Key Dates

2015
December:
7th  Gr 4 Transition @ SMOTA
8th  Orientation Day & Information Session for Parents
10th School Christmas Carols/Concert
11th Nathalia Community Carols by Candlelight
16th End of Year Christmas Mass & Graduation
17th Students last day of school. Normal 3.20 pm Finish
18th Staff last day.

2016
January:
25th Staff resume
26th Australia Day holiday
28th Students First day

February
4th  Hello Night
5th  Opening school Mass
9th  Shrove Tuesday
10th Ash Wednesday
16th School Board Meeting 7 p.m.

No School Canteen on Thursday 10 December 2015
Dear Parents and Friends of St Francis,

**Fr. Chris Update.**
Fr. Chris, our canonical administrator, has decided to complete his pastoral duties for our school and parish effective from last Saturday. This decision was finalised on advice given from his specialists in Melbourne and Bishop of Sandhurst Les Tomlison.

As you can imagine this news was quite sudden and has saddened many parishioners and members of our school community.

Fr. Chris has been under-going treatment for melanoma cancer for some years now and in recent weeks his condition has deteriorated impacting his ability to fulfil his pastoral duties. Currently Fr. Chris is in intensive care in Melbourne but is in good spirits.

When not in Melbourne undergoing treatment, Fr. Chris will be living at St. Kilians parish Bendigo. I will inform our school community of any up-dates as they come to hand. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with Fr. Chris at this time.

**Swimming Program Commences next Monday**
Please remember to pack swimming gear next week. We look forward to our swimming program and the many benefits of learning to swim. Our students are very excited. Please feel free to help supervise and walk students to and from the pool. If you are available and have not yet notified teachers, please notify the school. We remind parents that lunch orders will be available next week. Our Foundation and Grade 1 students will be having lunch at 12 noon whilst all other grades will have lunch at normal times. Kylie from the Canteen is very happy to provide the two lunch times for us next week. The swimming program will not be happening on Tuesday, 8 December as that is our whole school transition day.

**Festival of the Sacred**
On Wednesday our 5/6 students participated in the Goulburn Valley Deanery Festival of the Sacred in Shepparton. Our students along with all Catholic Schools across our Deanery put on a magnificent performance. We are extremely proud of the way our students conducted themselves throughout the entire program and for the way they performed on the day. As Mr Paul Desmond our Director of Sandhurst explained ‘it was an experience they will remember for the rest of their lives’.

We had a number of students and staff who had important and significant roles to play. Ebony James and Nikita Pawlowicz sang solos and harmonised together and were simply outstanding. Well done girls. Riley James had a speaking part which he delivered with great style. Well done Riley. Veronica Daniel had the enviable duty of being conductor for a song and she naturally did a wonderful job also. Congratulations Lonky! Mrs Williams proved she is no stranger to the tambourine and joined other teachers by adding percussion throughout a piece.

Thank you to all parents who could attend and congratulations to the A3 team for co-ordinating our students and bringing everything together to make for an enriching experience for our kids!
**St Vincent’s Christmas Appeal**  
We have two baskets in our front office where non perishable items can be placed for the St Vincent’s Christmas Appeal. We will be presenting the baskets to Mrs Mary Wilson who is a long standing member of St Vincent’s at our last assembly. Let’s help send some Christmas cheer to those in need.

**Fees and Levies**  
Please advise the school office as soon as possible if you do not wish to continue your direct debits over the holiday period.

**Grade 3/4 Banawah Visit**  
This week the grade 3/4 students were truly living the spirit of Christmas by giving, caring and sharing with others in their community. The students made Chocolate Coconut Yum Balls on Tuesday along with beautifully hand decorated bags. On Wednesday afternoon the students visited the Banawah Nursing Home to deliver their special hand made gifts and to treat the residents to some singing. The smiles on everyone’s faces showed just how much this visit meant to all involved. The children moved around the room happily chatting to residents taking in their stories of days gone by.

**Transition Day next Tuesday 8th December**  
Students will be informed of their new class placements for 2016 next Tuesday. Transition time will be between 11:30am – 1:30pm for grades 1-6 and 9:30am - 1:30pm for our new Foundation students. **There will be no swimming next Tuesday!**

**End of year Celebration and Graduation ~ December 16th 6:30pm**  
Preparations are well on the way for this important end of year function.

**Change of Venue:** We are now holding our End of year Celebration and Graduation in St Mary’s Church starting at 6:30pm. A shared supper will be held at school in the undercover area, it would be appreciated if you could bring a plate of supper to share.

**Christmas Carols ~ School Concert ~ Thursday 10th December**  
On Thursday 10th December we are having Christmas Carols and school concert. Each year level will perform 1-2 Christmas Carols with the senior students performing segues between class performances. A whole school finale will conclude the evening. Our Christmas Concert will be held on the SMOTA oval beginning at 7pm. Families are asked to BYO Chairs and picnic tea.

**Jump Start Program ~ Tuesday 8th Dec 9:30am – 1:30pm**  
Our Jump Start Program continues to be a wonderful experience for our new Foundations students for 2016. Our newest students are eager and raring to start their formal schooling. Welcome to all of our new families who have joined our community.  

**Please note:** Our last Jump Start day is next Tuesday 8th Dec from 9:30am – 1:30pm.

**Parent Information Session ~ Welcome to our New Families 2016**  
Last Tuesday we held an information session for new parents to our community. It was great to meet many of our new families and speak to them about our wonderful school. We currently have 18 new foundation students commencing next year and several new students commencing in other grades across the school. We warmly welcome all new families to our school community.
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**Billabong Ranch ~ Grade 3/4 Camp.**
Our Grade 3/4 students had a wonderful time on camp last week. School camps provide our students with many exciting learning opportunities and Billabong Ranch was no exception. Highlights of the camp included: Archery, lasso throwing, mini-golf, rock wall climbing, paddle-boats, ropes course, night walk, roasting marshmallows, fire-twirling demonstrations and spending time with friends and teachers outside the confines of school. Our students were exceptional in their willingness to participate, behaviour and good use of manners, were noted by camp staff and supervisors.

