yoga and hanging out with her two children (4 and 6) in her spare time"



Mrs Melissa Jacobson is our new Biology and Science teacher. We are thrilled to welcome Melissa back to St Mary's where she previously attended as a student. Melissa has a passion for all things environmental and was previously the Environmental Educator at Rotokare Sanctuary.

"My name is Melissa Jacobson, I am an old girl, attending St Marys as a full boarder during the mid-90's. I am thoroughly enjoying teaching science and biology at St Mary's, and look forward to very a productive year. When I am not teaching I am kept busy with my husband, our three children and our lifestyle block".

School Production for 2018

Rehearsals are well underway for this wonderful show with some stunning singing, dancing and acting already coming through – pencil in these dates on the calendar now so that you don't miss out seeing the first exciting event of the year from the performing arts area of our school.

Opening night Tuesday 8 May and evening performances on Wednesday 9 May, Friday 11 May and Saturday 12 May with a matinee on Saturday 12 May at 3pm.

Celebrations

Congratulations to Payton Agent and Nikita MacDonald who have qualified to swim at The National Division II Competition to be held in Rotorua from 18-21 March 2018.

Congratulations to Anne Larcom who has gained her Level 3 Figures Certificate and also her Level 2 Dance Certificate in Figure Skating recently at Manawatu Competitions. She is now working towards selection for the national competitions in July.

Best wishes to Jasmine Gibbon who is competing in the New Zealand Secondary Schools Triathlon in Nelson next weekend.

Congratulations to Eva Greensill who gained an NCEA scholarship in Drama in the 2017 examinations.



NCEA Results 2017

Our final NCEA Results for 2017 are once again a reflection of the commitment our teachers put in to ensuring your daughters gain a first class education to prepare them for life beyond our gates

2017 participation results - results for girls who were entered in the respective levels

Level 1 93.1% pass rate against a national pass rate of 87.8%

Level 2 100% pass rate against a national pass rate of 91.2%

Level 3 96.2% pass rate against a national pass rate of 86.6%

University Entrance pass rate 88.5% against a national pass rate of 66.8%



Department Updates



English

Welcome to Miss Simpson

We are delighted to welcome Miss Gentry Simpson to the English department this year. Gentry is an experienced, enthusiastic teacher who brings vibrancy and energy to her lessons. She has begun the year teaching poetry, film and reading skills and creative writing to her classes. Gentry joined St Mary's Diocesan in 2017 teaching Dance, Physical Education and as the Learning Support Coordinator.

A travelling poet

On Wednesday 7 March a group of senior students listened to a visiting poet from Edinburgh who is in New Zealand as part of the Wellington Arts Festival. Harry Giles is a 'general doer of things', writing and performing innovative poetry in English and magpie Scots. The poems were fascinating, funny and thought-provoking. Harry's playful use of language and ability to put an audience at ease meant that we had a fantastic morning.

Year 9 haiku

Year 9 classes have also started the year by studying poetry. The girls have been learning about haiku and have written some lovely ones. A selection is included here for you to enjoy.

Flowing in the wind
Rough banana edges
Lime to dark

by Megan Lodge

scent of salt
the sun hides behind the sea
gulls eye our food

by Lucy Hopperus Buma

The powder blue leaf
falls down reminding us
of when we lost her

by Kelly Armitstead

Orange splotted leaf
and rose petals combine...

together as one
Happiness is found.

by Melissa Smith

Maria Taylor, LAH English

Business Studies



The Young Enterprise Scheme has started again for this year with a Young Enterprise Timata Kick Start, held at the Plymouth Quality Hotel on February 19th where our Year 12 and Year 13 Business Studies students got to meet with a number of Speed Coaches to discuss product possibilities.

Year 12 Business Studies Students with Lauren Rowland



Year 13s discussing ideas with Rosemma Strombom from Fairfax Media.

Fleur Karasawa, Business Studies

Unit Standard 167

The attached photos show our girls dressed up and all prepared to sit Food Safety Unit Standard 167 which is an

essential standard required by many councils for staff to work in cafes and restaurants. We are thrilled that all girls have been successful and will now be able to work safely in food preparation areas throughout New Zealand.

Our thanks to TET for the funding and FEATS for providing the chef expertise.





Health & Physical Education Department

Kicking Off a New Year!

It has been a busy start to the year with three outdoor camps, swimming sports and Athletics all completed in the first half of this term. It was a hectic start to the year, but we got to enjoy some amazing weather and quality time with students outside of the classroom, building relationships and knowledge.

Year 9 students have been involved in a range of activities for getting to know each other, as well as preparing and taking part in Athletics. They have had a positive start to the year and have enjoyed getting involved in a range of outdoor activities, as well as taking part in Year 9 camp.

Year 10 students went to TOPEC in Week 2 of this term which was an excellent opportunity for participating in a variety of outdoor activities that they would not normally do. Learning to work together in a residential setting, preparing and completing an



overnight experience where they had to cook for themselves, put up fly sheet or tents and

get to and from venues. TOPEC provides an excellent platform for students to learn in the outdoors in a safe and supportive environment

Senior students are also well underway with their NCEA courses. Level 2 students have already participated in a rock climbing camp in conjunction with TOPEC, stepping out of their comfort zones and supporting each other to gain the best grades possible.

