Xavier News

Issue Number 24 Thursday 18th August 2005

Xavier Day
Wednesday 24th August

Our Community Day of Celebration

Xavier day is a casual day for everyone.
Bring a gold coin donation to support the Salesian ‘Boys Town’ project.

CALENDAR DATES

Wed Aug 24th
Xavier Day

Thurs Aug 25th
Year 10 Parent Information meeting

Fri Aug 26th
Rock Eisteddfod

Wed Aug 31st
Immunisations Year 8

Wed Aug 31st
Combined Arts Night

Mon Sept 5th
No Gawler High School Buses operating

Wed Sept 7th
STUDENT FREE DAY

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“a school of the future in the present”
From the Principal

XAVIER DAY CELEBRATIONS
This week there is growing excitement as we prepare for Xavier Day on Wednesday, 24th August. Ms Rawady, Mr Watson and the House leadership teams have been busy making plans and students have already chosen activities for the day. It is an important day in the life of the community as we celebrate the founding of the College. The day will commence with a full school Mass, an important celebration of what it means to be a school community in the Salesian tradition. This year the theme of the liturgy will focus on our connections with the wider Salesian community, the other Salesian Schools in Australia and the Salesian Mission in the village of Swaghi in the Solomons that we have special ties with through our Lenten Project Compassion Appeal. This year we will also strike a special connection with the Salesian ‘Boys Town’ Project in NSW, where support is provided for children and families in crisis. Students will be asked to bring a gold coin donation to help support a Holiday and Adventure Program being run by Boys Town in an attempt to provide holiday opportunities for young people who are often deprived of the holiday activities that many of us take for granted.

The rest of the day will be set aside for the various activities that have been planned and this will be followed by a community BBQ lunch and band festival before a 1pm dismissal.

PASTORAL CARE and the HOUSE SYSTEM
Pastoral Care underpins everything we do at Xavier and is fundamental to the educational philosophy of St John Bosco and his belief that “education is largely a matter of the heart” that leads young people to “know that they are loved”. The House System is the primary structure through which this pastoral care is provided and as a consequence is constantly under review in an attempt to enhance the effectiveness of the system. The ‘Be Active’ initiative introduced this year is an example of our proactive approach to developing the well-being of students. Another initiative that is being trialled throughout the remainder of this year is the establishment of the new position of Assistant House Director, this role is designed to strengthen the leadership within each House and provide students with an additional adult to whom they can turn to for support, advice and guidance. I am delighted to introduce the newly appointed Assistant House Directors and to acknowledge them in the first instance for their willingness to take up such an important role at the College.

Ms Nadine Smart McCormack
Ms Cate Jacka Polding
Ms Michelle Rawady
Mr Peter Thornton Bosco
Mr Lynn Martin Principal

Year 10 SACE Parent Information Meeting
7pm Thursday, 25th August

Essential information regarding the South Australian Certificate of Education and the subject selection process for Year 11, 2006 will be presented at this meeting. Year 10 students have already received a copy of the 2006 Senior Curriculum Handbook and attended an assembly at which the same information was outlined. This is an opportunity for parents to become fully aware of the process that students will be engaged in during this crucial period of discernment.

Salesian Youth Group in Gawler
Are you in Years 6-9 at school?
Interested in meeting and socialising with other young Catholics?
The organisers are speaking at masses in a few weeks time, so come and hear about the proposed Salesian Youth Group in the Gawler Catholic Parish.
This is your chance to contribute to the Parish and have fun!
For more information contact Cate: 0405 420 660

CONGRATULATIONS
Kiara Redden will be competing in the National School Aerobics Funk competition August 20th to 22nd in Melbourne.

St Bridgid’s Year 7 Orientation Day
The Year 7’s from St Bridgid’s had a very successful visit to Xavier on Friday 12th August. The Year 10 House Leaders took the students on a tour of the College which was followed by some sports activities on the Oval with one of our Year 8 classes. Their trip ended with a visit to our Canteen.
The Year 10’s did a great job and really impressed the students and staff from St Bridgid’s. Our Year 8’s were also fantastic in terms of welcoming the new students, joining in the activities and supporting our staff.
I would like to thank the following staff for their assistance in making this run so smoothly: Mr Daniel Searle, Mr Robert Polito, Ms Nadine Smart, Ms Chris Dwulat, Mr Mike Hennessy, Mrs Diana Docherty, Mr Adrian Beacham and Mrs Karen Stacey.

Ms Michelle Rawady
Director of Students
Handling The Homework Horrors

By Michael Grose
Accredited Professional Speaker and Author

Homework causes more headaches for parents than it does for children. Some parents worry because their children don't seem to do enough while others are concerned because they do too much.

But for many parents homework is that time of the day when they routinely harass, hassle and harangue their child to JUST DO YOUR HOMEWORK.

Okay, what to do?

The first step is to know the homework policy of your children's school and understand what is expected of you as a parent. Most schools have parent interviews and information sessions at the start of the new year so make sure you get a good handle on how your child's teacher expects you to assist.