Thank you to Malinda Rankin for her organisation of the camp and to all parents and teachers who attended.

**Strawberry Festival**
Thank you to many of our students who volunteered and took part in this year’s event. Our students sang and performed beautifully. By all accounts it was a wonderful community event. Thank you Veronica Williams for supervising and performing with the students.

**School Library Books**
It's getting towards the end of the year and we still have many library books which haven't been returned so if parents could help their children search for any library books that they may have at home and send them in to school it would be much appreciated. Thanks, Kris Scott, Library Assistant.

**Raffle Tickets ~ School Voucher**
School Voucher raffle tickets may be returned to school before the end of the year if your book has been sold. We look forward to receiving the sold books.

**Zooper Doopers**
Friday's in Term 4 are Zooper Dooper Friday – 50c each. A yummy way to keep cool!

Enjoy your weekend and week ahead!

Chris Summers

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**WALKER LEARNING**
In the past few weeks I have attached WLA Philosophy and Pedagogy and the Key Principles Guiding the WLA. This week I have attached the **Early Years Walker Learning Approach:**

**WL Overview Early Years**

Walker Learning in the early childhood years bring back to life the aspects and elements of development not as a fad or an old fashioned way of thinking about early childhood but as a vibrant, necessary piece of evidence based on neuroscience and development that brings rigor, facts and the tracking and observation of children's development, learning and skill acquisition back into our major role and focus in
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early childhood education. One of our major aims is to ensure effective and smooth transition for children as they move between their early childhood and early primary years. Walker Learning ensures a consistency of teaching and learning across the early childhood and primary years.

It acknowledges that culture, community and family have a significant impact on a child's life and learning. However, it would be naïve to ignore the importance of the biology of the developing child just as it would be naïve to ignore the importance of culture on the developing child. Walker Learning uses elements of development as a vibrant, necessary piece of evidence based on neuroscience and development that brings rigour, facts and the tracking and observation of children's development, learning and skill acquisition back into our major role and focus in early childhood education.

It provides systems for planning, documentation, implementation, relationships, and defines open-ended play based curriculum based on child development theories rather than simply children's interests.

- It is a play based approach that is embraced and implemented across Australia and internationally and has been for over 20 years. It uses elements of the great traditions and theorists of child development and play and is the very first Australian play based curriculum developed and implemented in Australia and exported onto the world stage.
- It has been developed to embrace play pedagogy in Australia and internationally not only in early childhood but into the first three years of school and beyond so that all children, regardless of where they live and what age they are, may access their universal right to play and learn and be educated. With other great educational philosophies, such as Montessori, Regio, Steiner, Walker Learning has defined itself with clear educational philosophy and theory.
- The uniqueness of Walker Learning is that it brings to early childhood an Australian based and designed culturally appropriate play based pedagogy that has been developed for the diverse range of Australian communities. It is the first time Australia has an Australian designed play-based curriculum.
- Walker Learning embraces the concept of the "Whole child". This concept has been around in history and education for many decades and changes over time. In Walker Learning, we embrace the child holistically in terms of their overall development, using neuroscience and developmental theory as a foundation. We embrace the culture and family and relationships within and beyond community as major influences in a child's life and learning.
- We accept the diversity of children and families and cultures and that all children are born with the natural ability to learn and develop by exploration, investigation and the need for explicit direction and instruction. The whole child concept includes the child as capable and an active participant in their learning alongside the adult and extended community. We view the education of a child as a systems model whereby the community, relationships, culture are all interconnected.

Quote of the Week:
‘You cannot speak of Catholic Education without speaking about humanity, because the Catholic Identity is precisely that God became man’ ~ Pope Francis addressing the Vatican congress on Catholic Education last week.

St Francis Catholic Primary School acknowledges the Bangarang and Yorta Yorta people, the traditional custodians of the land on which our school is situated. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside Aboriginal people for reconciliation and justice.
SOCIAL SKILLS BLITZ

This week, our Positive Behaviour Blitz is Perseverance

“Perseverance is a quality where the process is more important than the end result. It is difficult for students (and adults) to see that anything is gained by trying constantly, sometimes without success. One successful goal easily balances out many failures. Perseverance helps to build strong character.

In Week 8 our Social Skills Blitz was around Cooperation. The following students were nominated by their peers and teachers as displaying positive behaviour last week:

Winner of the care box was Matilda Flenley.

Reading Awards: Aiden Botteril, Charlotte Whyte, Brady Walpole, Ally Francis, Ruby McIver & Kiara Deverill.
Keep up the great work everyone. 😊
Congratulations Everyone!
Community News

Andrea Baker is again offering piano lessons to our students in 2016. Andrea attends the school to conduct the lessons. Please contact Andrea on 5862 2017 or 0447 110 906.
SCHOOL CANTEEN CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

$5.00 MEAL DEAL

FRIDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2015

STUDENT NAME: ..................................................

CLASS: ..................................................

Please choose one of the below:

- HOTDOG
- 3 PARTY PIES
- SCHNITZEL AND GRAVY ROLL

SLUSHIE

Please choose one of the below:

- CHRISTMAS TREE GREEN
- REINDEER NOSE RED
- TROPICAL AUSSIE CHRISTMAS

ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY
WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 2015