Dear Families,

We have had a wonderful opening week of the 2017 school year with the children getting back into good routines quickly. Congratulations to the Foundation parents who have taken on what was spoken about at last year’s Foundation Information meeting. Waving good-bye from the line, leaving the classroom quickly on the first day (new OLHC record – 9.08am), getting the children to school on time, has allowed our new Foundation children to show great confidence and independence already.

Our Specialist teachers began this week. The children at our school are so fortunate to have six specialist subjects each week:

- Library – LOTE Italian
- Physical Education/Sport – ICT/Computer Education
- Performing Arts
- Visual Arts

Your classroom teachers will have this week sent out an individual class timetable that will detail when your specialist classes take place, when library books are due, when children need to wear sports uniform etc.

**2017 - YEAR 6 GRADUATION COMMITTEE**

Even though our Year 6 Graduation is on the Friday 15th December, the parents of this year’s Year 6 want to make an early start planning this great event.

If you are interested in being on the committee can you please email principal@olbunvicewest.catholic.edu.au

We will convene a Graduation Committee meeting shortly.

**SCHOOL APP.**

We have many, many families who have downloaded the school app onto their Smart phone. Parents have said how useful they find it, in the ‘busy-ness’ of their lives, that they receive push notifications and reminders about upcoming school events. We also use the school app. as an instant, messaging system to parents in the event of a school emergency or lock down. The app is free and is downloaded from the App store. Parents please make full use of this way we communicate with parents.

**HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

School Newsletter: This newsletter is the main way that we communicate with families about important school information, upcoming events, student awards, and term dates.

This newsletter is distributed in three forms each week:

1. Hardcopy. Although not environmentally friendly, having a hardcopy sitting on your kitchen counter at home, still works for many families.

2. Email. The newsletter can be emailed to you, at any address, on a weekly basis.

3. School Website. The newsletter is posted on the school website each week.

From experience, we have found that by using these three forms of communication, no family can say “I did not know…;”, “I did not get…”, “I did not receive …”

**School Calendar** – We print a term calendar of upcoming events on the weekly school newsletter.

There is also a more long range school calendar on the school website (right hand side of the main page).

If a date is not on either of these two calendars, then the date is not yet confirmed/unknown.

If a date is published it will happen on that date rain, hail or shine.

**Teacher Email addresses** – Direct communication can be made with the teachers through email. As teachers are involved in the act of teaching and that is obviously their number one focus, it is not uncommon for an email not to be replied to immediately. However teachers will respond as soon as practicable. All 2017 teacher emails are now on the school website in the “About Us’ tab.

**Morning Assembly** – This is a daily forum that allows the parents and students to hear what is happening at their school, and most importantly what is coming up.

As one parent commented last year at a Principal Forum, “it would be really great if parents who wanted to talk at assembly would stand at the other end of the basketball court. I come to assembly to listen to what’s going on”. Parents being attentive allows the 310 children to focus on what is going on and know about important school news.

As per our Home/School Communication protocol (on the school website in ‘School Policies’), parent communication, in a positive and affirming school community like ours can take four forms:

1. Communicating School News
2. Communicating Children’s Learning
3. Communicating a Success
4. Communicating a Concern

Often parents at schools think that the only time they need to communicate with the teacher is when there is something ‘wrong’. However we a bigger and better than that at OLHC School and parents are so much more positive and complimentary. Parents notice and appreciate the small things that teachers do, that simply do not happen at other schools. It is sometimes nice for teachers to receive a “thank you” email, notice of a success that has happened at home or school, something exciting that is happening within your

EVEN STRONGER TOGETHER
family. And yes if there is ever a question or a concern, the first port of call is always the classroom teacher, not the school office. In 99% of all concerns, problems are sorted by the classroom teacher at the classroom level.

SCHOOL BANKING
As of next Tuesday 14th February, school banking will begin! School banking is processed every Tuesday by parent volunteers, so we look forward to your child’s deposit each week. Also, if you have an hour to spare on a Tuesday mornings from 9am to 10am, we would welcome the extra help to count the deposited monies. Meet up with the banking parents at the school office every Tuesday to volunteer your time or email Debra debrao1974@gmail.com to indicate your interest or have any questions. Thank you Banking Parents.

OPENING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR MASS
We welcome all parents to our Opening of the School Year Mass at 9.15am on Tuesday 21st February.

As a Catholic School community it is important that we gather to celebrate who we are and pray for God’s assistance in the year ahead. Our new Foundation children will be accompanied to the Mass by their Year 6 ‘Big Buddies’. We look forward to a lovely Mass with Father Michael who will celebrate the Mass and who will announce our School Captains and Vice Captains for 2017.

