Friday, 9 December 2016

Dear College Families,

As 2016 draws to a close it has been pleasing to reflect upon all that has been part of our learning community this year. I am very proud of the many achievements and efforts of students that were recently recognised at our Presentation Ceremony and at other times throughout the year, and it is with much humility that I lead the wonderful teachers of the Secondary Years into the year ahead.

Welcome to our new families

To families who are new to the College in 2017, I know that you will find this a welcoming community for you to belong to, and along with Secondary staff, I look forward to working with families closely as we raise and nurture students to their potential. Across the whole College we work with a wonderfully professional and caring staff who are committed to meeting the learning and other needs of your child/ren.

2017 Secondary Staffing

The new academic year brings with it some new staff in our Secondary Years and some new appointments internally. Each of these appointments represents growth in the College community and as such we welcome:

- Mrs Felicity Marlow, who joins us as our new Deputy Principal and Head of Music;
- Mrs Elizabeth Cox, who will return to the College as an English and HSIE teacher;
- Mrs Cindy Ham, who joins us as Head of Faculty - Mathematics;
- Mrs Krysten Bisby, who returns as a Science teacher from maternity leave; and
- Mrs Rebekah Dredge, who joined us in Secondary Education Support in Term 4.

New appointments:

- Mrs Linda Hogan, who has been appointed Head of Faculty – English;
- Mrs Michelle Wilson, who has been appointed Education Support Coordinator P-12.
- Mr Peter Christie will join the CAPA faculty as a music teacher;
- Mr Benjamin Thomas who has been appointed as Head of Sport;
- Mrs Thea Laffin, who will assume the role of Stage 4 Coordinator; and
- Mr Luke Barnett, who will move into the role of Stage 5 Coordinator.

We trust that along with all Norwest staff, you will find that our new teachers will be a blessing to your child/ren. We are excited by the appointments of these new members of staff and the professional and personal qualities they will bring to enhance the College academically, socially, and spiritually.
2017 Priorities

In 2016 much time was spent by Secondary staff working in professional learning teams around priorities that include:

- Growing the extra-curricular offerings of the College;
- Student leadership, and the Year 11 Leadership program to be launched in 2017;
- Service Learning;
- A literacy and research focus across all Key Learning Areas;
- An increasing academic rigour in Stages 5-6 courses;
- Year 7 transition into high school;
- Stage 4 integration, looking for cross-curricular opportunities for learning and assessment;
- Investigating new subject offerings for the HSC;
- Developing Norwest Wellbeing Programs Years 7-12;
- Implementation of our BPL Framework.

Each of these priorities is designed to extend the academic on co-curricular offerings of the College, to bring further enrichment to the experiences of students across the Secondary Years in 2017 and beyond.

First Days 2017

We will welcome our Secondary students over two days at 8:40am for the start of the 2017 school year as follows for current NWCC students. All students will be able to access their timetables via Edumate by the final week in January, and should come prepared for lessons on their first day from Period 2 onwards. New students should bring four exercise books, unlabelled, along with basic equipment for the day.

Monday, 30 January

Year 7
Meet in the LRC from 8:30am. Staff and student leaders will meet you in the main quadrangle to escort you. Parents/guardians are invited to attend a short welcome assembly and farewell their child from here. Students should wear their formal summer uniform.

Years 11 and 12
Meet in E1 at 8:40am for a stage meeting. Students should wear their formal summer uniform.

Tuesday, 31 January

All year groups
Meet in Home Group rooms at 8:40am, followed by Assembly in the Performance Space at 9:40am.

New Students

On either day, students new to the College will be met at the Regent Street car park entrance between 8:15am and 8:30am, and be escorted to the LRC. Parents are welcome to say their goodbyes here. Students will then meet their buddy and mentor, and will begin with the routine of the day.

Please ensure that your child/ren are aware of the arrangements for travelling home on this first day. Students will be assisted onto buses where arranged, or parents are welcome to meet their child back in the LRC at 3:00pm for their collection.

