



Our School Newsletter

Principal: Sally Smithard

School Captains: Neha Bhatt and Avisha Khan

School Council President: Ross Abbott

ISSUE 26

25 March – 5 April 2019

Important Dates – Term 1 2019

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| W9 | Tues 26 Mar | School Council Meeting 6pm, Front Office |
| W9 | Tues 2 Apr | Year 11 NESA Confirmation of Entry, Period Zero |
| W10 | Fri 5 Apr | Open Evening, 3 pm - 7 pm |
| W11 | Fri 12 Apr | ANZAC Commemoration Assembly |
| W11 | Fri 12 Apr | Last day of Term 1 |

Important Dates – Term 2 2019

| | | |
|----|-------------|---|
| W1 | Tues 30 Apr | First day of school for students |
| W1 | Wed 1 May | Evening performance "In The Heights" |
| W1 | Fri 3 May | Evening performance "In The Heights" |
| W1 | Sat 4 May | Matinee and evening performances "In The Heights" |
| W5 | Tues 28 May | School Council Meeting 6pm, Front Office |
| W6 | Mon Jun 3 | School Athletics Carnival Blair Oval, all day |
| W7 | Mon Jun 10 | Queen's Birthday Holiday |
| W9 | Tues 25 Jun | School Council Meeting 6pm, Front Office |
| W9 | Fri 28 Jun | Western Sydney Careers Expo Year 12 students |
| W9 | Fri 28 Jun | Seminar Day Year 11 students |

Principal's Report

I am extremely honoured to be the principal of our wonderful senior high school. We are a fiercely proud public school which provides our students with the support, confidence and capacity to become global focussed, honourable citizens who substantially contribute to an every changing world.

The next few weeks at St Marys Senior High School are deeply intense with quite a heavy assessment period for many students. I have written about the support available in previous newsletters but it is imperative that our students know that there is support available from a variety of sources if needed. Just as a reminder, your Mentor Teacher or Personal Mentor as well as your Student Adviser are great first points of call. Students and/or parents can self-refer students to our counsellors. Your Deputy Principal and myself are also important contacts of support. Please remember that wellbeing is not a thing we do at a point in time, it is about developing your overall health enabling you to overcome difficulties and achieve your goals.

Continued over the page →

Principal's Report continued

In this edition of the newsletter you will also find information related to our school musical which will be showcased in Term 2. Our students are currently rehearsing to ensure a great musical is provided as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations. I would like to thank Fatima and Michael for their leadership of this event. I look forward to seeing our community at one of the performances.

I have included in this newsletter a copy of the newly released School Community Charter from the Department of Education. We have a great community that in general are always respectful of each other. However, at times we do experience behaviour that is inappropriate. This is more often experienced around the enrolment process. As a school we always welcome feedback and I encourage contact with me if there are any concerns you would like to address.

As Year 12 progress throughout their final year of schooling many students are looking at scholarships, early entry to university and alternate pathways to further learning. Many of these alternate pathways require students to obtain references from their school. At St Marys Senior High School, these references are completed by the Principal. As discussed on Day One it is imperative that students book in a time with me to ensure that I can provide them with the time to support them in this process.

Dress code

A general reminder about dress code which in recent weeks has resulted in some reminders to individual students. We seek parental support to ensure that students are in dress code to assist us with identifying students on site and to ensure that students are appropriately dressed for school. All students enrolled at St Marys Senior High School agreed to meet the dress code requirements. I am happy to discuss any concerns with students and/or parents. Even though we are an adult learning environment, we are also an educational organisation and as such we expect all students to adhere to our dress code.

Enrolment 2020

Our enrolment timeframes for Year 11 2020 have been brought forward and we ask our community to share our updated timeframes via their social media platforms and community networks. Open Evening will occur this term and will move from a Saturday to a twilight event on **Friday 5 April**. EOI forms for local and non-local enrolments are available now on our website and these forms are due **by 3pm on Friday 24 May 2019**. Any questions can be directed to myself or our Enrolment Secretary. Please feel free to contact the front office on 02-9623-8333.

