Welcome back to everyone for a wonderful 2017 school year. We are really grateful to our parents for believing in our commitment to our EMU Maths program and allowing us the opportunity to have one on one time with each of your children for the Maths Assessment Interviews (MAI) prior to the beginning of the formal schooling. This time is invaluable to us in mapping where each student is at and how we can support their growth this year. We appreciate these extra days take a big commitment from parents. We are very thankful!

STAFF 2017

- Mrs Therese Seymour — Principal
- Miss Kasey Miles — Assistant Principal, Leader of Curriculum and S1 Teacher
- Mrs Libby Spash - Leader of School Evangelisation and S2 Teacher
- Mr Andrew Maslen — Leader of Pedagogy
- Mrs Nikki Wagner - Leader of Catechesis and S3 Teacher
- Mrs Lisa Donohoe—Enrichment Support and ES1 Teacher (Kinder)
- Mrs Ros McElligott—ES1 Teacher (Kinder)
- Ms Sonya Lovett - S1 Teacher
- Miss Jess Fitness - S1 Teacher and Sport
- Mrs Nicole Wagland - S3 Teacher
- Mr Paddy Wilde - S3 Teacher
- Mr Peter Slattery - Release from Face to Face
- Mrs Margaret Lidbetter—Release from Face to Face and Intervention
- Mrs Cathy McWilliam - Release from Face to Face
- Mrs Anna Moloney - Release from Face to Face
- Mrs Lyn Rowling - School Chaplain/Wellbeing
- Mrs Lisa Knight - ES1 Enrichment Tutor
- Mrs Jennifer Slattery - S1 Enrichment Tutor
- Mrs Hermien Mellick - S2 Enrichment Tutor
- Mr Victor Murgha - S3 Enrichment Tutor
- Ms Ros Kingsford - ICT Support and Library
- Mrs Debbie McMahon - Secretary (Tuesday and Wednesday)
- Mrs Tanya Pagotto - Secretary (Friday)
- Mrs Patricia Steele - Secretary (Monday and Thursday)
- Mrs Leanne Harris - Canteen Convenor
- Mr John Fivaz - Uniform Shop Coordinator
- Mr John Wardrop—Maintenance Officer

We will send out a photo sheet in next week’s newsletter so you can familiarise yourself with all staff members.

ASPECT TEACHING STAFF
Meghan Williams, Kirsty Cameron, Jypsy Pendragon, Ay-Shin Chiou, Wendy Neukirich

UPDATE INFORMATION
We are sending home today with the newsletter an update sheet for each child. This form allows us to check whether any information has changed. We do need you to return the document to
school by next Wednesday 8 February to acknowledge that you have seen it, and have made any changes necessary.

Please be mindful of informing the school of any diagnosis or change in medical conditions for your child so that the school plans and records are current and accurate. This is especially important for those students with Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes and other medical illnesses.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS HOPEFULLY ANSWERED HERE......

SCHOOLWORX

- If your child arrives after the 9:05am bell they will be marked absent. To change this to present, they must arrive through the Front Office to have the office staff mark them present. The same needs to happen if they are being picked up early. For small absences during the day they are to be signed out and back in at the office. (However we would like to avoid absences during learning time).
- If your child is going to be absent from school you can either ring the office on 66281009 after 8:30am OR SMS to 0439837083 (no calls to this number). Doing either of these choices means you will not need to send in a note. You can email the school (alstp@lism.catholic.edu.au) but our preference for ease of access is SMS.
- After the rolls are marked, and if we have not heard from you, then you will receive an SMS inquiring about your child’s absence (usually between 9:30 and 10 am). A response to this will also negate the need for a note.

ABSENCES

Holidays during school time are not necessarily granted. This comes from the Minister for Education, “If the Principal does not believe the absence is in the student’s best interests and does not accept the application then the absence will be recorded as A.”

“IF the absence is in excess of 50 days the student may need to transfer to distance education”.

“If a student’s absence is due to sickness the Principal may require a doctors certificate, particularly if there is a history of unsatisfactory attendance”.

Whatever the outcome, all these days missing from school are totalled and will be under investigation if they are high.

Please go to our school webpage and look under Parent Information. There you will find ‘Application for Leave’. If you wish to take your child out of school for more than 10 straight days then this form needs to be lodged at school PRIOR to this occurring.