Year 10 Work Experience

Year 10 Work Experience is a unique opportunity for students to undertake a job placement situation and gain important skills in communication and professional engagement with employers. In 2017, placements will take place in two sessions. Forms for completion can be found here and should be returned to the College by no later than Wednesday, 17 February for the first placement.

- Monday, 13 to Friday, 17 March
- Monday, 9 to Friday, 13 October
Places fill quickly so it is advised that students confirm their experience prior to school returning in the New Year. It is the responsibility of each student to seek an approved employer for work experience during this week where regular classes are not scheduled as an alternative. All enquiries about this program should be directed to the College's Careers Advisor, Mr Mark Longworth at careers@nwcc.nsw.edu.au.

2017 Camps will be held as follows
College camps are compulsory and are a wonderful time for students as they engage in outdoor education (Years 7-10), service (Year 11) and study (Year 12).

- Years 7-9, 11 and 12 Wednesday, 15 to Friday, 17 March
- Year 10 (Ski Camp) Sunday, 30 July (evening departure) to Friday, 4 August

Stage Coordinators
Coordinators will support mentors in the Pastoral Care of students in their Home Groups. In 2017 coordinators are as follows:

- Mrs Thea Laffin for Stage 4;
- Mr Luke Barnett for Stage 5; and
- Mr Mark Longworth for Stage 6.

After-School Service Program
The After-School Service Program is designed to allow students to repair their relationship with the College where their behaviour or actions have breached the College Student Code of Conduct, or is deemed warranted by the Head of Years. Students accumulate demerits most commonly for uniform breaches (including jewellery and make-up), incomplete homework, disrupting the learning environment, playground behaviour or lack of application to studies.

After-School services are held on a Thursday afternoon, and parents will be notified in writing by email should their son or daughter be required to attend. Your support in these matters is essential as we strive to engender in our students a sense of community responsibility for their learning and behaviour. We encourage you to discuss the Student Code of Conduct found on the website with your child so that they are clear about College expectations.

Please note that the College reserves the right to exclude students from the College where their obligation to attend a scheduled after-school service has not been met. It is not possible for these services to be held at other times.

Communication
Our teachers welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your child's learning (classroom teachers) or any other day-to-day issues that may arise (mentor's). Communication between home and school is of great importance and we value your contribution at all times. The main form of communication is through email for all staff. It is best to email confidential notes to your child's mentor or make an appointment to speak with the teachers as required. If you need to notify your class teacher about an issue urgently, please make this known to staff in the College office who will be sure to pass on the message as required.

Academic Year Rollover
Classes in the Secondary Years will again 'rollover' at the end of Term 3. For example, the 2017 Year 8 cohort becomes Year 9 in Term 4, and then begin their Year 9 courses of study. This means that final assessments are also completed by Term 3.
Assessment Tasks

Students should refer to their Assessment Handbooks for assessment dates and task outlines. Important dates set by teachers will automatically appear on student Edumate calendars for each student. Students are encouraged to search ahead in their Edumate diary for information about important upcoming events and tasks. Parents will also be able to access their child's online diary and dates for upcoming tasks via their own login.

English Texts

Literacy provides foundational skills and knowledge that underpin all student academic achievement throughout the Secondary Years, and is of critical importance to students' engagement in other subjects. The College endeavours to work in partnership with parents both in developing our students' literacy skills, as well as their appreciation and critical engagement with a broad range of literature from a thoroughly Biblical perspective. In 2017, Year 7 and 8 students will engage with slightly different texts in order to ensure that over the course of their time in the Secondary Years they develop the critical skills and understanding needed to excel in the Higher School Certificate and beyond. Please find attached the Year 7 English Letter, and the Year 8 English Letter here.