WELCOME PICNIC – TUESDAY 21ST FEB – 5 to 7pm
One of the ways we welcome new families to our school and celebrate old friendships among the parent community is the annual Welcome Picnic. This will be held in the school grounds on Tuesday 21st February from 5pm to 7pm. We are ‘normally’ blessed with a beautiful balmy night where the children are entertained by jumping castles and some sausages, and the parents are entertained with some BYO refreshments and engaging adult conversation. All teachers will also be present and so it is a great opportunity to catch up with both classroom and specialist teachers in an informal and social atmosphere. The Parents Association will be selling sausages and drinks throughout the evening. We look forward to making this year’s Welcome Picnic the biggest and best yet.

Extend OSHC at
Our Lady Help of Christians School
Welcome back! We hope you had a wonderful break over the summer. Please see important information below to ensure you are ready and organised to use Extend’s service this year.

NEW FAMILIES – ENROL TODAY
Enrolling is simple and can be done online via our Parent Portal. The annual enrolment fee will not be charged until you use the service, so it’s a way to ensure you can have emergency access if the need arises. See information on operating hours, fees, and how to enrol & book at extend.com.au.

HAVE YOU SECURED YOUR 2017 BOOKINGS?
If you have used our services before, we look forward to seeing you again throughout Term 1. Please ensure you have made your 2017 bookings on the Parent Portal in advance.

QUESTIONS? Check out the FAQs on our website which contains useful information for new parents.

PARENT PORTAL: extend.com.au

Weekly Recap
Welcome back to School everyone. We hope everyone’s holiday was as good ours here at Extend. After winning the best team of 2016 for Extend last year, our staff this year is staying the same. Kasey is still the Team Leader, so feel free to come say hello or if you have any questions. Mark is only here for Before School Care and Kat, Alex and Nicole are still our ASC Educators. We will have a few new staff members from other services visiting during the term, which will be fun. We have had a great start to the term already, the children have enjoyed cooking Banana Bread, creating new flags of different countries and getting to know each other. Bop It is still a favourite BSC activity with logo.

Our Extend Superstar is Everyone from Vacation Care for demonstrating a caring nature and friendship towards others and for playing co-operatively with everyone.

Next week’s activities
Monday 13th February: Valentines card creations
Tuesday 14th February: Valentine’s Day craft
Wednesday 15th February: Thursday 16th February:
Dodgeball Wind Car
Friday 17th February:
Messy Friday: Finger painting

Please remember to MAKE or CANCEL a booking you
MUST CALL OUR OFFICE: 1300 366 437
OR BOOK ONLINE: extend.com.au

SCHOOL CALENDAR – TERM 1 2017
13th February – Foundation children until 3.30pm. this week
15th February – Parents Association Meeting @ 7pm
15th February – Foundation Interview Day
15th February – Meet the Teacher Interviews –Yr 1 6
21st February – Welcome Picnic – 5pm to 7pm
22nd February – Foundation Interview Day
21st March – Foundation Interview Day
3rd March – Ash Wednesday
6th March – Foundation are now full time
13th March – Labour Day Public Holiday
14th March – Sister School guests arrive in Melbourne
15th March – Parents Association Special Lunch Day
17th March – St. Patrick’s Day
20th March: Parents Association Meeting @ 7pm
26th March – Year 6 Sacrament of Confirmation
28th March: Easter Raffle drawn
29th – 31st March – Year 5/6 School Camp at Mt.Evelyn
31st March – Term One concludes at 1pm
18th April – Term Two Begins at 8.55 am

I hope your child is coming home each night and telling you about all the learning that is taking place. Term Overviews will be out shortly that will assist you in having an informed discussion with your child.

Philip Cachia (Principal)
In reply please quote: GE16/0002

27 January 2017

Dear Parents

Re: Child Safe Standards –Engaging Volunteers

A distinctive mark of our Catholic schools is the emphasis on principals, teachers, staff and parents working together - and also with the wider community - to educate and develop the whole child. This approach encompasses spiritual, academic, emotional, physical and social development.

This whole of community approach extends to a shared responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people in our schools.

With the introduction of the Victorian Child Safe Standards in 2016, all Victorian schools are required to systematically develop, implement, monitor and evaluate risk management strategies to ensure child safety in all school environments.

As the 2017 school year begins, Catholic schools are continuing to work closely with their communities to review and strengthen child safety policies, codes of conduct and related procedures and practices for the wellbeing and protection of all students. This will result in growing community awareness and understandings of our shared responsibility.

As part of the Child Safe Standards, schools are also required to demonstrate evidence of their commitment to safer recruitment of staff including, teachers, volunteers and contractors. This requirement extends to the engagement of parent volunteers and involves more open and transparent screening and supervision practices.

Volunteers continue to be a valued and vital aspect of Catholic education and Catholic schools welcome and encourage involvement of parent volunteers to share their skills, experience and expertise.

As parents of children in Catholic schools, when you enrol your child, you should feel confident that their safety is a priority while at school and in the care of all members of the learning community.

I thank you for your support and engagement with numerous child safety initiatives. Your commitment and involvement helps to maintain a safe, secure, and nurturing learning environment for all students and staff in Catholic schools.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Elder
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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