Welcome To A New Year!
This year will bring its usual quota of work and play, of success and failure…
All the things that are part of school life.
It is a new beginning; the planting of a seed that will grow for a year,
The seed of fruit that will blossom in times to come.
It is a new hope; hope for good work, for successful results, for friendship, for fun, for learning.
In this coming year, may there be learning, prayer and achievement.
May there be hard work, faith and friendship.
May no one in this school be lonely;
may no one be left out in class;
May no one suffer through others here.
As we begin this year in hope, in prayer and in friendship…
May the Lord begin it with us, be with us during it, and successfully bring it to its conclusion.
May we, this year, together act justly
Together love tenderly
And together,
Walk humbly with our God

SPECIAL NOTICES:

- **Our New Preps Begin This Coming Monday**
  It’s one of the most special days of the year for parents of new prep students. There’s an excitement and energy that comes with a new beginning. Could all families please take extra special care during drop off and pickup times as there are many young children and toddlers moving around at the front of the school at these times. It’s also a great opportunity to say hello to our new faces and welcome everyone warmly.

- **Carnival Meeting Next Tuesday 7.00pm.**
  The carnival is almost here and the next few meetings are essential to ensure it is another fantastic annual event. Could all those who are members on the committee please make sure you’re available to attend.

- **Beginning of Year School Mass – Wednesday 8th of February 9.30am.**
  This year’s Beginning of Year School Mass provides us, as a Parish community, with the opportunity to present teachers with their classroom candles as well as witness their commissioning as educators of our students. The commissioning of our staff, reinforces the school’s commitment to you as parents that we will nurture the Spiritual and Educational needs of our students so that they, in turn, foster a life-long love of learning and a deep relationship with their God.

- **Welcome Picnic Night & Bush dance – Friday 10th February (starting at 5.30pm)**
  is a fantastic opportunity for current and new families to get to know each other and enjoy a very social evening. This year we are hosting a family bush dance. Bring along a picnic dinner, blanket and chairs and your best dancing moves.

- **Parent Teacher Interviews – Tuesday 14th Feb and Thursday 16th Feb**
  will be conducted after school from 3.45pm on both Tuesday and Thursday. Details regarding booking times will be communicated via CareMonkey.

- **Canteen:** The school canteen is still being repaired. Operation of the canteen will commence from Monday 20th February. This year, canteen orders will be made through an online process. Further details will be provided next week in the newsletter. The canteen will be available on Monday, Wednesday & Friday.
Dates for the Diary

**Week 2**

**Monday: 6.02**
- School Organisation Meeting – 8.10am – 8.30am
- Prep students begin First Day.
- Preps school day: 8.45am till 12.30pm
- School Assembly 2.55pm
  - Introduce new staff
  - Safety
  - Expectations

**Tuesday: 7.02**
- Excursion / Incursion Day
- Carnival Meeting 7.00pm

**Wednesday: 8.02**
- Beginning of Year School Mass 9.30am
  - (Whole School) St Ambrose Parish Church
  - Class Candles Blessed
  - Student & Staff Blessing

**Thursday: 9.02**
- Staff Meeting 3.45pm – 5.15pm
- Parent Teacher Interviews: 3.45pm – 7.45pm

**Friday: 10.02**
- School Welcome Picnic Night (5.30pm) & Bushdance (6.00pm)

**Week 3**

**Monday: 13.02**
- School Organisation Meeting – 8.10am – 8.30am

**Tuesday: 14.02**
- Grade 3 – 6 Rotation Activities
- Parent Teacher Interviews: 3.45pm – 7.45pm

**Wednesday: 15.02**
- Prep Rest Day
- Emergency Displan Practice
- Music Work Tuition Lessons – 11.30am – 8.00pm

**Thursday: 16.02**
- ICT Network Meeting - Kelly
- Parent Teacher Interviews: 3.45pm – 7.45pm

**Friday: 17.02**
- School Closure Day
  - Foundation Day for Visible Learning: Staff Training

**Saturday: 18.02**
- Principal Sponsored Tour to Japan (18th - 25th Feb)

**Week 4**

**Monday: 20.02**
- School Organisation Meeting – 8.10am – 8.30am
- School Assembly 2.55pm
- Canteen commences

**Tuesday: 21.02**
- Carnival Meeting 7.00pm

**Wednesday: 22.02**
- Prep Rest Day
- Class Mass – 9.30am (5/6F)
- Northern Region Principal Reference Group
- Sacrament of Reconciliation – Adult Faith Night: Gr 3 – 7.00pm