PEOPLE IN OUR SCHOOL

Everyone who works in our school is important, but as a new parent there are some people you will be more likely to see or need to speak to. Communication is the most important aspect of a school and your class teachers should always be the first point of call for issues related to your child.

You will be informed of your child’s PASTORAL TEACHER this week. This is the go-to teacher for your child’s Stage. If you need information about an event, want to let a teacher know about a change or just catch up, then this is the teacher you contact.

This teacher will also be the one you book into for Parent/Teacher/student Conferences on www.schoolinterviews.com.au. More about all of this at our Parent Information Meeting. These groups of children (their Pastoral groups) will be used on release days as they experience a variety of activities related to Personal Development, PE & Health.

Just remember, schools are busy places so if you need to speak to your child’s teachers in detail make an appointment to see them so they can allocate a time and give you their full attention. You can also communicate with your class teachers through notes, phone calls and email. If wishing to email, you need to use the teacher’s first initial and surname followed by @lism.catholic.edu.au (e.g. If you were wanting to contact Therese Seymour then you would email tsymour@lism.catholic.edu.au). All Teachers will be in contact with you this week through a note home.

WHAT THINGS DO I NEED TO TELL THE PASTORAL TEACHER?

Communication is the key to a great year for you and your child. The best way for the class teachers to teach your child is if they know your child. If your child has any specific issues, e.g. they have a problem with going to the toilet or the way in which they are going home each day (bus, car pick up), the class teachers can help if they are aware.

Let your class teachers know if your child will be away and why; if your child has a medical condition; if there are changes to family circumstances that may affect your child; afternoon pick up arrangements if you will not be picking them up; if your child has had Head Lice or anything else you may feel they need to know.

Good communication means less stress all round.

SIGNING IN AND OUT

It is a legal requirement that visitors to the school sign in and out at the Front Office. If you are coming in to help in a classroom, attending a meeting, coming to assembly or working in the Canteen please remember to sign in and attach a name sticker. This allows us to know who is in the school and make sure everyone is accounted for in the case of a fire or evacuation. Please do not just pop into school to give your child a forgotten lunch or book. Enter through the office at all times.

SCHOOL TIMES

Mornings

School starts at 9:00am. There will be a teacher on duty from 8:30am. Before this time children are required to sit on the silver seats around the basketball court. If your child needs to be at school before this time please contact the school.

Afternoons

School finishes at 3:20pm. A bell will ring at 3:15pm to allow classes to pack up and be ready for the second bell at 3:20pm. If you are coming into the school to pick up your
child, please park around the side of the school and wait at the Basketball court until the second bell then proceed to the pick up area in front of the Kinder classroom.

| Crunch & Sip: | Around 10am daily for 5-10 minutes |
| Lunch:       | 11:50am – 12:40pm                 |
| Afternoon Tea: | 2:00pm – 2:20pm                 |

Children are given time at the end of each break to go to the toilet, have a drink and wash their hands before going into class. Please remind your child of this and remind them that if they need to go to the toilet during class time they need to see their class teacher.

**CRUNCH & SIP**
This break is a short break during the morning session where students go outside to have a drink and a piece of fruit or vegetable. Parents are encouraged to cut up fruit for younger children if they are not able to manage a whole fruit on their own. Fruit break **MUST be FRESH** fruit or vegetables or dried fruit. Fruit straps etc. will not be allowed during this time.

*If your child is having a lunch order you MUST still send in fruit break.*

**LUNCH**
Children all come out together and sit under cover for lunch. Students are required to sit and eat their lunch until the teacher on duty lets them go off to play. Please pack your child a healthy lunch as they will need this energy to help them get through the remainder of the day. If your child is having a lunch order, please see the Canteen List for more details.

