Dear Parents and Friends,

On Wednesday, 15th February parents are invited to a parent information evening. The purpose of the information evening is to provide parents with an opportunity to meet their child’s teacher, see the classroom and hear about the expectations each teacher has for their students. One of the greatest influences in your child’s learning progress is the family. The more interest you as a parent show in what is happening at school, the more influence you have on your child’s learning.

The evening is from 6:00pm. All parents are invited to hear from myself in the Library regarding the school priorities for the 2017 school year along with our building plans. Each class teacher will run two class sessions:

- Session 1 is from 6:20pm until 6:40pm
- Session 2 is from 6:40pm until 7:00pm

Each session is the same and is repeated to allow parents who have more than one class the opportunity to visit each class. A welcome sausage sizzle will be running from 6:30pm and we would appreciate if the RSVP forms could be returned to the office for catering purposes.

Sun Safety

During these particularly hot summer days it is important to remember sun safety procedures. All students must have a SCHOOL HAT at school each day to wear during all outside activities including lunch times. No hat means no play. Parents are very welcome to apply sunscreen before school each day.

Social and Emotional

Each week at assembly I will speak of Concepts from our Social and Emotional programme. This week at assembly I spoke about the emotional thermometer and is the reaction appropriate for the problem. We spoke about whether the problem is a “mountain or a molehill”. Ask your child this week what is the difference between a mountain or a molehill?

School Communication

This year our school will utilise an SMS service to remind parents and friends of important events or up-to-date information due to weather. Please ensure your mobile number is up-to-date with the school office this will ensure that we can communicate with you at all times.

School Facebook Page

Parents are able to access the page by searching @StMaryOfTheCross. Please make sure you like the page so you receive updates and information. We ask that you use this page with respect and consideration of the school community. Our page is closely monitored to ensure that comments are moderated. Only St Mary of the Cross staff will be able to post on the page and moderate pictures and comments. Please search for our page to see the many enjoyable things happening in our school.

Have a good week,
Matthew Beacroft - Principal
Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Our senior students spent the day out of school at the State Library this Wednesday learning how to be great student leaders. They engaged in a number of activities involving teamwork, encouragement and helping others. They also enjoyed fish and chips at Southbank. A special thank you to Mrs Hill for her organisation and enthusiastic participation.

Have a peaceful week,

Dean Estreich
Assistant Principal Religious Education (APRE)
Dear Parents,

Generation Next is a federal government initiative to support the mental health of our next generation – your children. A recent article by Karen Hey-Sigmund offered the following tips for encouraging your child to always talk to you about their problems. This is the first half of the article, the rest will be next week.

1. **Let nothing be off-limits.** Let them know that they can come to you with anything. They don’t have to know how to start or how to say it. Let them know that it’s enough to let you know that they have something they want to talk about, but that they don’t know what to say. The next part you can do together.

2. **Let them know you can handle anything.** They’ll catch whatever you send out, so let it be peaceful, beautiful vibes, even if you have to fake it. Let them know that there is nothing they can say that will make you sad, angry or disappointed in them. You might feel all of these things, but hang on to them. If they’re opening up to you, it’s because they trust you and want to bring you in to their world. Keep the connection.

3. **Set a time to chat – with a definite beginning and a definite end.** Have a regular talk time with a definite beginning and a definite end, eg 4:30pm-5:00pm, but where they can stop the conversation if they want with no pressure from you to keep it going. Let them have the control. Sometimes it can be difficult to raise things because of where it might end up – too many questions, phone calls to the school ... . Sometimes children need the opportunity to say what they need to say, even if it’s just downloading about a crappy day, and know that they can stop the conversation whenever they want to. If it needs to go further, you can deal with that later, but at least you know there is a problem.

4. **Don’t judge, criticise or push them too hard to move through it.** What they are doing might not be working for them, but for the moment it’s the only thing they know how to do. Be the one who ‘gets it’ from where they are. When they feel validated (you understand) they can start to respond from a position of strength. Criticising them, judging them, or demanding a different response will only intensify their feelings of self-doubt and put a distance between you.

5. **They need to know you get it.** Telling them there’s nothing to worry about will only make things tougher for everyone. When they are anxious, they are being driven by a brain in fight or flight. It’s working towards survival and has no time for rational thought. The rational, thinking part of their brain ‘disconnects’ from the instinctive, reactive part. You can play a powerful part in turning this around. Stay calm and gently tell them that you can see that they’re struggling and that you understand – even if you can’t change things at this moment. Take away their reason to fight you or withdraw (flee) from you. This will help settle the reactive part of their brain and bring the rational part back online. When this happens, they’ll find calm and will be able to make better decisions.

Mary MacKillop would say: “Let us take one day only at a time, merely making a resolve for tomorrow. Thus may we hope to get on, taking short, careful steps, not great strides.

Have a good week, taking short, careful steps. Stay cool this weekend.

God bless,

Sr Anne
**SUPPORT A READER (SAR)** is a very successful program which aims to support and develop the literacy skills of our young students. It is easy, fun and very satisfying. We are calling for volunteers to help us with this program in 2017.

If you are interested we will be holding a training session at the school on Wednesday February 22. (1.45-3.00 pm)

This session will be informative but very relaxed!

We will then ask you to nominate a 1 hour time slot each week when you can support young readers 1:1, following the SAR process.

If you feel you are able to support the school in this way please contact Maureen Walsh on mwwalsh@bne.catholic.edu.au or 3857 4803. Thank you in anticipation!

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**Get involved in the School Banking program!**

St Mary of the Cross is excited to offer the Commonwealth Bank School Banking program to all students.

School Banking is a fun, interactive and engaging way for young Australians to learn about money and develop good savings habits. Children who deposit money into their Youthsaver account through School Banking earn Dollarmites tokens, which they can save up and redeem for exciting rewards.

The rewards available during 2017 are:

- Cyber Handball
- Colour Change Markers
- 3D Chalk Set
- Tablet Case
- Smiley Emoji Keyring
- Volt Handball
- Pencil + Tech Case
- Epic Earphones

**Getting involved in School Banking is easy!**

All you need to get involved in the School Banking program is a Commonwealth Bank Youthsaver account. You can open an account for your child in one of two ways:

1. **Online**
   

2. **In branch**

   Visit a Commonwealth Bank branch with identification for yourself and your child, like a driver’s licence and birth certificate.

   If your child has an existing Commonwealth Bank Youthsaver account they can start banking straight away. They just need to bring their deposit in every week on School Banking day using their Dollarmites deposit wallet.

**School Banking day is Thursday.** Each week you need to hand your Dollarmites deposit wallet to the school office.

If you would like to know more about School Banking, please ask for a 2017 School Banking program information pack from the school office or visit [commbank.com.au/schoolbanking](http://commbank.com.au/schoolbanking)