Welcome to our last edition of The Life for 2015. We are looking forward to sharing in our Celebration and Awards assembly with all our families next week as we reflect and acknowledge the growth in our students throughout this year. Families will also be receiving Semester 2 reports next week which give feedback on students’ progress and suggestions for improvement next year. The education journey we are on is not a short sprint but a cross country run with many hurdles and milestones along the way. The staff at the College are passionate about ensuring each student is well supported to tackle any obstacles and encouraged to persevere in their learning so they can achieve beyond their expectations.

Planning is well underway for ground improvements over the holiday period as we extend the current playground and returf the grassed area behind the playground. The fence line will be moved to allow room for the new agriculture plot and greenhouse. Year 9 students who have chosen the Agriculture elective will be the first to plan out how this new project will be developed, although we also expect to see some of the younger students getting their hands dirty as they learn how to produce fruit and vegetables the natural way.

As we anticipate enrolments of 350 students in 2016, our current classroom spaces will be completely utilised. So I’m also pleased to announce that our new Senior Studies building is on track to commence construction next year. This building will have 12 new classrooms including specialist Science and Technology and Applied Studies learning spaces. It is exciting to consider that just as the community around us is growing rapidly, our student population is likely to reach 750 students in the next 5 years.

The end of the College year also marks the holiday and Christmas season. Throughout the year, children share in Bible stories and learn about the character of God and the love He has for His created people. Christmas remembers the birth of Jesus who is in very nature God, but made Himself nothing, just like a servant and was born as a baby boy. Our God demonstrates His love for us by sending His own son to live amongst us and then sacrificing Him so we all could be saved and receive eternal life. What a wonderful reason to celebrate as we share in feasts and gifts with family and friends. I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a safe and relaxing holiday period.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Mrs Naomi Wilkins
Head of Campus
Staffing News

To support our growing student population there must also be a growing staff team and we have recently appointed 10 new teachers to a range of part time, full time, permanent and temporary roles from the beginning of 2016:

Junior School

Mr Jonathan Baker
Mrs Rosalind Langley
Mrs April Lindsay
Mrs Amy Maloney
Miss Claire Pritchett
Miss Lucy Whelan (maternity leave replacement)
Mrs Lauren Zucchi

Senior School

Mrs Genesa Lane
Mr Michael Pilottos
Mr Michael Strong

At the end of the term we will be farewelling Ms Kristy Edwards who has accepted a promotional position at St Peter’s Anglican Primary School. As one of the foundation teachers she has made significant contributions to the life of the College. Her passion for personal development, health, sport and the creative arts has seen the introduction of the Live Life Well at School program and the growth of our Creative Arts performance night. We thank Ms Edwards for her dedicated service over the past four years.

Mrs Ainslie Blake will be taking 12 months maternity from the beginning of next year. We pray for her and her family as they anticipate the arrival of their new baby.

We also thank Miss Alicia McCrohon for her service to the College this year, particularly her warmth and student centred approach to her teaching on Stage 1. We wish her well in her future pursuits.
DATES

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Week 9

Monday, 30 November
- Year 3/4 Road Awareness Program

Tuesday, 1 December
- Quizworks (2.15 pm)
- Celebration Assembly
  Camden Civic Centre, 5 pm

Wednesday, 2 December
- Volunteers Morning Tea (10.30 am)
- Year 5 Excursion

Friday, 4 December
- Last Day Term 4

2016

Week 1

Thursday, 28 January
- K-6 commence

Week 2

Monday, 1 February
- Prep Red (3 day) commence

Tuesday, 2 February
- Prep Blue (2 day) commence
- Y3-9 Swimming Carnival

Thursday, 4 - Friday, 5 February
- Y5-6 Camp

SENIOR SCHOOL

Week 9

Tuesday, 1 December
- Celebration Assembly
  Camden Civic Centre, 5 pm

Wednesday, 2 December
- Volunteers Morning Tea (10.30 am)

Friday, 4 December
- Year 7/8 Excursion
- Last Day Term 4

2016

Week 1

Wednesday, 27 January
- Y7 commence

Thursday, 28 January
- Y8-9 commence

Week 2

Tuesday, 2 February
- Y3-9 Swimming Carnival

Wednesday, 3 - Friday, 5 February
- Y7-9 Camps

Excellence | Wisdom | Service
Volunteer Helpers Morning Tea

Date  Wednesday, 2 December 2015  
Time   10.30 am  
Venue  Oran Park Anglican College Administration

If you have helped out at the College in anyway (excursions, in the classroom, at events etc) we would like to say ‘Thank You’ with a delicious morning tea.

Babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers are welcome.

RSVP to the College Office by Monday, 30 November 2015.

Thank you for all of the generous donations made to Toys ‘n’ Tucker.

The team at Anglicare were very grateful to the College for their donations.
As we approach the end of the year, it is pleasing to note that students are still working hard in class and continuing to watch out for each other in the playground. It is with much excitement that we finish up our units of study we have been working on for quite a few weeks and focus now on Christmas and the holidays.