It is also useful to find out what the teacher will do if your child doesn't complete set tasks. Homework is basically an agreement between a teacher and a child so it should be up to the teacher to ensure the homework is completed. That means the teacher becomes 'the bad guy' and puts some consequence in place if the homework is not completed. Your role as a parent is to support the school if a consequence is put in place, such as missing some recess to complete it or whatever.

Parents need to be mindful that it is hard for teachers these days, as they don't have too many options available to ensure children complete homework.

Here are 10 tips to help you handle homework in a relatively sane way:

1. Establish homework time and stick to it each day. If children tell you that they don't have any formal homework then they can read, revise or organise their work. My feedback tells me that sticking to a routine despite the fact that no formal homework is set is extremely useful and helps avoid battles.

2. Put the onus back on your children to take responsibility for their work. Ask children at the start of a homework session to state how much homework they will do. At the end of the session check it to see if it matches with their intentions as well as yours. If you are more concerned about homework than they are, then it is you, not your children who is responsible for homework.

3. Homework is as much a time management issue as anything else. Encourage students to work reasonably quickly and efficiently. Have a set time limit, which they should stick to. There is generally little point slogging away once they become frustrated or tired. Give them an egg timer or use a clock and get them to work hard for small chunks of time. A little work each night is more productive than packing it into one weekly session.

4. Help children decide the best time to do homework and then encourage them to stick to those times. Maybe on some days homework is tackled after dinner for any number of reasons. If having homework done straight after school is important to you then consider feeding children ONLY after homework is completed. Food can be a huge motivator for some children!!! (As mentioned in point 1 it is important that there is a homework routine, but the timing can vary.)

5. Establish a good working environment for students. Make sure they have a quiet area away from distractions that is well lit and with good ventilation. A table or desk makes a good workspace, although don't be surprised if they spread work out all over the kitchen table. Some kids hate to be stuck away in their rooms and prefer to work at the kitchen table and can do so productively. Others are easily distracted and work in short bursts. Work out what is best for YOUR child.

6. Use the motivating research tool of the 21st Century - the Internet. It is quick, convenient and gives access to huge amounts of information. Nevertheless, children should still know how to access information from more traditional means such as books. Check with your child's teacher as to their specific recommendations and preferences.

7. Encourage children to get organised by thinking ahead and planning their homework around their extra-curricular activities. A weekly planner or diary will help older students get organised. Assisting children to become organised is perhaps the best way parents can help at home.

8. If you are helping a child with a particular task, keep your explanation as simple and practical as you can. If you become upset or frustrated and the atmosphere becomes tense then stop helping.

9. Be realistic and don't expect to solve all homework difficulties. When in doubt send a note to your child's teacher letting him or her know the problem. The teacher will appreciate this good communication.

10. If you have concerns about the how much homework your child is set or the level of difficulty of homework contact the teacher and arrange a time to discuss your worries. Such discussion is the basis of true partnership between you and your child's teacher.

Homework hassles have always been around and always will be. The place of homework is routinely questioned by education authorities but my gut reaction is that children will always have homework. The name may change and the activities may vary, but it will always be homework.

I urge schools to make sure homework is varied, interesting, engaging and purposeful for children and parents. Parents also need to be patient with both children (if they struggle) and schools that are trying to find a balance between too little and too much in these busy times.
Girls Yr 9 Knockout Tennis

Final Score:
- Trinity College 3 rubbers (29 games) defeated
- Xavier College 3 rubbers (24 games)

Xavier College were tied with Trinity College after the first round of doubles games (at 1 rubber each). This healthy position was due to a strong win by Liesel Dunstan and Jess Power. Alisha Cassidy and Katie Thackray were the first to play their singles games. Despite their valiant efforts they went down to a strong Trinity College combination, which left Xavier College fighting to get back into the match. However, Jessica Power and Liesel Dunstan overcame a strong top order to tie the match at 3 rubbers each. This was a hard fought battle that ended up coming down to the amount of games that each school had won. Congratulations girls on a great effort.

Mr Andrew Footner
Coach

Year 9 Boys Knockout Tennis

Last Monday Xavier played host to Trinity and Gawler High School in the first round of Year 9 Knockout Boys Tennis. After a wet night, the boys were welcomed with bright sunshine and a breeze, which dried the courts up quickly. The first match between Trinity and Gawler High was over in a flash as Gawler struggled with the consistency of the Trinity lads. The next match was almost identical as Xavier College ran all over Gawler to record a very comfortable victory, 6 rubbers to nil.

The last match of the day was always going to be the decider and Xavier needed to get off to a good start in the doubles. Unfortunately this was not to be the case, Trinity winning both doubles matches 9-6, 9-3. From this point we had to win at least 3 singles rubbers to win the tie. Our comeback began well, Nathan Griffith accounting for Josh Ferguson 6-2 and Brett Tucker, struggling to run because of knee problems, also gaining the same result over Chris White. Sam Stanton and Cameron Daniels had played an exciting doubles match, eventually losing 9-6, and this made them quite leg-weary as they headed out for their singles matches. Both unfortunately lost but their efforts throughout the day had been exceptional. At the end of the day it was the wrong result for Xavier College, 4 rubbers to 2, but all 4 boys played some outstanding tennis and the sportsmanship between the teams was first-rate.

Mr Daniel Searle
Sports Administrator

“a school of the future in the present”