**Thursday: 23.02**
- Additional Learning Needs Network
- COBWA Tennis (4 qualifying students)
- Staff Meeting 3.45pm – 5.15pm
  - Dynamic Warden Training for Emergency Displan

**Friday: 24.02**
- Deputy Principals Network

**Saturday: 25.02**
- Parish Family Mass (Prep R & P1E)

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**Parent Helpers Program**

The partnership between parents and staff is highly valued and extra assistance is always greatly appreciated. Fortunately we have many parents who sincerely wish to help out in the classroom. Because of this and to ensure quality of teaching and learning, we are offering a Classroom Parent Helpers Program that ensures that parents assisting in classrooms are instructed on correct protocols when working with students, such as being aware of making judgments about other children and retaining confidentiality.

The course outlines ways that parents can assist in the classroom by working with small groups of children and providing a role model for learning.

It is in the best interest of the children in the classroom and the learning that needs to occur there, that younger siblings are not to be present in the classroom with their parent at this time. Other arrangements will need to be made outside of the school.

There will be only one session offered currently:

Thursday 9th February @ 9.00am till 10.00am

Please contact office to book your place.
With the ever increasing number of students riding to school, we are strongly reminded of the need for our children to be safe when riding from and to school. If you have not observed your child riding their bike to school lately, this might be a timely reminder to check in on their use of road awareness skills. A talk is good but a demonstration is even better.

**Grade 3 to 6 Extra-Curricular Subjects**

Last year, we introduced to our Grade 5 & 6 students, the opportunity to participate in three additional activities that enhanced their learning experience whilst addressing learning outcomes that are part of The Victorian Curriculum. These subjects were Food Tech, Cycling and Science.

Due to the success of this initiative and in particular the enjoyment that students had in being engaged in these activities we have extended this to now include the Grade 3 & 4’s.

**Grade 3 & 4** students will spend a term each on the following three areas: Swimming / Horticulture / Coding.

**Grade 5 & 6** students will spend a term each on Food Tech / Tennis / Robotics.

These activities will occur every second week for a duration of 2 hours and are described in the school calendar as ‘Rotational Activities’.

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**2017 School Fees & Levies**

Family Statements will be sent out next week. The **2017 Family Fee** is **$1710 per family** and the **Student Levy** for all students for the 2017 school year is **$475**.

Please note that like 2016, there will be no further request for funds throughout the year for either Excursions, Sports Programs or Sacramental Programs. Camp costs for Year 6 will still be invoiced.

It is important to understand that the levies collected are pooled so as to ensure the best value for dollar is achieved.

We take pride in the fact that we are able to achieve excellent educational outcomes for our students whilst providing a reasonably priced Catholic education. In keeping our costs low and affordable, it is essential that families contribute to their child’s education by ensuring that payment of the fees and levies are made each year.

For 2017, the **Student Levy** of $475 is to be paid by **Friday 24th February 2017**. This is essential as the school is billed well prior to this date for the resources purchased for the coming year.

For families who are currently in **arrears** for the 2016 school year and have not made an arrangement with the school, it is essential that you please attend to your account as soon as possible or to contact the office prior to **Friday 24th February 2017**. Families in arrears will be asked to enter into a payment plan so as to ensure that arrears do not become unmanageable. Please note that we do everything we can to hold costs down whilst providing the best education opportunities possible for your child.