**AFTERNOON TEA**
Afternoon tea is time for the students to have a snack and a short play. Please ensure your child has a snack for this time. If you are putting in yoghurt or other items that need to stay cold, it is a good idea to freeze items or put in ice bricks. Don’t forget to include a spoon if needed. *If your child is having a lunch order please include afternoon tea for them, unless you are ordering this as well.*

**CANTEEN**
The Canteen is run by Mrs Leanne Harris and is open Wednesdays and Fridays **for lunch only**. The Canteen is at the back of the School Hall. Lunch orders MUST be taken to the canteen before school starts on these mornings. A Canteen List will come home shortly, and is available on the website, and you will find weekly specials on the back page each week. *You can order lunches and afternoon tea, however, all will be delivered at lunch time.*

**Canteen Volunteers**
The Canteen can only run if we have parents that volunteer to help Leanne. If you are able to help in the Canteen for a day during the term or on a more regular basis please contact Leanne Harris. Volunteers are always welcomed and it is a good way to help out the school.

**BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE**
There is a Before and After School Care operating at St Joseph’s School run by Rainbow Children’s Centre. The program is for primary school aged children. Opening hours are 6:45am—8:45am and from 3.00pm—6:00pm. Breakfast and afternoon tea is supplied. Enrolments forms are available from the school office.

**GETTING TO AND FROM SCHOOL**
There are several options for getting your child to and from school: Drop off in car pick up, walking and buses. The area around our school is very busy at this time and safety is of the utmost importance. Please follow the procedures in place for the safety of all our children and staff.

**BUSES**
If your child is to catch a bus they will need to have a Bus Pass. A new process is involved. To apply for free travel for the first time complete the online application form at [www.transportnsw.info/school-students](http://www.transportnsw.info/school-students), print, sign and date the completed application then send it to the school for endorsement. If you don’t have internet access you should phone 131500 for assistance with your application.

If your child is new to catching the bus and they do not know anyone else catching the bus, please let the school know and we can arrange a bus buddy for them. Infants children are walked up to the bus each afternoon by a teacher. Please make sure the Pastoral Teacher is aware of your child’s bus and routine so they are where they should be.

**Walking**
Walking is an option if children live close enough to walk to and from school. Please talk to your child about road safety and crossing at the appropriate crossings. **Children under the age of 8** have not developed their peripheral vision yet and should always cross the road with adult supervision. It is a good idea for your child to walk home with a trusted adult or older sibling until they can cross the road safely.

If students are riding bikes or skateboards, we insist they wear a helmet.

**Parent Pick Up**
If you are coming into the school to pick your child up, please park at the side of the school. Parents are asked to wait at the Basketball court until the second bell has rung.

All students that are not catching the bus will be sitting on the seats on the road side of the Kinder rooms. Please walk around there to pick your child up.

**Car Pick Up and Drop Off**
Behind the back of the school near the Kindergarten rooms is a car pick up area. This is supervised by several teachers (afternoon only) and is an easy and effective way of picking up and dropping off your child. Please note that you are not allowed to park or get out of your car in this area during the pick up and drop off times.

Children will wait on the silver seats until they see your car and then they will be instructed to walk down to you. Children should be able to get into the car by themselves and put on their own seatbelt. Please note that the car pick up line can be long but moves very quickly and efficiently when people work together and if it is raining this is a good option.

Please do not block the entry to the Police Station while waiting.
WHAT IF MY CHILD IS LATE TO SCHOOL?
If your child is late to school for any reason you are to take them to the office and sign them in. Your child will need to wait for a Late Slip to take to class with them. The office can be busy at this time so please be patient.

Please do not drop your child at car pick up / drop off if they are arriving late.

WHAT IF I NEED TO PICK MY CHILD UP EARLY?
If your child needs to picked up early or if they have an appointment in the middle of the day and will be returning to school after this you will need to go to the Front Office and sign them out. Please do not just go to your child’s classroom and take them. If your child is returning to school please sign them in again on their return.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS SICK?
As inconvenient as it may be, if your child is sick please do not send them to school. Sick children spread germs that in turn make more people sick. If you are unsure if your child is too sick to come to school use these tips:

- do they have a temperature?
- are they coughing uncontrollably?
- do they have green or yellow mucus coming from their nose?
- are they tired, lethargic and grumpy?
- have they been vomiting or had diarrhoea in the past 24 hours?
- has anyone else in your family been sick in the past few days?
- do they have an unidentified rash?
- are they on antibiotics and are still unwell?

Please make sure you let the school know if your child is sick by sending an SMS or responding to ours.

