Principal’s Article for Newsletter – 27th July 2015

Dear Parents, Caregivers, Students and Friends of our College.

Welcome back for Term 3 and a special welcome to the new students who join us this Semester.

**Staff Changes**
At the end of last term Ms Mo Mara took a year’s leave from the College and has moved overseas with her partner. Ms Mara has been a great asset to the College and we will miss her enthusiasm, professionalism and her effervescent personality. Ms Heidi Drummond has been appointed to replace Ms Mara and we warmly welcome her to the College.

There are also a couple of additions to the College staff. Mrs Helen Kirk takes up the newly established position of ‘Executive Secretary’ for the College Leadership Team and Mrs Janet Ludeman joins us in a temporary position for 5 weeks as the College Chaplain.

As well, Ms Cathy Hives has been appointed the Year 10 Team Leader, replacing Ms Mo Mara, and Ms Kaleena Markowski takes up the Year 7 Team Leader role in place of Ms Cathy Hives.

**No parking lines:** In the near future the road side curb outside the front of the College will be marked with a yellow line. Once this is done it will become a ‘no parking’ zone, so those parents who park in this area at the end of the school day will need to drive their car into the car park and wait there to pick their son or daughter.

**‘Get Kids outdoors or see their sight deteriorate’, by Shane Rodgers**

I read the article below in The Australian on July 13th and thought it good enough to pass on to our readers of Newsletter. He had this to say:

“Children should spend an extra hour outdoors every day, and time on electronic devices should be restricted, if Australia is to avoid a dramatic leap in the number of people who are shortsighted.

Professor Brien Holden, an internationally acclaimed vision researcher, said the proportion of 17 year-olds with myopia had jumped from 20 per cent to 31 per cent over the past 15
ears. About 30 per cent of the children who were shortsighted were found to have no correction in place for the problem and this was impacting on their ability to learn in school.

If the problem was not addressed, by 2050 more than 50 per cent of the population was expected to be shortsighted.

Professor Holden said growing shortsightedness was linked to people going from largely rural environments to urban settings where they mostly concentrated on “near” things such as books, computers and mobile phones. “It has now been quite well established that time outdoors reduces the risk of myopia and may even reduce the progress of myopia in myopic children and non-myopic children,” he said.

“Children need to spend at least 60 minutes extra outside per day compared with what they do on average these days. We also need to screen every four-year-old … before they get out of kindergarten and we need to have every child going into primary school examined by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist and given a certificate on the state of their vision.”

Professor Holden, the chief executive of the Brien Holden Vision Institute, said a further examination was needed when children started secondary school. He said about 60 per cent of myopia cases started between the ages of six and 15, and a second wave of myopia tended to happen between 18 and 22, when people started studying at University. The problem was particularly bad in Asia, where half the population was shortsighted. In Taiwan, 96.5 per cent of males aged 19 are myopic. Taiwan has introduced laws under which parents can be fined if a child younger than two uses an iPad or a child younger than 18 uses one excessively. “It is a massive problem in Asia, a developing problem in Australia, and in the US they’ve gone from 25 per cent myopia to 42 per cent myopia in the last 30 years, and that process is accelerating,” Professor Holden said.

That’s all form me for this fortnight.

God bless.

Jim Jolley