Payment of school fees and levies can be done at the office using cheques, card or cash. For parents wishing to use Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):

BSB: 033 674  
Account: 710 747

Please use the ‘reference’ on the bottom of the statement.
Transitioning To the New School Uniform – Q & A

A huge thankyou to every parent who has demonstrated patience and understanding as we begin transitioning to the new school uniform. We did not expect it to be a walk in the park but we are very pleased at how many families are moving toward purchasing the new uniform. The delay in delivery of new uniforms has caused a few issues but we are working through these on a case by case basis. We hope that the following will answer some of those questions that are being asked at the moment. We are sure there are many still to come.

Q. Do I need to purchase the new uniform immediately for this year?
A. No, there is no requirement for parents to purchase the new uniform as there is an 18 month lead in time. However, many families are now taking up the opportunity to change to the new uniform.

Q. Can I buy parts of the new school uniform and wear it with the old?
A. Yes. The uniform is going to look a little messy during the transition time but it is important that families have time to make the most of the uniform they currently have whilst changing over to the new uniform.

Q. Is sports uniform only to be worn on days that P.E. or a formal sports event takes place?
A. Yes, that is correct. Full school uniform must be worn on all other days.

Q. When will the new uniform stock be available for current students?
A. New stock is arriving each day as we endeavour to fill orders. We are encouraging families to place orders via the order form.

Q. How much does the new uniform cost?
A. Please refer to the Uniform Price List attached to today’s newsletter.

Q. If I place an order now, how long will it take for me order to be delivered?
A. Currently there is a two week wait on uniform orders. We hope this will improve as more families move to the new uniform.
Students at St. Ambrose are required to wear a formal compulsory identifying uniform, which distinguishes them as a member of the school. The uniform provides an opportunity for the students to display pride not only in themselves but in their membership of the school.

**GIRLS’ SUMMER UNIFORM**
Blue and white tartan dress with navy trim.
White school socks. (Strictly no anklet socks)
School pullover with logo / and or
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
Black leather school shoes.
Navy blue hair ties
Sun Smart School Hat

**OR**
Short sleeve blue shirt with logo.
Navy school trousers or Navy school shorts
White school socks. (Strictly no anklet socks)
School pullover with logo / and or
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
Black leather school shoes.
Navy blue hair ties
Sun Smart School Hat

Sports Uniform

Girl’s summer uniform (alternative to the dress)
BOYS’ SUMMER UNIFORM
Short sleeve blue shirt with logo
Navy school trousers or Navy school shorts
Navy school socks (Strictly no anklet socks)
School pullover with logo / and or
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
Black leather school shoes.
Navy blue hair ties if hair is longer than shoulder length.
Sun Smart School Hat

GIRLS’ WINTER UNIFORM
School pinafore with inverted pleats front and back.
Long sleeve blue shirt with logo
Navy blue tights or socks (Knee high)
Black leather school shoes
Navy blue hair ties
School pullover with logo / and or
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
School Beanie
OR
Long sleeve blue shirt with logo
Navy long pants
White school socks
Black leather school shoes
Blue hair ties
School pullover with logo / and or
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
School Beanie

BOYS’ WINTER UNIFORM
Long / short sleeve blue shirt with logo
Navy long pants or shorts
Navy school socks (Strictly no anklet socks)
Black leather school shoes
School pullover with logo / and or
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
School Beanie

SPORTS UNIFORM (Boys & Girls)
Tracksuit pants with school logo / and or -
Sports shorts with school logo
Short / Long Sleeve Sport Polo with Logo
Navy Soft Shell Jacket with logo.
Sun Smart School Hat (T.1/T.4)
School Beanie (T.2/T.3) – Optional
White sports socks (Strictly no anklet socks)
Sneakers