Sally Smithard

Principal



School Community Charter

 **Collaborative. Respectful. Communication.**

The following School Community Charter outlines the responsibilities of parents, carers, educators and school staff in NSW public schools to ensure our learning environments are collaborative, supportive and cohesive.

What our schools provide

NSW public schools work to create positive environments for students, staff and the entire school community that support student learning. We strive to ensure that every student is known, valued and cared for.

The best education happens when parents and schools work together.

The School Community Charter aligns with the NSW Department of Education Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022.



Positive environments

It is important that our NSW public schools are positive environments and that parents and carers are kept informed of students' progress and school announcements.

Parents and carers can expect:

- to be welcomed into our schools to work in partnership to promote student learning.
- communication from school staff will be timely, polite and informative.
- professional relationships with school staff are based on transparency, honesty and mutual respect.
- to be treated fairly. Tolerance and understanding are promoted as we respect diversity.

We treat each other with **respect**

We **prioritise** the wellbeing of all students and staff

Unsafe behaviour is not acceptable in our schools

We work **together** with the school

Ensuring respectful learning environments for all members of NSW Public Schools communities.

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We create
collaborative
learning
environments

We
all play
a part

We work
in partnership
to promote
student
learning

Communicating with our schools

Our staff will find a time to talk to you when they can give you their full attention. Please remember that while our staff are in class or dealing with other matters, they may not be available to answer your questions immediately.

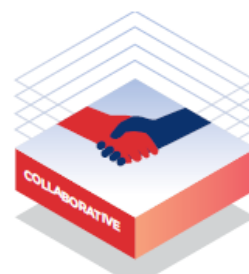
Our schools and communities will make sure that written communication is appropriate, fair and easy to read. We encourage you to use email and social media appropriately to connect with your school and stay up-to-date with up-coming events in the school community.

Our guide for parents, carers and students provides useful information about the complaints process: education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/complaints-compliments-and-suggestions/guide-for-parents-carers-and-students

Respectful communication is a right

In all workplaces people have the right to feel respected. Unacceptable and offensive behaviour has no place in our school communities.

To ensure the wellbeing of students, staff and the community in our schools, steps will be taken to address unacceptable behaviour. This may include restricting contact with the school community or, in more serious cases, referral to NSW Police.



Unacceptable behaviour may include but is not limited to:

- Aggressive or intimidating actions, such as violence, threatening gestures or physical proximity.
- Aggressive or intimidating language, including the use of obscenities, making sexist, racist or derogatory comments or using a rude tone.
- Treating members of the school community differently due to aspects such as their religion or disability.
- Inappropriate and time wasting communication.



Collaborative.
Respectful.
Communication.

School Community Charter

education.nsw.gov.au



St Marys Senior High School

Kalang Avenue, St Marys NSW 2760
P.O. Box 1053, St Marys 1790

Phone (02) 9623 8333
Facsimile (02) 9833 1304

20 March, 2019

Dear Parents,

The school has been saddened by the tragic incident which occurred late last week in Christchurch, New Zealand, and resulted in the sudden deaths of over 50 people.

We are aware that there has been extensive media coverage of this event, and the breadth of this exposure may have accentuated the sadness of this event to many people.

It is possible that some students may experience fluctuating emotions as a result of this incident, and are aware such responses are considered as a normal reaction in these circumstances. Many young people will find normal routines the best way to manage their emotions.

It is possible that your child may have some feelings and questions that he/she may like to discuss with you, and you can help your child by taking time to listen and by encouraging them to express their feelings.

All young people are different and will express their thoughts and emotions in different ways. It is not uncommon for children and young people to have difficulty concentrating or to be fearful, anxious, or irritable. They may become withdrawn, cry, complain of physical aches and pains, have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares. Some may not want to eat. These are generally short-term reactions. Over the course of the days to come, please keep an eye on your child and allow him/her to express their feelings without criticism.

Classes will continue as usual, but it is possible that the next few days may be difficult for some students.

We have enclosed some information which you may find useful in helping your child through this difficult time.

If you would like further advice you may wish to contact one of the Deputy Principals, the Head of Welfare, or the School Counsellors.

