Late last year, just after I commenced at Wycliffe, we held an Information Evening when we informed parents of the financial challenges faced by the school. In short, the school was in a pattern of spending significantly more than it received in income on an annual basis. This was resulting in the school functioning on overdraft for increasingly longer periods that, if left unaddressed, could have placed the school in a very vulnerable financial position.

I am pleased to inform our community that in just 12 months the financial situation of the school has seen a remarkable turn around. Having just received our last grant from the federal government, taking also into consideration parental fee payments between now and the end of the year, we should be able to make it through to when the next monies are received from the federal government in January next year without having to touch our overdraft facility.

I thank parents of the school for their diligent and timely payment of fees throughout the past year, and also to those who have cleared outstanding debt from previous periods. The efforts of our Business Department in chasing down outstanding debt should also be acknowledged. We would request families to check their fees account balance to ensure all fees for 2015 are cleared by the end of the year. This will enable the school to continue to build upon this improvement into the future.

Due to our improved financial performance fee increases were able to be kept to a minimum, even below CPI, 1.8% for 2016 (most independent schools rise by 5-6% pa). We will endeavour to sustain this pattern of minimal increases over the next couple of years, which will continue to support our parents in maintaining/improving the affordability of school fees.

FAREWELL BARISTA EXTRAORDINAIRE

It was with great sadness that we farewelled our Café Manager, Mr Joel Boorman, last week.

Joel has served our community since the opening of our school café in 2011. His happy disposition and openness to a chat has seen the café fulfil its vision of a welcoming community centre.

Joel and his wife Sarah had recently sold up and moved to Wollongong with Joel commuting to Wycliffe until he found employment in the Illawarra. It seems that Christ has opened a new door for Joel, and he will be pursuing a career in the travel industry.

We thank Joel for his contribution to the Wycliffe community. Our prayers and best wishes go with Joel and Sarah as they begin this new phase in their lives.

COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE WEEK

This week we feature Robert-Joseph Slockee of 2CT.

Robert-Joseph’s smile and happy disposition are an encouragement to all. Whatever he turns his hand to, from classroom learning to the sporting field, Robert-Joseph gives his all.

Central to his life is his love for Jesus, something dear to his whole family.

Peter Jamieson
Principal
FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Last week I attended a briefing regarding the new Geography National Curriculum K-6. We examined the focus of the curriculum, which is optional to teach in 2016 but will be mandatory in 2017. Consistent with other National Curricula - the focus is on skill development, learning to learn and how students then apply these skills to all areas of learning. Geography, rather than being a collection of facts will be the study of places and the relationships between people and their environments, through an inquiry learning approach. The rationale states - Through an inquiry approach students explain patterns, evaluate consequences and contribute to the management of places and environments in an increasingly complex world.

The goal of the curriculum is to develop responsible, thoughtful, informed citizens who will use this understanding to actively participate in community life. When such a framework so closely echoes Biblical values it would be easy to teach the course as is, with appropriate references to Biblical principles, and yet at the heart of the course is the belief that it is nature that sustains man, completely contrary to our knowledge that God holds all things together and that we have been given a mandate to be good caretakers, stewards, of the world He has gifted us with.

This term, Years 3 & 4 have begun to look at our particular Australian environment through a Unit - “Australia...you’re standing in it” as well as looking at what it means to be Australian, they will be learning about the geographical features of our country and local area, but more importantly, considering what it means to live as a Christian who cares for the environment as good stewards – considering the ‘here and now’ as well as what we leave for future generations.

Year 5 & 6 are also considering God’s handiwork in more far reaching environments through their Science unit “The Heavens’ Declare”. Throughout this unit teachers challenge the humanistic beliefs that form the basis of worldly understanding and show that as Science uncovers the mysteries of Space we see more and more of God’s amazing creation and His intricate design.

As Term 4 races towards the end of the year there will be many exciting activities to report – so keep checking School Talk for the latest news.

Coral Edwards
Deputy Principal
LIBRARY NEWS

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH

October is International School Library Month. It is an opportunity to celebrate school libraries and the important role that they play in enhancing lifelong learning and the enjoyment of reading. Research continues to link the school library with achievement in literacy, comprehension and creativity. These skills are foundational to success in school and later life.

Of course, these findings are not just referring to the library as a place. Nor is this achievement solely related to the number of books available or the frequency of borrowing, although there is certainly a correlation between test scores and the usage of the library. A print-rich environment leads to more reading, and free voluntary reading is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary growth, spelling and grammatical ability, and writing style.

Also contributing to student achievement is the quality of the collection and the collaboration between the school librarians and class teachers in planning and resourcing units of learning. The library staff is able to assist teachers to cater for difference in learning styles through the provision of a range of teaching resources.

Libraries can also make a positive difference to students’ self-esteem, confidence, independence and sense of responsibility in regard to their own learning. They equip students with the skills necessary to succeed in a constantly changing technological, social and economic environment. Finally, they provide and promote quality fiction to develop and sustain in students the habit and enjoyment of reading for pleasure and to enrich students’ intellectual, aesthetic, cultural and emotional growth. All of which is something worth celebrating.

Mr Cooney

SPORT

THE 2015 CSSA STATE TRIATHLON

Phillip Morgans (Year 7) represented our school at this year’s CSSA State Triathlon at Penrith’s Regatta Centre on Friday, 16th October.

Phillip contested the Junior Secondary event for boys aged 13 to 14 years of age and was required to complete a 300-metre swim, 5-kilometre bike ride followed by a 2-kilometre run. This was Phillip’s third Triathlon. He found the swim leg very tough going – quite a few of his older competitors were typically strong surf swimmers from the Northern Beaches. Once out of the water, however, Phillip commenced making his way through the field with strong performances in both the bike and running legs despite the sweltering 34-degree heat. His time for the event of 32 minutes 59 seconds placed him in the top half of the field.

Phillip’s track and field performances this year are steadily improving as he recovers from a niggling back injury which he sustained 2 years ago in a non-sporting incident. He is a dedicated and focused athlete who maintains a diligent training schedule and he hopes to finally be back to his best for 2016.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming school events are available from: www2.wycliffe.nsw.edu.au/calendars

COMMUNITY NOTICES

TAFE Blue Mountains (Wentworth Falls) is currently offering FREE “Summer Skills” courses (with some requiring a small additional cost*)

- Barista – 16 to 18 November
- Café Assistant & Barista - 23 to 27 November
- Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA)* - 3 Dec
- Responsible Conduct of Gambling (RCG)* - 10 Dec
- Food Safety Supervision* - TBC
- Retail Hair & Beauty Assistant – 23 to 25 Nov
- Retail Tanning & Nail Art - 24 + 26 Nov OR 30 Nov + 3 Dec
- Guide Single Pitch Abseiling Natural Surfaces - 29, 30 Oct + 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 27 Nov

(Participants must be 15 years or older and no longer at school). For more information, or to enrol, visit http://wsi.tafensw.edu.au/ or call 4753 2100