If your child has an illness that is contagious or they are off for a prolonged period of time due to illness please notify the school immediately. A doctor’s certificate may be required.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS ON MEDICATION?
Sometimes children need to take medication at school. This may be something as simple as cough lollies (strepsils) or it may be ongoing regular medication e.g. asthma puffer. Whatever the case, all medication must be sent to the office with a note and in most cases a form outlining the dosage and time it needs to be taken etc. If you need more details about this please contact the Front Office.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS A MEDICAL CONDITION?
It is important that the school and class teacher are aware of any medical condition your child may have, especially if this condition requires regular medication, staff training, student monitoring or impacts your child’s everyday life in anyway. Kinds of conditions that schools need to know about are:

⇒ Asthma, 
⇒ Epilepsy, 
⇒ Diabetes, 
⇒ Anaphylaxis, 
⇒ allergies – food (eggs, nuts, seafood etc.), bees, other bites etc.;  
⇒ ADHD, ODD, Autism,  
⇒ Intolerances or allergies to gluten.

If you have any concerns please contact the school.

HEAD LICE
Something you will come in contact with at school is Head Lice. If your child gets Head Lice they will not be alone and they must be treated. Children with Head Lice are not allowed into the school until they have been treated and all eggs have been removed. If your child is found to have lice at school they will be sent home to have it treated and will need to return to the school via the Front Office to have their hair checked before they are allowed back in class.

There are several treatments out there to treat Head Lice but the main issue is to remove all the eggs and re check your child’s hair every couple of days for the next week to make sure no new eggs have hatched. You will need a fine tooth comb and some conditioner to check your child’s hair. It is a good idea to wash hats and pillow cases and check the whole family.

To help prevent Head Lice (nits) encourage your child not to play with other people’s hair; do not share hats, keep hair tied back and neat, use gel or hairspray as this can help stop lice gripping to hair, spray hair with a combination of water, conditioner and tea tree oil; check your child’s hair regularly.

WHAT IS MUFTI DAY?
Occasionally throughout the year the school will have a mufti day. Usually mufti days are a fundraising event and students are allowed to wear plain casual clothes for the day. (These are no uniform days) in exchange for a gold coin donation. Sometimes these days will have a theme e.g. bandanna day or red nose day. Information will be in the school newsletter when these days are coming up. When dressing children for these days they need to have covered shoulders, covered shoes and a hat, no midriff tops etc. please.

DO YOU HAVE A SCHOOL COUNSELLOR?
Each year we receive funding from the Catholic Schools Office in Lismore to support student wellbeing. In previous years we have employed a counsellor for half a day a week to support students who may be experiencing behaviour difficulties, be new to school and having trouble settling in, have had changed family circumstances and require some support or are having friendship issues.

This year rather than employ a counsellor who has limited contact with students and little continuity with a student we are trialling a new model.

We have Mrs Lyn Rowling as our Chaplain here at school. She already works in this wellbeing area. We have utilised our CSO funding to supplement her work which will enable her to work in school in this area of wellbeing for 2½ days a week. Her role will include lunchtime support for students, social stories work, the Seasons program and other student support work.

Lyn will not be counselling students, rather supporting them to manage the difficulty or putting in place structures to support them.

Should a staff member identify a student who might need extra support they will bring this to the attention of the Principal and Assistant Principal. Next, contact will be made with the child’s parents and a letter of consent signed by the parents. Then Lyn will work with the student or a program can be put in place that best supports the student’s needs.
If a parent chooses not to consent then the school may ask the parent to seek outside support. If the school believes the problem being experienced is too big for us to manage effectively we will ask parents to seek support. Methods for doing this can be explained as needed.

**WHAT ARE SPORTS HOUSES?**

When your child enters the school they are given a sports house and each house is represented by a colour. St Joseph’s has three houses represented by the colours red (McCarthy), green (Cawley) and yellow (Dara). Your child will be able to wear a coloured shirt representing their house on sports carnival days. If you are unsure what colour house your child is in please ask the pastoral teacher.

**WHAT ARE SPORTS CARNIVAL DAYS?**

St Joseph’s has three main school carnivals – swimming, cross country and athletics.

The **swimming carnival** is held in December each year and all students are involved. Students under 8 years, compete in water games and activities in an infants carnival, this is a fun event and non competitive. Students over 8 years can elect to swim in a number of different events. This section of the carnival is competitive and students who do well can then go onto higher levels representing the school and diocese.