Yours sincerely,

Sally Smithard
Principal
St Marys Senior High School

Tips for talking with and helping children and young people cope after community violence

Extreme and distressing events like public shootings, hate crimes, terrorist threats, violent racist demonstrations, and other acts of community violence, are powerful and upsetting incidents that intrude into daily life.

This resource sheet includes some helpful resources for parents, caregivers and teachers for helping children and young people to cope following community violence.



Guidelines for parents, caregivers and teachers

Extreme and distressing events like public shootings, hate crimes, terrorist threats, violent racist demonstrations and other acts of community violence, are powerful and upsetting incidents that intrude into daily life.

Many people can have strong emotional or physical reactions like sorrow, anger, confusion, or even fear after an incident of community violence. Whilst they may not have experienced the incident first hand, these emotional reactions can be sadness for the people who lost their lives or lost loved ones, as well as a response to other types of losses. They may experience the loss of their sense of safety, their trust in those who live in their neighbourhood, or their trust in the government and the authorities, or the event might trigger feelings around a personal experience of violence or loss.

For most, these reactions subside over a few days or weeks. For some, the feelings and reactions may last longer and be more severe. Even following such events from a distance in the media can be distressing. Indeed, the way the media portray these events can make them seem even more overwhelming or distressing.

What can parents, caregivers and teachers do?

Engage in age-appropriate honest discussions

Encourage (but don't force) children to talk about their thoughts and feelings about the events. Let them know that talking about it can be a good thing.

Parents, carers and teachers of school aged children may need to open the conversation about the event and its aftermath. Say things like "As you know, there was a [shooting in PLACE XYZ]. Many people were killed or injured. I want to talk with you about this and answer any questions or worries you may have".

It is not necessary to share gruesome details of the event, but do provide truthful but simple information that will help them to separate fact from fiction and clear up any misinformation about what happened. Expect that children might ask the same questions over and over as they attempt to make sense of events.

Children and young people will also want to know 'why'. These questions are harder, but children need our best answers. They need honest, thoughtful explanations that will help them to develop a realistic understanding of the event, and again, to clear up any misinformation. This is also an important opportunity for learning and imparting pro-social values (see below).

Provide children with opportunities to express their feelings

Help children and young people to put words to feelings.

Sometimes children can better express their feelings through play than through words, so make time to play with them. They may talk about it in their own time or after a few days rather than the first time you have a conversation, so try to be open to this.

Let them know that crying is fine when they need to.



Monitor media exposure

Children can become distressed and fearful after watching repeated images of frightening events on the television, as well as other forms of media, and can come to believe that the world is a scary place. Many children retain longer-term recurrent, disturbing memories from viewing violence.

Adults can shield young children from traumatic events by not letting them see or hear media reports or overhear adult conversations about the events.

If older children are viewing media stories of distressing events, it is best to watch with them. They need your adult presence and perspective. Being able to talk about the material with a caring and reassuring adult can greatly reduce these reactions. These events and reactions will likely be depicted through social media, which can be more difficult for parents to monitor. It is important to prepare young people for this exposure (including other people's reactions to it) and to monitor social media use as well as reinforce the above messages.

Talk about how to treat others

These events are a chance to have discussions about how to treat others, and to share values about what sort of a society you want to have.

You can use it to open up a frank discussion about realities in society and the ways in which some people who live in this country are treated. Hate and prejudice are not innate but learned.

Let children and young people know that no one deserves any act of violence for their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, culture, or other beliefs.

Avoid stereotyping, narrow analyses of the problem, disaster or crisis, and the blaming of whole groups for the actions of few.

Help children to separate angry thoughts and feelings about specific people who behave in cruel ways from the larger cultural or religious group to which those people may belong.

Define the problem group (e.g. bigots, haters, terrorists, violent activists) narrowly. A narrow definition reduces the problem's impact and the potential leverage of people advocating or using violence.

Explain to them that people who advocate hate and violence are a tiny minority. It's a problem, but it's a small problem relative to many other challenges we face in society like homelessness, poverty, discrimination, or environmental destruction.

