22 January 2016

Dear Parents & Guardians,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce myself as the Year Eight Coordinator for 2016. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new school year and invite you to continue your active involvement with your son’s education. It is an exciting time, and I am very much looking forward to working with parents, caregivers and the Year Eight students in the coming year.

The students of Year Eight 2016 will already be anticipating this next stage in their schooling career with some excitement and perhaps even apprehension. It is important that we support this transition and encourage them to be the best that they can be. Any issues that arose in Year Seven have hopefully been resolved and advanced from to make improvements for the future. “Good Christians and Good Citizens” remains the College theme for 2016 and at its core are the words from 2 Corinthians 13:11 “Try to grow perfect; help one another. Be united; live in peace and the God of love and peace will be with you.” This theme will serve as a powerful reminder of the uniqueness and potential of every student in Year Eight as they journey with a caring God through the next stage of their school life. I will be encouraging students to take on this theme and to ‘defame no-one, be peaceable, considerate and always polite to everyone’.

Year Eight will present the students with countless opportunities and challenges. They should aim to be highly involved with all aspects of College life. I urge you to encourage your son(s) to set goals aimed at involvement in the academic, social, sporting and cultural dimensions of the College. The focus of the Pastoral Care Program in Year Eight will continue to be based around the College’s Code of Conduct. A special emphasis will be placed on respect, solidarity, organisation, study skills and the responsible use of technology. We will also be focusing on the important issue of mental health and resilience. The students will be exposed to a variety of Social Justice Initiatives throughout the year, and it is expected that they will support them fully.

To assist you in planning for the 2016 school year and to ensure a smooth transition, it is imperative that all students return to school meeting the standards of Marcellin College. The Marcellin College diary clearly sets out these expectations which include the following:

- All Applications for Exemption from Attendance must be submitted in writing two weeks prior to the leave where possible. The application form can be found on the website and should be submitted to me in a timely fashion.
- Any student who has a genuine requirement to use a public bus to travel to and from school e.g. – where a school special is unavailable must apply in writing to me. This must be submitted by the end of week two. If the application is successful, a pass will be issued. No student is to use a public bus stop without a pass or a note from me if it is a one-off e.g. travelling to an appointment.
- Hair is to be cut short and be neatly groomed at all times. Cuts are to be even graded from the base to the neck. No shaved, stepped, undercut, layered styles, streaking, colouring or dyes are not permitted. If a boy’s hair is not satisfactory, they will not be allowed to go to class until it has been fixed.
- Students must have a uniform that fits correctly. Trousers should be the correct length and shirts should fit neatly so that the top button can be done up and long enough to be tucked in. The shirt must have a top button.
- Students must have a black leather belt.
- Shoes should be polished black leather business type shoes. They can be lace up or slip on. Skate shoes or the like will not be tolerated, so please do not buy these for your son. Socks must be of a suitable length to cover the ankles well.
- Rain Jackets must be the Marcellin College jacket and are not to be worn in class.
- The Marcellin College cap must be worn for outdoor activities.
- Students must have the Marcellin College school bag.
- The sports uniform is worn on Thursdays and for PDHPE. All students require a correctly fitted sports shirt, as well as a house coloured shirt. Joggers should be running shoes that are lace up.
Term 1 commences on Thursday 28th January with full College summer uniform to be worn as there will be no sport on the first day of school. There will be no canteen access on this day. Normal sport training and games will resume in week two. The program for the first day will be as follows;

8.45: Whole school assembly in the Courtyard to welcome students back
9.00: Year Group Meetings and Extended Homeroom
10.15: House Meetings (Directions will be given via the PA when the bell rings)
10.45: Whole school assembly in the Courtyard
11.00: Dismissal

**Term dates for the year are as follows:**
Term 1 – 28th January to the 8th April.
Term 2 - 26th April to the 1st July.
Term 3 - 18th July to the 22nd September.
Term 4 - 10th October to the 13th December.

There are a number of school activities that require your son’s full support and attendance. These events are compulsory and a Medical Certificate will be required if your son is absent. This is not a complete list and I encourage you to check the College Calendar regularly. Please remember that the College Website is an excellent source of information as is the College Newsletter that is emailed out every second Friday.

I would like to draw your attention to the following events:

**Term 1**
Thursday, 28 January  
Years 8-12 first day (school uniform required, no official classes)
Friday, 29 January  
Marcellin Swimming Carnival – Botany Pool
Friday, 12 February  
Meet and Greet Evening
Friday, 12 February  
Commencement Mass

**Term 2**
Friday, 29 April  
College Athletics Carnival
Friday, 10 June  
Champagnat Day Activities
Wednesday, 29 June  
Years 7-9 Parent/Teacher Night
30 May – 1 June  
Years 7-9 Half Yearly Examinations

**Term 3**
8-12 August  
Activities Week
22 September  
Graduation Day

**Term 4**
Friday, 28 October  
Walkathon
14-18 November  
Years 7-9 Examinations
The classroom experiences presented to the students in Year Eight will continue to be Information Communication Technology (ICT) rich and allow them to foster a strong commitment to life-long learning. It is imperative that the students establish a regular study routine each day. This study may cover class homework, research, revision, assignments and assessment tasks. Students must also check their school email account at least once daily as it is being increasingly used by teachers for important messages. I will be providing time, support and a quiet place for students to study each Tuesday afternoon from 3.20-4.30. Attendance at these sessions may be compulsory at times if a student is struggling to complete homework or assignments. As we continue to deliver a curriculum that is ICT rich I will also use this time to assist students with data management, electronic communications and submission of assignments. Students must take responsibility for their laptops as they are an essential tool for their learning. They must be in good working order, have all required software installed and be fully charged for the start of each school day. Any issues need to be dealt with promptly at the College’s Technology Support Centre.

The student diary is an important and valuable tool for students, parents and staff. It is the most direct method of communicating between staff and parents along with a way for your son to stay organised and monitor homework. Please sit down with your son when he first receives his diary and read through the ‘College Expectations’ and the ‘Anti-Bullying Responsibilities & Policy’. There are two agreements that then need to be read, discussed and signed by you and your son(s). ‘The Digital Device Student Acceptable Use Agreement’ and the ‘E-Learning Agreement’ need to be carefully read and signed as a contract with the College that he understands and will agree to follow these policies closely. Please also take the time to read and sign the ‘Student / Parent Commitment’. The diary should then be monitored closely, checked each evening and signed at least once every week.

This year we have a very caring team of homeroom teachers working directly with your son. The homeroom team for 2016 is Mr Peter Sgouras, Mr Steve Roemling, Mrs Hayley Spencer, Mr Justin McHugh, Mr Thomas Gardiner and Mr Steve Brock. The homeroom teachers are the first point of contact regarding your son(s). They are available via your son’s diary, by phone or email. Teachers email addresses and other relevant information can be located on the College Website (www.marcellin.nsw.edu.au).

Another vital point of contact is the Parent and Student Portal of Sentral, you will find this link on the College Website. It can be used to access student timetables and attendance records. I would encourage you to visit this portal and ask your son(s) to print out their 2016 timetable and study it prior to the first day of school.

I look forward to working with you and your son(s) this year. I anticipate that we will strive together towards common goals. Ensuring your son’s welfare and that of his fellow community members is a top priority as is ensuring that the high standards and expectations of the College are maintained. If there are any questions or concerns regarding your son(s) please do not hesitate to contact the homeroom teacher or myself.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Sharon Moore
Year Eight Coordinator