Homework Assistance Program

The Secondary Homework Assistance Program will continue next year on Tuesday afternoons in the LRC. Students can receive assistance with their studies in Mathematics and English. Students should meet in the LRC at 3:15pm and will be dismissed at 4:15pm from the LRC also. Senior Student Leaders also run academic support sessions at lunchtimes to assist younger students with assessment tasks and general classroom learning.

Home Program and Mentors

Each day Secondary students will meet in Home Groups with a Teacher Mentor. These Home Groups are organised by Stage, and in Stages 4 and 5 they are single sex groups. These groups are intended to foster personal pastoral care relationships with peers and the Home Mentor (teacher). Your child's Mentor will be named on their timetable, and will be your first port of call for any wellbeing or learning related matters. This Mentor will also be the first person that your child will go to if they need advice or support in any way.

Home Group time will also be the time where students engage with our Wellbeing program, attend Chapel services and assemblies, document their progress in the Norwest Challenge, and other College related matters.

Sport/PE

Students are to wear their sports uniform on Tuesdays only. Please refer to the website for the uniform requirements for these days. Students must not wear canvas or high-top shoes as sports shoes and will not be permitted to participate in activities should these be worn contrary to our guidelines. Students must bring their sports uniforms at other times as directed by their PE teacher.

Student Lockers – Secondary

The College has lockers available for Secondary students to assist them in the organisation of their school books/resources, formal uniform, and sports uniform. Lockers are located within E-Block and are currently available to hire as follows for 2017:

- Purchase of lock – optional one-off cost (optional) $25.00
- Small (38cm/wide x 60cm/deep x 45cm/high) $20.00
- Medium (38cm x 60cm x 60cm) $30.00
- Large (38cm x 60cm x 90cm)(with hook) $40.00

The costs of lockers is substantially lower than they have been previously. It is our desire that parents consider these as a viable option for their child/ren as opposed to heavy bags being carried in some circumstances.
Payment for lockers must be made via the College website here prior to allocation. If the locker size you request is unavailable due to demand, either a refund will be made to you or an additional payment will be required.

**Textbooks**

The College will continue to provide the majority of its textbooks in Years 7-10 in an online format. JacPlus texts can be accessed both from the College and home via individual logins. These texts feature content that is up to date and interactive tasks to support student learning. Students will login via the NWCC Student tab on the website and enter their College email account. Students will then create their own personal bookshelf of texts and resources at the request of their teachers.

Stage 6 students are required to purchase their own textbooks as per the 2017 Preliminary, 2016/2017 Focused and 2016/2017 HSC Text Requirements.

**Vaccinations**

Vaccination dates for 2017 are as follows for Year 7. Please ensure that documentation is returned to student services promptly once issued.

- Thursday, 23 February
- Thursday, 27 July
- Tuesday, 28 November

**Salutation**

Thank you for your time taken to read through this correspondence. I trust that you will have a Merry Christmas, and some treasured time with your families over the festive season. We look forward to the year ahead and trust that God's leading and blessing will make 2017 a wonderful year for your family at the College.

Yours in Christ,

Geraldine Paynter
Head of Secondary Years

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INFORMATION FROM THIS POINT ONWARDS IS COMMON TO BOTH SECONDARY AND PRIMARY.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance at school is not only best for learning, but is also a legal requirement. The College is compelled to report students at risk of not receiving a satisfactory education due to absences, or even regular late arrival to school. Please ensure that absences are for legitimate reasons such as illness, and that your child/ren arrive at school by no later than 8:40am. In the Secondary Years, student absence may also mean that students do not meet the mandatory minimum hours for a course of study, putting them at risk of non-completion of a subject.

**Absences**

All student absences must be accounted for. Where your child is absent for a day, the College will send you an SMS indicating the absence. Please reply 'Yes' and a reason to indicate your receipt of the SMS – this also acts as an official 'note' from you covering the absence, otherwise a paper version of a note explaining the absence is required on the next day of attendance. In the case of extended leave or sickness, please notify the College office.