SCHOOL BAGS
St Ambrose school bag

APPLICATION OF THE DRESS CODE
• The Dress Code applies during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when students are on school excursions.
• Summer and winter uniforms, as well as sports uniforms are prescribed, and are required to be worn.
• Stud earrings and sleepers worn in the ears, plus watches are the only acceptable jewellery.
• Extreme hair colours (e.g. green, pink or purple rinses) and/or extreme hairstyles (e.g. spikes or mohawk) are not permitted.
• Other than clear nail polish, cosmetics may not be worn at school.
• The only headwear that is acceptable is Sun smart hats consistent with our Sun Smart policy or the school beanie.
• Hair that is longer than shoulder length is to be worn tied back as a health and safety measure. Ribbons, clips, bands (non plastic only) and ‘scrunchies’ are to be of navy colour.
• The School Advisory Committee requires the Principal to be responsible for implementation of the Dress Code in a manner consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.
• Arrangements can be made to supply uniforms for families experiencing economic hardship through consultation with the Principal.
• Parents seeking exemptions to the Dress Code due to religious beliefs, ethnic or cultural background, student disability, health condition or economic hardship must discuss this directly with the Principal.

Sun Smart Policy
The shade sails only provide limited shade for our students whilst they are at play during recess and lunchtime, therefore it is essential that students have their school hat ready for the start of next term.

School Wide Brimmed Hat:
Students without a school hat this term will be required to remain within a specified shaded area during recess and lunchtimes.

Sunscreen:
We encourage parents to ensure that their child has applied sunscreen prior to coming to school although, the school itself does supply sunscreen that is available from a pump bottle within each classroom. Children are encouraged daily to apply their own sunscreen, or that supplied in the classroom prior to each play period, and to ensure that they are wearing a school hat prior to leaving the classroom for play.
As announced at the end of last year, St Ambrose School has entered into a three year program that will introduce staff to the core concepts of Visible Learning and the research of John Hattie. Through the lens of the Visible Learning evidence, staff will be able to focus on what works best to improve student learning. The program will require every staff member at St Ambrose to participate.

The three year professional development program addresses the following:

**Foundation Day**
The Foundation Day shares with staff the results of 25+ years of research into what really works best in education. For so long in education, we seem to have been on the hunt for the next best thing - this research makes us stop and think about the vast amount we already know and take stock about what really does make the difference to student learning.

**Evidence into Action Day One**
This day introduces the type of evidence that can be used to prioritise the direction of your school and the VL tools available including the Visible Learning Matrix, to support this. At the end of this day, staff will be provided with a checklist of the evidence the team will be expected to gather to bring to the Evidence into Action Day Two.

**Evidence into Action Day Two**
Participants return, with their evidence to focus on visible learners, teachers and school systems: Analyse the extent data and evidence drive practice in the school Define school aspirations Identify and determine priorities and targets Define required knowledge and practices Develop an action plan including the monitoring of progress Introduce change management concepts to complete a Visible Learning plan for your school.

**Evidence into Action Three**
Continuing to gather, collate and examine evidence from your class(es) and transfer this into action that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students in the school beyond the first Visible Learning Plus year. This facilitated workshop supports the use of current data to develop the next year’s action plan to support ongoing improvements for student learning.

**What is Visible Learning?**
“Visible learning is teachers seeing learning through the eyes of their students, and students seeing themselves as their own teachers”

**Visible Learning into Action for Teachers One**
The first of a two day Visible Learning research day seeks to identify specifically what really works best in education. Staff will learn how to gather, collate and examine evidence from their class(es) and transfer this into action that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students in the school.

**Visible Learning into Action for Teachers Two**
Data and evidence drive professional learning and development and classroom practice. The second day of a 2-day program focuses staff on gathering, collating and examining evidence from their class(es) and transferring this into action that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students in their classroom. The question being asked here is, how can our data inform us all of our impact on student learning and achievement?

**Creating Effective Assessments for Teaching and Learning Using the SOLO Taxonomy**
There are many ways to collect information about what students know and can do in their learning. One of the ways is by using tests. As we at St Ambrose use effect sizes to track student growth, we need to develop reliable tests. A seminar will be undertaken to assist staff in creating effective pre- and post-tests using the SOLO taxonomy as the framework for effective and reliable design.

**Feedback that Makes Learning Visible**
In this workshop, staff look closely at what effective feedback is and how you can get the greatest impact from the feedback that they give. They also consider the feedback that teachers receive and how to make a positive difference to the outcomes for students in our school.