Let them know that hate directed at anyone who is different is unacceptable, and that meeting hate and violence with more hate and violence does not solve the problem.

Discuss the importance of encouraging peace and non-violence at all levels of society, by promoting understanding of people from different groups, supporting ways that strengthen people's cultural identities, teaching conflict resolution skills, and changing social norms (making it unacceptable to be violent or hateful).



Look out for possible stress reactions

Look out for changes in children's usual behaviour that suggest they are unsettled or distressed. This may include difficulty sleeping, being more clingy than usual, or changes in appetite. There may also be problems with attention and concentration, an increase in irritability and mood swings, or being more withdrawn than usual.

Exercise, eating healthy meals, and plenty of rest are all helpful.

Encourage children to do the things they used to enjoy doing, and to play and laugh.

Try to spend more time with your children and provide them with plenty of attention and affection. Let them be more dependent on you for a while.

Maintain good routines – predictable activity at home and school is very reassuring for children and young people.

Recognise safety and security needs and reassure children

People often have heightened concerns about their own safety after tragedy.

Talk to children and young people about the helpers and the heroes that help to make the world a better place.

Let children know that there are many people across the country working hard to make sure that people stay as safe as possible before, during and after any emergency, disaster or traumatic event and that these people are very good at their job.

Reassure children and let them know that they are safe and are being looked after, and that nothing bad will happen to them personally.

Make this an opportunity to discuss family or school plans for safety in the event of an emergency.

Foster hope

In the aftermath of tragic events we can also be reminded of the goodness of people.

Leave children with a sense of security but also hope, and help them to see that their world is basically a safe place, people are usually good, and that life is worth living.

Help them to see that there can be positive changes that come from distressing or tragic events, for example:

- Increasing the motivation for us to turn the tide of violence and fear and work harder to build a better, safer and respectful society.
- Increasing people's desire to help more and show acts of kindness to others in their community or in other parts of the world.
- Having increased appreciation for relationships and loved ones.
- Becoming allies to other people and minority groups who might be in need of support, including those of which you are not a member.



Help children find something positive to do in response to distressing world events, so they feel they can make a positive difference in the world, like:

- Volunteering in the community to help others.
- Donating money that they have personally earned to Red Cross or other emergency organisations.
- Writing thank you notes to the organisations that helped following the event.
- Standing up and speaking up for friends who are being bullied or targeted.

Pay attention to your own reactions

Children may respond to the anxieties felt and expressed by the people around them. They often see and hear far more than adults are aware of, and they will take their cues for how to respond from you.

Talk privately with trusted adults if you are needing to air your own feelings or explore your own reactions to the events.

Share your own feelings, but show that you are in control of them.

Pay attention to your own reactions and model good coping skills for dealing with distressing and confusing events.

Seeking professional assistance

Talking with a psychologist may be helpful if you feel you need further assistance with communication techniques that will assist you in discussing important issues. Your APS psychologist has at least six years of education and training to equip them to provide a professional and efficient service.

For more information about the APS disaster recovery resources please visit psychology.org.au/topics/disasters/

ANZAC Commemoration Ceremony – 12 April 2019

Our school will be holding our ANZAC Ceremony on Friday 12 April 2019.

A number of our students are a proud part of Australian Air Force Cadets, Australian Army Cadets and Australian Navy Cadets. If any of these students wish to wear their uniform on this day, we have been informed that students simply must provide a letter permitting this from their commanding officer.

If you have any questions or concerns, please see Rebecca Langham, Head Teacher of HSIE at your earliest convenience.



Our school musical – “In The Heights”

We are excited about our upcoming school musical, involving a performance of the popular work “In The Heights”.

Tickets are now on sale at <https://www.trybooking.com/BBHFM> for shows on 1 – 4 May 2019.

Please contact Fatima De Assis on 02 9623 8333 with any questions.