Last week we welcomed many new students to our College as part of their orientation for 2016. It was exciting to see so many new faces and to watch our current students reach out and help them get to know the College.

Year 6 are looking forward to celebrating the last year of their Junior School experience with a celebration dinner on Friday, 27 November. It will be a fun night of sharing memories and reflecting on their growth, both personal and as a year group.

Junior School reports will be distributed next week. Teachers have worked hard to put together a picture of your child’s academic and social development over the semester. Please take time to read the report with your child and highlight the positive comments that your child has received and the growth that they have made. It would be a good time to reflect on the year to date and set some goals for the year ahead.

Friday 4 December will be our final day at College for 2015 and teachers have planned a fun day for each grade to finish the term. Students may come to College dressed in mufti clothes. Your class teacher will notify you early in the week of any other variations to the day.

Over the holiday break, please remember to keep encouraging your child to read for pleasure and keep having those conversations about every day Mathematics. It would be a good time too, to help them brush up on any multiplication tables that are still a bit fuzzy, so that students can come back to College ready to tackle new challenges next year.

Christmas is a time to remember God’s love in the birth of Jesus His Son. I would like to encourage you to take the time to visit your local church on Christmas Day – there is one close to you that will have services from which to choose. Enjoy the holiday break and I trust it will be filled with happiness and relaxation with your family and friends. Thank you for your continued support as we walk together in partnership in the education of your children.

Mrs Cathy Grant
Junior School Coordinator
**In the classroom with Prep**

We have had a wonderful term in Prep. The students have been very busy getting ready for Junior school and have thoroughly enjoyed their visits to Kindergarten for orientation. Our Science unit this term is “animals” and we loved visiting Featherdale Wildlife Park where we had the opportunity to get up close and personal with some Australian wildlife. The students’ behaviour was fantastic and we were thankful to have some great parent helpers.

As we look back over the year we can reflect on how much our Prep children have grown. During their time at Prep they have learnt to share, write their name, the alphabet and numbers, how to use scissors, developed their creativity and how to be a good friend. Each child has developed their personality and we have seen their confidence grow as they became comfortable in the College environment.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Prep students the best for Kindergarten and thank them for the happy memories that both Ms Smith and I have of an amazing group of children.

Mrs Finlay and Ms Smith

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**In the classroom with Year 6**

Where have the years gone?

It seems incredible that several of our foundation students and others who have joined us since, have come to the end of their Junior School years and are now moving on. This term we finished our units of study and have looked at the changes that take place in the transition from Junior to Senior School.

We have talked about how to relate to one another in caring and supportive ways, have shared some funny memories and moments and practised some Senior School procedures as part of their orientation to Year 7.

We say good bye to Natasha and James who will be leaving our College and will be praying for all our students as they transition to the next journey of their schooling.

Year 6 are very much looking forward to celebrating together on Friday night at their dinner.

Mrs Grant
The History of Christmas Trees

How It All Started

Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had a special meaning for people in the winter. Just as people today decorate their homes during the festive season with pine, spruce and fir trees, people in ancient times hung evergreen boughs over their doors and windows. It was believed that evergreen trees hung in their house would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits and illness.

The evergreen tree was an ancient symbol of life midst of winter. Romans decorated their houses with evergreen branches during the New Year, and ancient inhabitants of northern Europe cut evergreen trees and planted them in boxes inside their houses in the winter time.

How They Became A Christmas Icon

16th Century German preacher Martin Luther is known as the very first person to bring a Christmas tree inside, to show his children how the stars and moon shine through the trees by placing candles on it. The Christmas tree was traditionally decorated with food like nuts, apples, popcorn and berries. They also put candles on them but today we don’t because it is a fire hazard.

Decorations

There is a huge difference between what they used to decorate Christmas trees with to what we do today. They decorated theirs with food and candles, but we just go to the shops and buy Christmas baubles, tinsel and a star to put on the top which represents the star that guided the three wise men to Jesus’s birth place. We also have man-made plastic trees but you can still buy natural Christmas trees.

Researched by Year 4,
written by Alicia and Ashley

Below: Year 4 created a Nativity Scene out of cardboard
What an exciting and busy year we have had... students have continued to grow both in knowledge and in numbers. With this continued growth brings new staff, and new buildings. We are delighted to see the planning, designing and discussions as the architectural plans are finalised in preparation for the new Senior School building. It is envisaged that this new building will be operational for 2017.

We recently had many new students come and do an orientation for Senior School and it was a delight to see current students stepping up and assisting with the running of these programs as leaders.

In 2016 we start our Year 9 program along with various elective courses and offer an exciting and unique opportunity where students do a 100 hour course and participate in three electives. For 2016 these will include; agriculture, commerce, sports studies, food technology, timber technology and information software technology.

