Dear Parents/ Care Givers,

This week all classes begin a series of lessons that will stretch out over the next few weeks on student protection matters. Being safe and feeling safe are absolutely vital for all children at all times. It is certainly our number one priority here at St. Mark’s. Indeed, student success depends upon it. Whether issues arise at home, or school, or the wider community, all children need to know and be assured that help is available.

As mentioned, children have access to a number of trusted contacts in the school. Apart from their teacher, children can also contact Mrs Lysaght, Mrs Patrick, Mrs Daley or myself and know that we will act to secure their safety.

Talk to your child about what they are learning or simply contact your child’s teacher should you prefer.

**P and F Meeting**
The P and F meets this Wednesday evening at 5.30 pm. Business pertinent for this term will occupy a deal of our time—school events and celebrations. Mr Brian Weston, president of the P and F from Our Lady of Fatima School, Acacia Ridge, will be one of our guests. I hope to see a good roll up at the meeting.

**Mark Times**
The teachers and classes will again produce Mark Times for this year, recording some of the happenings of the year. My thanks to Mrs Winterflood and a group of teachers who will co-ordinate its production, the children for their input, and the P and F for covering the costs. This ensures that all students will receive their (your) copy in the last week of the school year. I know you will enjoy it again!

**CTJ Day**
**Next Monday is a student free day** with teachers involved in meetings in various schools throughout the district and beyond. There will be a number of visiting teachers coming to St. Mark’s that day. Please make suitable arrangements for your child/ren.

**Disco**
By popular demand, and with great teacher support, the P and F will hold a disco on Friday evening, 25th October, in Mercy Hall, from 6.30 to 8.30 pm. These are always a great favourite amongst our children and I’m sure this will be no different. Parents are, of course, very welcome, and indeed encouraged, to attend. Please mark it on your calendar.

**RE Curriculum**
With great fanfare, the new Religious Education curriculum was launched by the archbishop, Mark Coleridge, last Friday. A number of our teachers involved in its implementation, and me, went along and joined the celebrations. Religious Education will be taught with all the rigor that applies to all other key learning areas. We look forward to the continued success of the important and inspirational teaching of RE which is at the heart of all that we do in a Catholic school.

**Month of the Rosary**
Each day, throughout this month, chimes ring out at midday, calling us to prayer. Classes are learning about and praying the rosary. I would encourage you to lead the prayer life in your family along these lines at this time.

**Clubs**
Breakfast Club operates each Monday and Thursday morning.
Homework Club operates on a Tuesday afternoon.
These are for the benefit of families and individual students, wonderfully supported by the teachers.

**Tuck Shop**
Thanks for your on-going patronage and general support of the tuckshop. I am very hopeful that, with this continuing, its wonderful service can go on. A new price list and menu is now in effect.

**Student of the Week**

PG: Gavin Tran
PW: Sophie Leighton
PB: Livron Kolio
1G: Peter Williamson
1W: Loni Leman
1B: Cruze Connors & John Ceballos
2G: Catherine Huynh
2W: Gabriella Rangel
3G: William Nguyen
3W: Devon Nguyen
4/5B: Alex Ho
4G: David Ngo
4W: Emma Lu
5G: Jessica Dang & Luis Ventura
5W: Jemma Watkins
6G: Kenboy Tran Nguyen
7G: Natalie Nguyen
7W: Andy Nguyen
This week we will begin our annual focus on Child Safety here at St Mark’s. Once again we are using a program provided by the Queensland Government which runs the students through a series of four lessons which talk about safety issues. At St Mark’s we use these lessons to explain that we are all special, unique individuals created by God and we have the right to be safe at all times. The students will talk about the “early warning signs” that their body gives out that tells them they might be in danger. For example, butterflies in the tummy, sweaty palms, an uneasy feeling or the hairs on the back on the neck stand up. Many children think that being safe refers to practical matters like crossing the road, wearing a bike helmet—many don’t realise that being safe also means being emotionally safe too. The children discuss the importance that their body belongs to them—and that nobody can touch them or make them touch somebody else. Because God has created each of us special—and we are all important—we have a right to protect ourselves from people who may want to hurt us. The children will also be given some very practical, proactive strategies to use against someone who may potentially be dangerous to them. They also take time to specifically name adults that they can trust to talk to if they ever don’t feel safe. These lessons will be conducted by their teacher, Mrs Patrick and myself.

These are very important life lessons for our students. Please take the time to talk to your children about these lessons. Please talk to myself or your child’s teacher if you have any questions.
BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION: 
Personal Development Survey

Sexuality education is an essential aspect of any Christian Education and supports parents in their primary role as their children’s first and foremost educators. Through such education, parents and schools help students explore our Christian vocation to love which leads to a responsible and fulfilled Christian life.

Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) has embarked on a two-year project seeking to strengthen its capacity to deliver quality evidence-based sexuality education within the Catholic Christian perspective. As part of this project BCE would like to gain an understanding of the sexuality education currently occurring in Brisbane Catholic Schools and Colleges. To this end, a random selection of families from many schools and colleges is being invited to complete a survey to help BCE better understand the views, needs and wants of parents across the archdiocese.

Your Participation:

Randomly selected families will be contacted and invited, by an external contractor engaged by BCE, to participate in the surveys. The contractor will contact these parents via email on the 18 October 2013. If you are contacted you will not be asked to provide any personal information but rather about your views on what should be taught in sexuality education, how it should be taught, and how well it is currently being taught.

Although some families will be selected at random, BCE would like to extend an invitation to participate in the survey to any or all families wishing to be involved.

If you would like to be a part of this important project and would like to complete a Parent Survey, please contact the contractor detailed below before 18 October 2013. Thank you for your support.

Laura Graham
Survey Contractor
Email: laura.graham.surveys@gmail.com

SPECIAL SHOWBAGS FOR SALE!

The St Mark’s Show bags are now for sale at the bargain price of $10. You could keep all the items for yourself or you could split up the items to share with the family. This is a wonderful purchase for anyone - in particular. YEAR 7s. What a great memory of your primary school as you head off to your separate high schools and a lovely graduation gift, parents, for your year 7 child. Purchase NOW from the office.

LATE STUDENTS

If students are late they must report to the school office, to let Mr Montgomery or Mrs Ioannides know the reason why they are late for school. Thank you!

NAPLAN RESULTS:

This week, parents of children in Years 3, 5 and 7 will receive NAPLAN results from tests that were conducted earlier this year. These results have merit but need to be understood as a “snapshot” of achievement, at a particular point in time, that gives an indication of how students are performing.

We are pleased with overall results in a number of key areas. There is much to celebrate about the learning that has taken place for many students. For others, areas of concern are highlighted that can give a focus for further effort and application.

Teachers will soon be writing Semester Two reports for all students in all classes. This is a more comprehensive assessment of achievements made through the year. I encourage all parents to take on board what teachers are saying and act on the advice given.

For all students, the overwhelming contributors to a students’ chances of success lie with keen and caring parents (50%)and teachers (30%).

Should you like or need any clarification, do not hesitate to contact the school.
NEXT P&F MEETING IS ON THIS WED 16TH OCT 5.30PM
Brian (President) and Daniel (Vice President) from Our Lady of Fatima P&F will be joining us at our Wednesday night P&F Meeting. They were interested in seeing how other multicultural school communities meet. EVERYONE WELCOME!

World Teachers Day Morning Tea on Friday 25th October
To celebrate our wonderful teachers and staff, we are inviting parents and families to bring along a plate (biscuits or cake or spring rolls etc) to share with our teachers for morning tea.

My Amazing Teacher...
Mr Fergusson is a teacher who has a passion for teaching. He is fun, approachable, and a very encouraging person. He likes to share interesting stories and funny jokes, which 7G enjoyed very much. I am grateful to have him as my teacher this year.

Zac Gavarra.

Thank you to Tran Nguyen, (year 6) for the Beautiful words she wrote about Mrs Cook and Mrs Gorman last week.

Marissa and her proud brother, Daniel (Prep B).

Congratulations to David & Laura Matheson on the birth of their beautiful daughter, Marissa.

Jayden & Quinn are very blessed to have an amazing grandmother who picks them up from school everyday and she is always smiling!

Grand Parents Day on Sunday 27th October

PARENT FORUM 31ST OCTOBER 5.30pm—7.30pm
Review of Queensland senior assessment and school reporting and Over-all Position (OP) tertiary entrance processes, presented by Prof. Gabrielle Matters
Brigidine College Indooroopilly RSVP 25 October 2013 email. info@pandf.org.au

ST MARKS CHRISTMAS DINNER ON FRIDAY 15TH NOVEMBER
Private Function Room at Richlands Tavern
$35.00 for buffet dinner, dessert and unlimited soft drinks.
EVERYONE WELCOME!

Upcoming Disco 6:30pm Friday, 25th October.

$5.50 can make a difference?
Thank you to Mrs Mayers and Mrs Satchell for their great suggestion of donating care packs to the local homeless.
Thank you to Mrs Watkins for providing samples of affordable care packs.
As Mrs Watkins said, “for the cost of a McDonalds Happy Meal you can make a difference and the homeless people would be a step closer to feeling like they are not forgotten”.
Let me know what you think of this idea as we need more families behind it.