“In The Heights” is presented by permission of ORiGiN Theatrical on behalf of R&H Theatricals: www.rnh.com

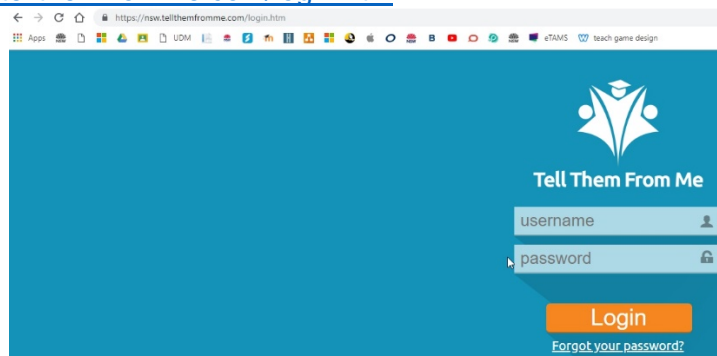


Tell Them From Me 2019

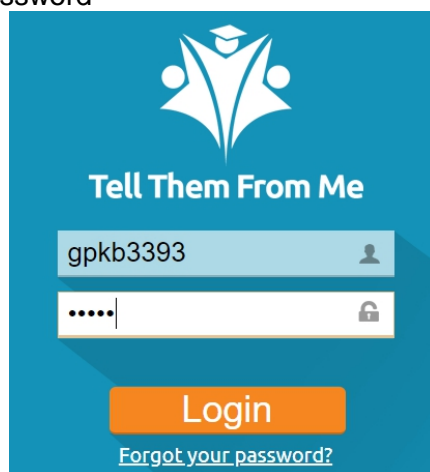
In 2019 St Marys Senior High School is completing the Tell Them From Me survey offered by the NSW Department of Education. This survey gives the school valuable data on the services we offer and how we can improve these services in the coming year.

All students have been invited to participate in the survey. To be involved, please follow this short tutorial.

Step 1: Go to <https://nsw.tellthemfromme.com/login.htm>



Step 2: Enter your username and password



All students were sent a username and password combination in their school email account. These usernames and passwords guarantee that responses are private and we cannot trace a response back to an individual student.

If you have any trouble logging into the website, please come to the Tech Centre for assistance.

Thank you very much in advance for completing this survey. Results will be shared in the school newsletter and on the school website after the survey closes.

Matthew Topp

Head Teacher Computing Studies



School attendance

Some students have asked questions about the following - so we thought we would post the information for everyone:

- 1. A reminder that any student absence from school needs to be covered by an explanation from their parents and/or caregivers **within seven days of the absence.****
 - Parents and caregivers can write a note for this purpose – but they may prefer to complete a note on Skoolbag, send a message via the Portal or send an email to our school.
 - Notes being returned should be signed by the parent or caregiver, and put in the silver letterbox in the front office foyer.
 - Notes or emails should include:
 - The student's full name
 - The date of their absence
 - The details of the absence (whole day or the part of a day missed, and the reason for the absence)

- 2. If a student is leaving school early for any reason:**
 - The student must sign out in the front office near Leah's office.
 - The student must ensure that their parents/caregivers provide an explanation outlining the details of the partial absence. *This explanation should come in the form of a note to your DP that is handed in before school on the morning of your absence. If your absence is unplanned, your explanation should come in the very next school day.*

- 3. If a student arrives at school late for any reason:**
 - The student must sign in to the school in the front office near Leah's office.
 - The student must ensure that their parents/caregivers provide an explanation outlining the details of the partial absence. *This should be submitted on arriving at school. If your absence is unplanned, your explanation should come in the very next school day.*

Students, parents and caregivers with questions or concerns should contact the relevant Student Adviser:

- Year 11, Surnames A-G Rosa Kim
- Year 11, Surnames H-O Lyn Tuckwell
- Year 11, Surnames P-Z Jesse Vassallo
- Year 12, Surnames A-G Luigi Serra
- Year 12, Surnames H-O Andrew Mabey
- Year 12, Surnames P-Z Nicola Preston