Each of our College houses are named after people who have been world changers. William Wilberforce, Eric Liddell, Aimee Carmichael and Clive S Lewis are figures in history who have each had an enduring impact on the world. These special individuals were inspired by God to go out and make a difference in the world around them. Our students are starting to understand that they too can be part of a community, both individually and collectively, that can go out and make a difference in our world.

To assist students in learning what it entails to make a difference, we took a group of Senior School students to Anglicare’s Warehouse at Villawood. The students rolled up their sleeves and helped sort and transfer several tonnes of items. The food hampers and gift parcels are distributed through Anglicare’s Emergency Relief and Family Support programs which assist thousands in our community who would otherwise go without. Students gained a ‘hands on’ experience and learnt that Christmas is a special time – a time to be filled with the joy of Christ and thanksgiving for his birth. Toys ‘n’ Tucker, an initiative of Anglicare Sydney, aims to share the joy of Christmas by providing food and gifts for those who would otherwise go without. We believe that Christmas is a time to give, to share and to be a blessing to those in our community who need it most. It was a privilege for these students to play a small part in making a difference in our world.

Have a safe and joyous Christmas.

Mr Steve Moynan
Coordinator Senior School
& Marketing
For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6
Tis the season…

In amongst all the busyness of the end of year, we can forget to stop and reflect on the year that has been, or to plan how to use the school holidays most effectively. The summer holidays are a wonderful opportunity for rest, learning, family time, and reflecting. Here are a few easy things to remember to help your children (and yourself) to make the most of the Christmas season.

- Everyone needs time to rest and mentally recharge. Remember, children need between 9-11 hours’ sleep, while teens need 8-10, and at the end of the year they may need to catch up a little. The summer holidays are a great time for them to catch up on rest.

- The holidays are a great opportunity for parents to observe and teach social skills away from academic pressures. As they grow and need to navigate increasingly complex social interactions, children and teens could use some support from their parents. Can they compromise? How do they respond to conflict? Can they problem-solve effectively? Do they play kindly or are a bit bossy? They may need coaching with all these skills. Encourage them to solve problems in a kind way and praise them when you see them doing so. Remember, your children are watching you to see how to use these skills.

- While school holidays can be a stressful time for parents, it’s important to prioritise family time over these holidays. Play games together, or do things your children will enjoy. Children (and teens) need time to be children, to play games, and to spend time with their family.

- Most importantly, stop and reflect on the “wins” of your children (and yourself) this year. What have they learned? How have they grown? When were you most proud of them? The end of year provides a reminder to take stock of the ups – and downs – of the year that was. Make sure you acknowledge the “ups” to your child and to yourself. This will help them to boost their self-esteem and feel proud of what they’ve achieved.

Have a blessed and safe Christmas.

Mrs Clare Calderwood
College Counsellor
Congratulations to all our students who participated in the League Tag (Tiger Tag) competition this past Tuesday. It was a great day enjoyed by all, with some wonderful results. Well done!

A big thank you to all the parents who attended the Tiger Tag event as well as those who have dropped off their children at the various training sessions throughout the year. IPSSO Sport can't function without your support, so many thanks.

We are also pleased to announce that we will be offering the opportunity for students to trial in the following IPSSO Sports in 2016:

**Summer (Terms 1 and 4)**
- Boys Cricket
- Mixed Oz Tag
- Mixed Basketball

**Winter (Terms 2 and 3)**
- Boys Football/Soccer
- Girls Netball
- Mixed Newcombe Ball (Years 3 and 4)
- Mixed Volleyball (Years 5 and 6)

IPSSO Summer Trials will be held early in 2016. If your child is hoping to gain selection for an IPSSO team, we encourage them to be familiar with the rules and skills of the sport so they can be prepared for the trials.

Mr Chapman
As we draw near to the end of the year, I would like to wish all families and staff a safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

I am pleased to announce that at the November meeting the P&F have pledged $15,000 to purchase musical instruments to supplement the College’s music program. This is something the P&F are proud of and is something that could not have been possible without the support of the entire College Community.

On behalf of the OPAC P&F, I would like to thank all parents who volunteered their time to assist with the organising and running of events throughout 2015. It is with this continued support that the P&F are able to assist OPAC and grow alongside the College. I would also like to thank those families who have donated to the P&F over the years. Every little bit counts. Our children, the students of this College are the beneficiaries of the support received from family, friends and the community.

When College returns in the New Year the first meeting will be the Annual General Meeting. This will be held on Thursday, 11 February 2016. The College and the P&F welcome all parents to attend. The P&F are seeking nominations for the roles of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. At the AGM, these roles will be elected.

As this is my final newsletter article as President, I wish the future President and P&F much success.

I would like to take this opportunity, to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to the success of the P&F during my time as President. I would like to thank the College for their support of the P&F in my time as President. It has been a pleasure to serve alongside you all for the benefit of our children.

Matthew Saliba
President