**Using Data to Evaluate Your Impact**
Teachers gather, collate and examine evidence from their class(es) and transfer this into action that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students in our school beyond the first Visible Learning Plus year. This facilitated workshop supports the use of current data to develop the next year’s action plan to support ongoing improvements for student learning.
POTENTIAL CODE RED DAY
SCHOOL CLOSURE

In the event of extreme fire danger and a CODE RED day being called, the following provides information as to how we, as a school will act and communicate with you.

The decision to close will be confirmed by the Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1.00 pm the day prior to the closure. Once we have received confirmation of the closure we will contact you directly via email and SMS before the end of the school day to confirm this. You are urged to check the Department of Education and Training website for updates, school closures will be posted to the Department’s website – see http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx

Please note that all of our school bus routes will also be closed; services will resume when the school reopens.

I realise that the potential closure of our school may result in you having to make alternative arrangements for your child, but the safety of our students and staff remains our top priority. Given the predicted weather conditions, we urge that your child is not left at home unattended or in the care of older children.

If you know of other parents who, for any reason, may not be aware of the school’s potential closure, please contact them to help ensure they are aware that the school may be closed.

You should also explain to your child and family members that our school may be closed. For safety reasons, no staff will be on-site if the school is closed.

For up-to-date information on this year’s fire season, visit the CFA website at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call the 24-hour Victorian Bushfires Information Line on 1800 240 667.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Library Helpers 2017

The Library should be all set for students to commence borrowing from next week. We are very fortunate at St Ambrose to have a very robust selection of books. At the end of last year we had many new books arrive that are now in need of covering before the students can enjoy them. If you have the time and expertise in the contacting department we would love to have your assistance by taking a small box of books home from time to time to get the new stock on the shelves ASAP! If you are a master of sticky contact please contact me arowland@sawoodend.catholic.edu.au and I will pop you on the list. Thanks, in anticipation.

Annie

One other Money Matter

Recently, a large amount of money was deposited into our school bank account, a transfer from a NAB Account. If you think this deposit might belong to you can you please see Karen in the office at your earliest convenience?

Just a reminder to those using this system to ensure you pop your name in the description of payment so we can work out where it’s coming from and what it needs to be attributed to.
Play Netball in Winter 2017- Woodend District Netball Club

Registrations to play for Woodend in the Macedon Ranges Netball Association regional competition close on Monday 20 February.

Where? Matches are played at the New Gisborne netball courts.


When? Competition starts 18 May and finishes 5 August (followed by 3 weeks of finals). Games are played on Saturday mornings (except school holidays). Training in Woodend on Tuesday afternoons at Buffalo stadium.

Cost? $160 inclusive of uniform hire and Netball Victoria membership

Register and pay online at: http://wdnc.sportzvault.com/home.aspx (registrations close Mon 20 February)

Note: separate Registration page for NetSetGO (U9s)

Enquiries? Contact WDNC Registrations Coordinator, Louise Farrelly: lfarrelly@westnet.com.au

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Community News

Little Gem

The Mount Playe's first production for 2017 is already well into rehearsals and offers something a little different “Little Gem” by Elaine Murphy, directed by Richard Keown is a beautifully written Irish play about a year in the life of one family. Three generations of woman tell their individual and collective stories by way of enigmatical monologues. These women are real, flawed, vulnerable but lovable characters with multi dimensionality, complexity and humanity. Their stories are delivered with passion and typical Irish humour. The season runs from Friday 24 Feb till Saturday 11 March. To book your tickets for Little Gem go to www.themountplayers.com or call our box office on 5426 1892.

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Girls 5-a-side Soccer

UNDER 6'S TO 16'S

Cost: $25 per player
When: Saturday mornings 9am to 12pm
Venue: Spring Gulli United Soccer Club

11 February
18 February
25 February
4 March
11 March
18 March

For more information visit: www.facebook.com/5x5girlsoccer
or email: skillsdevelopment@coach.com.au
Register Here: www.highbaking.com