Extended periods of planned student absence (of more than one week), must be approved by the Principal as a requirement of the NSW Board of Studies. Please contact the College if this will apply to your family in 2017. Specific consideration must be given, particularly in the Secondary Years, as absences may affect a student's mandatory hours of completion for course of study placing the student at risk of non-completion.
Late to School/Early Departures

Students who are late at school must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or make their own way with a note to the Student Counter in the Office to sign in, otherwise College records will show an absence for the whole day. Medical and other such appointments should be made outside of school hours, however, if an urgent need arises for you to collect your child early from school, contact the College office to organise collection. In the Secondary Years a note should be placed in your child's diary if they are to be collected from school early, including the time they should meet you in the office. Year 12 students may accrue special privileges for early departure – please refer to Information Guide for details.

BYOT (Bring Your Own Technology)

The College's BYOT program requires students from Year 3 onwards to bring a device to school, with a minimum screen size of 7 inches, although 10 inches (25cm) with a touch screen is preferred. Click here for more information about software and hardware requirements, security responsibilities and internet access at school. Please note that it is essential that students have access to a printer at home as the College does not have student facilities for this process available.

Please ensure that your child's device comes to school each day fully charged. It is recommended that you consider insurance for your child's device. We have systems in place to support the children in making safe and wise choices with their device, but sometimes accidents can occur.

College Website

The College's website contains a wealth of information about our routines and requirements for all matters relating to your child's attendance at the school. Click on the NWCC Parent tab for the Information Guide; information about our BPL Framework; Canteen; Letters, Notes and Forms (including academic assessment handbooks); Term Dates; Student Progress Meeting bookings; Online Bookings, etc.

Edumate

On the College Website you will also find links here to Edumate, the College's student management system, and the place where parents can grant permissions for excursions, view upcoming assessment tasks and due dates, and assessment results. For new users, an Edumate Screencast can be found here to assist with your orientation of the parent portal.

Edumate Access – Information Sessions

Parents are encouraged to attend the Edumate Information Session at the Know Your Norwest event on the evening of Tuesday, 7 February to ensure that they know how to access the information that Edumate provides, including live assessment results.

ICAS

The International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) are independent skills-based assessments with a competition element. ICAS is unique, being the most comprehensive generally available suite of academic assessments and school tests for primary and secondary school students. Students from Years 3-12 may participate in the suite of papers, at cost to parents. The assessments provide useful feedback to families based upon set criteria. Participation in these competitions will also contribute to your child's Norwest Challenge. Information about dates and assessments will be emailed to families as the assessment period approaches. Students who receive a Merit, Credit, Distinction or High Distinction will be awarded their certificates at an assembly.

Stationery and Equipment

Stationery and equipment requirement lists are available on the College website here.

Please ensure that your child has all of the required items and that stocks are replenished throughout the year. This saves valuable learning time in the classroom.
**Student Progress Meetings**

Student Progress Meetings (SPMs) are an important part of the home-school partnership. Parents are asked to attend with their child to discuss student's academic strengths and weaknesses, and plan for improvement. The College will again be using the Schools Online Booking System to book SPMs. To access the online booking system, please follow the link on the College website under ‘Online Access’. A guide to the online booking system is also located in this section. Appointments are 5 minutes in duration.

**Supervision**

Supervision before school begins at 8:15am in the Primary quad and classes begin at 8:40am. Parents are asked not to drop off their child/ren prior to this time under any circumstances. In the afternoons, supervision ceases at 3:05pm, except for those students who utilise bus services. Students on the premises outside these supervised times time will be accompanied to the OSHC facility and billing for this service will occur. In cases of emergency, please telephone the College office so that arrangements for the supervision of your child/ren can be made.

**Swimming Carnival 2017**

The Swimming Carnival for Years 3 - 12 will be held on Thursday, 16 February 2017. To complete the attendance process please click [here](#) or go to the online bookings tile on the parent page of the website. Please complete the attendance process prior to Monday, 6 February 2017.