**Cross Country** is a long distance running carnival which is held at school. The infants complete a fun run on the school playground. Older students compete in a more structured long distance run and may go on to represent the school or diocese.

The **Athletics carnival** is usually held in term 2 and all students compete in a range of athletic events including running, shot put, long jump and high jump. Students 8 years and over may be selected to represent the school or diocese.

**HOW CAN I HELP IN THE SCHOOL?**

Schools always welcome volunteers and parents in whatever capacity they are able to assist. There are many opportunities in which you can help the school, some of these are:

- Parish School Forum,
- Fundraising,
- Parent Representative,
- Parent Assembly,
- Canteen,
- In the Classroom: guided reading, changing home readers, listening to kids read, working with small groups), Art volunteers,
- Helping at sports carnivals,
- Assisting on excursions,
- Become a member of group or committee,
- LAP tutor – these are people who come and work one on one with students for around one hour a week (see LAP). These are just a few ways you can help.

*Your assistance helps your child…*

**WHAT IS PARISH SCHOOL FORUM OR PSF?**

The Parish School Forum is a group of parents, teachers and parish representative that comes together approximately once a month to discuss issues within the school and help the leadership team make decisions about the direction the school is heading. It is open to all parents who wish to attend and it is a great way to find out more about how the school is run. There are several smaller groups and committees within the school who have representatives that come along and present to the forum when they have events coming up so that the forum can assist them if needed.

In the past the PSF has assisted in rewriting policy within the school, taken part in the school review and development process and had input into the development of the five year school plan, discussed various ways we can encourage more parent involvement in the school, helped organise events such as Family Day, discussed fundraising ideas and develop education programs for parents with help of the Parent Assembly. This is an excellent way to be part of the school and work together with staff to create a great learning environment for your child.

*To find out more come along to a meeting.*

**First meeting is Tuesday 7 February at 7pm in the staffroom**

**WHAT ARE CLASS PARENT REPS?**

Each stage has at least one Parent Representative. This parent volunteers to support the class, teacher and parents in developing a positive working relationship. It is designed to help welcome parents into the class and school and develop friendships and a social network for families. Some of the ways in which Parent Reps assist teachers is to welcome and assist new families in to the class or to help farewell a student who is leaving. Parent Reps normally organise social gatherings for class parents and families like cake, coffee and play dates at the park, or nights out for the Mum’s or Dad’s, they may also organise a card or gift for a specific family event – new baby or passing of a family member.

**WHAT IS PARENT ASSEMBLY?**

Parent Assembly was set up by the Diocese of Lismore to give parents of all our schools a voice in the education of their children. It is an excellent way for parents and schools to work together to provide the best educational opportunities for all. Our school currently has three Parent Assembly Representatives, Sarah Moore, Karen Freebody and Deb Howe. These ladies are PSF members and attend meetings in Lismore once a term to feedback on how things are going at St Joseph’s, ways in which Parent Assembly may be able to support the school and ideas on how to involve families and parents in their child’s education.

Parent Assembly also has a Parent Library which is located in the teacher resource section of the school library. All parents are welcome to come and borrow items from here and can come and see Ms Ros Kingsford if they need assistance. This section contains books, DVD’s and other resources on a range of topics. Each year the Parent Assembly donate a considerable amount of new books to the section so please consider coming and using these great resources.

Parent Assembly also organises a range of events throughout the year to assist parents and families in educating themselves about relevant issues. Most schools
in the diocese have a variety of guest speakers and programs that run free of charge to the parents of all diocesan schools as well as an annual conference that includes four guest speakers usually experts in the field of children, family and parent education. Look out for posters around the school and in the newsletter for upcoming events.

Finally, the Parent Assembly also has a family faith gathering every year. It is a weekend away for families of children attending diocesan schools and is provided free of charge for families who wish to attend. It is a great opportunity for families to come together, meet new people and build on their faith.

WHAT ARE ENRICHMENT TUTORS?
We have several Enrichment Tutors in our school who assist a variety of students in the classroom setting. (In other schools they are called Teacher Aides.) Enrichment Tutors are vital members of our school community and work hard alongside the classroom teacher to bring out the best in all our students. Their knowledge and skills are invaluable and they provide a wealth of opportunities to the classrooms they work in.