The level 1 Physical Education girls have completed their pre-assessment for the "Aquathon", a multisport event consisting of a 200m swim followed by a 3km run. They are now working on their training programme to improve their technique and fitness in preparation for their final performance.



The Level 3 girls have completed their week at TOPEC to be a River Safety and Adventure Based Learning Leader. The girls have learnt about the

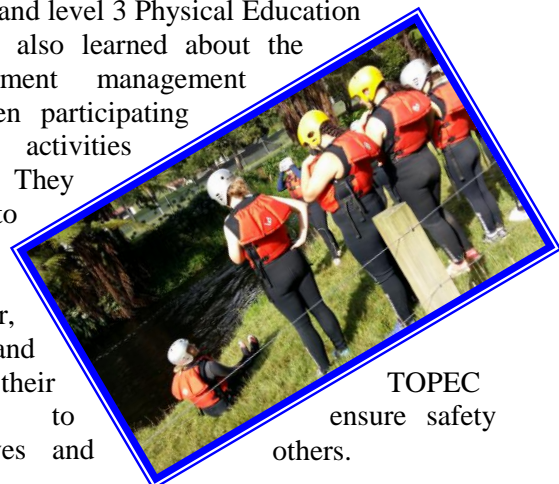


different styles of leadership and used this knowledge to instruct the Year 11 Physical Education students. On Wednesday 14 February the Year 13 students led River Safety and Adventure Based Learning Activities. This was completed to a very high standard and this enabled our Year 11 Physical Education students to have a positive and worthwhile experience. This authentic

learning enabled them to see whether each leadership style worked and what was not effective.

Both level 2 and level 3 Physical Education classes have also learned about the risk assessment management systems when participating in Outdoor activities with groups. They have had to

pre-plan and review all risks prior, during and following their experience to of themselves and



TOPEC ensure safety others.

Mrs Nic Carver will be away for the final three weeks of this term as she embarks on her study tour of England and Scotland with her husband, where they will be looking at sustainable farming practices as part of their role as Ambassadors for the Balance Farm Environment Awards. In her absence Mrs Rachel Neild will be relieving Physical Education for 3 weeks. Mrs Neild will be delivering Physical Education to Year 9 and Year 10 students. Mrs Karla Ralph will take over Year 11 Physical Education and Year 12 Outdoor Education classes during this time to ensure continuity of learning.

Karla Ralph, LAH Health & Physical Education

Year 9 Camp



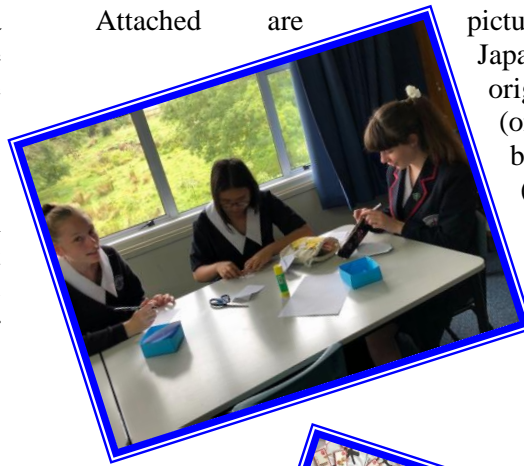
The year 9 students were formally welcomed onto the Whakaahurangi Marae where we learnt about manaakitanga, taking care of one another and sharing responsibilities. The girls learnt the school Waiata and made flax flowers in the afternoon before heading to Konini Lodge. The students talked and worked together around the recipe for respect and stitched their own cupcake recipe, helping each other and sharing ideas. We gave back to the community, clearing the pathways around the visitor area and Dawson Falls for the Department of Conservation. It has been a great opportunity for the girls to spend time getting to know each other and their class teachers who stayed with them on camp.

Liz Higgs, Year 9 Dean

Japanese Club

In Japanese, there is a special term for lunch, “**obento**”. An **obento** is a special kind of Japanese lunch that is not only tasty, but also very healthy and eye-catching. Japanese people tend to carry around their **obentos** in lunch boxes called “**obento-bako**”.

Attached are pictures of the Japanese club making origami rice balls (onigiri) for the bento boxes (Japanese lunch boxes) as we learn about Obento in term 1.



Invitation to

**2018 St Mary’s PTA Meet and Greet
Tuesday 13 March 7pm in the staff room**

*Come along for Drinks and nibbles
and to meet other parents/caregivers*

Followed by: the AGM

See and hear about the great work the PTA did last year and offer suggestions for 2018 projects

All school families are automatically members of the PTA

(No pressure to take on a formal role – we have had offers to fill the positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer)

Followed by: Are you growing a resilient daughter?

with Fiona Green

St Mary’s Open Day

If you know of any family who may be considering sending their daughter(s) to St Mary’s Diocesan in the next few years please let them know about our Open Day on Wednesday 21 March (see flyer on the next page for further information).

St Mary's Diocesan School, Stratford



An integrated Anglican Year 9 – Year 13 Boarding and Day School in the heart of Taranaki

Nurturing Exceptional Young Women

Join us on Open Day

Wednesday 21 March 2018 10 am – 2pm

Let us take you on a personal tour of our school and boarding house



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