This fortnight @ SMSHS

| Monday 25 Mar | Tuesday 26 Mar | Wednesday 27 Mar | Thursday 28 Mar | Friday 29 Mar |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| WEEK A Bring It On Rehearsals Year 12 Dance – Task due Year 12 History Extension – Task due Year 12 Investigating Science – Task due | Period Zero bell times School Council Meeting 6pm, Front office Year 11 Biology – Period Zero task Year 11 English Advanced and Standard – Task due Year 11 Society and Culture – Task due Year 12 Dance – Task due Year 12 English Advanced and English Standard – Period Zero task Year 12 Modern History – Task due | Year 11 Investigating Science – Task due | Period Zero bell times Year 11 IPT – Task due Year 12 Agriculture – Task due Year 12 Dance – Task due Year 12 Engineering Studies – topic test Year 12 Mathematics and Mathematics Standard – Period Zero task Year 12 Studio Drawing – Task due | SRC Leadership Day Year 11 Music Showcase , 6:30 pm Girls Knockout Soccer Game v Rouse Hill |
| Monday 1 Apr | Tuesday 2 Apr | Wednesday 3 Apr | Thursday 4 Apr | Friday 5 Apr |
| WEEK B Bring It On Rehearsals Year 11 Agriculture – Task due Year 11 CAFS – Task due Year 11 SOR 2 – Task due Year 12 Drama – Task due Year 12 English EALD – Task due | Period Zero bell times Year 11 NESA Confirmation of Entry Period Zero, MPC Year 11 Agriculture – Practical task due Year 11 CAFS – Task due Year 11 Economics – Task due Year 11 English EALD – Task due Year 11 SOR 2 – Task due Year 12 Drama – Task due Year 12 Physics – Period Zero task | Year 11 CAFS – Task due Year 11 SDD – Task due Year 11 SOR – Task due Year 12 Chemistry – Task due Year 12 English Extension 1 – Task due Year 12 Geography – Task due Year 12 Multimedia – Task due | Period Zero bell times Year 11 Agriculture – Task due Year 11 Business Studies – Task due Year 11 CAFS – Task due Year 11 Mathematics Advanced – Task due Year 11 Mathematics Standard – Task due Year 11 SOR 2 – Task due Year 12 Ancient History – Task due Year 12 Drama – Task due Year 12 Economics – Period Zero task | Open Evening 3pm – 7pm Year 11 CAFS – Task due Year 11 French Beginners – Task due Year 11 Italian Beginners – Task due Year 11 Mathematics Advanced – Task due Year 11 Multimedia – Task due Year 11 SOR 2 – Task due Year 11 Studio Drawing – Task due |

Our Staff Teams

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Principal: | Sally Smithard |
| School Leadership Team: | |
| - Deputy Principal (Year 11) | Danielle Ervine |
| - Deputy Principal (Year 12 - Rel) | Leah Havord |
| - English | Julie Robinson |
| - Mathematics | Simone Pett |
| - Science | Lidija Radovancevic |
| - Commercial Studies (Rel) | Salochna Reddy |
| - HSIE (Rel) | Rebecca Langham |
| - CAPA | Nicole Bonfield |
| - Computing | Matthew Topp |
| - LOTE | Luigi Serra |
| - TAS/PDHPE (Rel) | Angela Lievore |
| - Secondary Studies | Liz Hemmings |
| - Student Services (Rel) | Peta Bailey |
| - First Australians | Leah Havord |
| - Sport and Recreation | Joanne Brines |
| - School Administrative Manager | Rebecca Zinghini |
| Student Advisers: | |
| - Year 11, Surnames A-G | Rosa Kim |
| - Year 11, Surnames H-O | Lyn Tuckwell |
| - Year 11, Surnames P-Z | Jesse Vassallo |
| - Year 12, Surnames A-G | Luigi Serra |
| - Year 12, Surnames H-O | Andrew Mabey |
| - Year 12, Surnames P-Z | Nicola Preston |
| Learning Support: | Carmel Harriden Dianne Pyne |
| Careers Adviser: | Lyn Tuckwell |

Contact us



St Marys Senior High School
Kalang Avenue
St Marys NSW 2760



02 9623 8333



stmaryssen-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au



St Marys Senior High School Official Site -
Facebook



St Marys Senior High School -
Skoolbag App

WANT TO SEE WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER YEAR 11 2020?

Open Evening



For students, parents and families
Friday 5 April 2019 | 3PM to 7PM