WHAT IS BEST START?
Prior to Kindergarten students beginning formal school they all sit a Literacy & Numeracy Assessment with their teacher. They do this in one hour pre-booked timeslots. The results of this assessment give the school and their teacher an understanding of their starting point at school and how both the school and families and support them. The formal reporting of these results occurs during Term 1. (Week 5)

HOW DO THE STAGES WORK?
In Years 1-6 at our school the students are divided into Stages:
- Kinder is Early Stage 1,
- Years 1 & 2 are Stage 1,
- Years 3 & 4 are Stage 2 and
- Years 5 & 6 are Stage 3.
This continues in High school where the curriculum is studied in stages also.

The NSW Curriculum is actually planned out in stages with students given two years to cover the concepts. We place the students in stages for their learning. This year we are again working in more ‘open’ learning spaces where the students will spend time in open classrooms with all the teachers involved in their learning. This will ensure we can meet the needs of individual students at all ends of the learning spectrum as their needs become clear, e.g. Students are studying subtraction in stages also.

A traditional class means a teacher may be trying to teach a student working at:
- the level of Stage 1, for instance, the difference between 7 and 4 is 3.
- the level of Stage 2, e.g. 2,456 minus 1,385 OR the level of Stage 3, e.g. I have $40,000 to buy a new car. The basic model costs $36,118 and I have added tinted windows for $860, Bluetooth for $1,376. How much will I have left over?

To allow the learning to occur at all levels the teachers may decide to group like ability students for this task to ensure great learning occurs.

The Leader of Pedagogy ensures that the teachers are working in the best possible way to support your children. The whole Stage group of staff including Enrichment Tutors meets each week to plan for these experiences, change practice that may be impeding learning and to develop strategies. This is the Professional Learning Team (PLT).

WHAT IS LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OR LAP?
LAP was set up to allow students to engage in one-on-one time with an adult in the school setting. LAP was designed to support students who may need some extra support for a variety of reasons and would benefit from the positive and regular interaction with a caring volunteer. Students participating in LAP may be involved in a range of activities that relate to their interests and that of the volunteer. For some students it is an opportunity to have someone to talk to, for others it is having someone assist and support their learning one-on-one and for others it allows them to develop social confidence. Whatever the reason, if you would like to become a LAP tutor or you feel your child would benefit from this program please contact the school. This is co-ordinated by Mrs Lyn Rowling in 2017.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS UPSET WHEN I PICK THEM UP AFTER SCHOOL?
Try not to interrogate your child immediately. Have afternoon tea, do your normal after school activities and then after dinner sit down and talk through the situation or problem. As the Principal I receive many 3:35pm phone calls from worried parents. Often it turns out to be the child has had a few things go wrong during the day and they just need time to process this. Sometimes it is just a case of a tired student. But if it is a problem that the school needs to assist with a phone call or note or email next morning will get our help. Please do not go phoning other parents. This places them in a difficult situation and you may not have the whole story. If it is a school related problem please allow us to sort it for you.

LIBRARY
The library is run by Ms Ros Kingsford. Classes visit the library once a week as a group to borrow and return library books. Many students use the library at lunch times to read, play games and catch up with friends. It is important your child has a library bag as they will not be able to borrow without one. Make sure they are responsible for their library books and return them each week. Lost books will incur a book replacement fee.

The library also has a great parent library which you are welcome to use anytime.

RELEASE FROM FACE TO FACE
This is a requirement for all teachers. If they hold a fulltime workload they must be given at least 2 hours release per week. Staff holding positions of responsibility e.g. Leader of Catechesis are entitled to extra release. In 2017 we will again be releasing class teachers on a
fortnightly basis for a whole day. I will explain this by looking at Stage 2 as an example:

⇒ Stage 2 teachers Mrs Spash & Miss Fitness will be released in the even named weeks on Mondays (Weeks 4, 6, 8 & 10). During their release Mrs Moloney, Mr Slattery & Mrs Lidbetter will be responsible for their classes.

⇒ Kinder release will occur with S2 on Mondays in even weeks.