**Travel – School Travel Opal Pass**

Applications for school travel on public transport are now open online. Please click [here](#) for direction to the application, and requirements for parents and students when making or updating an application. Please note that all students in 2017 Kindergarten, or progressing from Years 2-3 or Years 6-7 will require an update application.

**Uniform**

It is important to the College that students adhere to uniform, hair, make-up, and jewellery guidelines at all times. These requirements can also be found in the uniform section of the Information Guide. Please be familiar with these standards and reinforce them with your child as necessary. Winter uniform is to be worn between Mother's Day and Father's Day. Full summer uniform is to be worn outside these dates. [Click here](#) for more information.

Please note that girl's formal shoes change from “Mary Jane” style buckle or velcro shoes in Infants to closed in shoes in Years 3 – 6. Also note that students are to wear traditional style formal shoes, not sports style black shoes with their formal uniform.

Of course, from time to time issues and mishaps occur and in these instances a note should be provided to your child's teacher in Primary or your child's mentor in the Student Diary in Secondary. Students out of uniform for any reason, even with a note, should report to the uniform register before school (music room in Primary and LRC window in Secondary) to have the infringement noted and warning issued, avoiding a demerit. Up to two warnings per term will be issued. We ask that you assist the College by ensuring that your child's uniform is correct each day, or communicating with the College where there are situations of incorrect uniform.

Where a student arrives to school with uniform that is unacceptable, a replacement item may be issued from the uniform shop and parents will assume the cost of the replacement item. Parents will be contacted where repeated issues of uniform exist and in the Secondary Years, consequences including after-school services and withdrawal from playground will be issued. In some circumstances, a student may not be permitted to return to school until an item of uniform (including hair) is corrected.

Your diligence with these matters at home will mean that teachers can focus on their core responsibility of learning, not uniform compliance.
Uniform – New Items
From 2016, girls have had charcoal tights to wear as an addition to the Winter uniform. We are currently considering this as a compulsory uniform item, and will inform families in due course.

Upcoming Events

Monday, 30 January  First Day of Term 1 for K – 6, Y7 and Stage 6
Tuesday, 31 January  First Day of Term 1 for Y8 and Stage 5
                   Celebration Morning Tea
Tuesday, 7 February  Know your Norwest
                   Volunteer Induction Seminar
                   Primary Super 8's Cricket Gala Day
Monday, 13 February P&F Meeting
Thursday, 16 February Y3 – 12 Swimming Carnival
Thursday, 23 February Year 7 Vaccinations (1)
Saturday, 25 February Scholarship Testing
Monday, 27 February Primary and Secondary Zone Swimming Carnival
Friday, 3 March    Harmony Day
Monday, 6 March    CSSA Primary State Swimming Carnival
Thursday, 9 March  Open Day
Friday, 10 March   ELC and Primary Disco
Monday, 13 March  Year 10 Work Experience Week
Wednesday, 15 March Year 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 Camp
Thursday, 16 March Year 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 Camp
Friday, 17 March   Infants Swim Fun Day
                   Year 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 Camp
Monday, 20 March  P&F Meeting
Tuesday, 21 March  Secondary SPMs
Friday, 24 March  Grandparents Day
Monday, 27 March  CSSA Secondary State Swimming Carnival
Tuesday, 28 March  Stage 5, and Year 12 Half Yearly Exams commence
                   Primary SPMs
Wednesday, 29 March Primary SPMs
Tuesday, 4 April  Years 8 – 10 Subject Information Evening
Wednesday, 5 April
Stage 5 and Year 12 Half Yearly Exams conclude
Stage 2 and Stage 3 Mathemania

Thursday, 6 April
Focused Preliminary Exams
Primary Celebration of Learning
Easter Service

Friday, 7 April
Last day of Term 1
Cross Country Carnival
Live@Norwest