⇒ Stage 3 release occurs on Tuesdays in even weeks.

⇒ Stage 1 release occurs on Friday in even weeks.

Staff with Leadership responsibilities are given an extra allocation of release to complete these duties. The relevant teachers will explain this during our Parent Information meeting (see dates on front page—Coming Events).

During release students will have a Personal Development, PE & Health focus. The same format applies to all stages. Release is being covered by Mr Peter Slattery, Mrs Moloney & Mrs Lidbetter.

WHAT IS A LITURGY?
A liturgy is a religious service that is held in the church, the hall or the classroom. It is less formal than a Mass, will usually not include the priest and will not offer communion. The school has several big liturgies throughout the year including: Ash Wednesday, NAIDOC week (Aboriginal and Indigenous Australians) and Family Day. All classes will usually have a liturgy at some point throughout the year. Families are always welcome and encouraged to attend these events. Please remember if you are attending an event in the school sign in at the Front Office first.

WHAT IS MASS?
Mass is the formal religious service, usually held in the church. Sometimes Mass will be moved to the hall to accommodate for larger numbers. All children attend Mass both as a whole school and in class or stage groups. Mass is different to liturgy in that it is more structured, it is longer and communion is celebrated. Families are encouraged to come and join in the school and class Mass and there is usually a morning tea organised after class Masses.

The School and Parish also encourage and welcome families along to Mass every weekend. Saturday night Mass is at 6pm with a Youth Mass once a term and a Children’s Mass with dates to be advertised). Sunday Mass is at 8:30am with Children’s Liturgy during school terms. Please visit the parish website (alstonvillecatholicchurch.org.au) to view the seven minute video which explains what the children and leaders do at Children’s Liturgy. St Joseph’s is well known for its large numbers of altar servers which are made up from our students from years 4-6 and high school students. There is also a Sunday Mass at Wardell at 5:30pm (Daylight Saving Time) and 5:00pm (EST).

RICHMOND ZONE SWIMMING CARNIVAL
The Zone Swimming Carnival will be held Wednesday 15 February in Lismore. Notes are going home this week to the selected students.

PARENT INFORMATION MEETING
This year we will hold these meetings on Tuesday 14 February from 6pm. These will be held in the classrooms. These meetings are important. Important information is shared by the teachers, routines and events are explained and helpers for classrooms are sought during this meeting. Please make every effort to attend. Children are invited to attend and participate in the room with you. Children not required while parents are in another classroom can meet in the Library. They will be supervised here.

INTERVENTION
In simple terms a stage Professional Learning Team (PLT) identifies the area where they would like to make the most difference in students learning on a short term basis eg three weeks focus in Stage 2 on multiplication facts and processes. They get the intervention team to come in at that time to add even more staff to the learning focus. Members of the team may include our Leader of Pedagogy Mr Maslen, Mrs Rowling, Mrs Seymour, Miss Kingsford, Mrs Lidbetter, etc. This is timetabled at PLT meetings to ensure fairness and equity and is always designed to support our students. Breaking that down: The Stage Teachers identify the area of need, the team goes in on several mornings a fortnight. Conceivably a class ratio could be in a “normal” class – one staff member to about 26 students. In Stage 1 on a normal morning would be 2 teachers and an Enrichment Tutor with 50 students. At Intervention morning time this could become 6 staff with 50 students focused on one area of learning. Imagine the learning that can occur and support all our students…

The worth of this intervention working within our flexible learning spaces is gaining great results for all our students.

THE SCHOOL WEBPAGE/ SKOOLBAG & FACEBOOK
The school webpage can be found at http://www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au. Important information, notes, newsletters are all placed here. Download Skoolbag from the app or google play store to your phone. We place messages and alerts here for your convenience.

Search for and like the school Facebook page St Joseph’s Alstonville. We place photos and other relevant information here. Links to Skoolbag and Facebook can be found on our webpage.

STUDENTS’ PERSONAL DEVICES
Please ask your child, if they bring a phone or other device to school, to bring it to the office in the morning and collect at the end of day. No device is to be left in a school bag or on a student. These will be confiscated if found. School cannot accept any responsibility if these devices are broken or stolen.

SCHOOL FEES
You will notice a different format on your School Fees Statement. In previous years, the Parish Levy component was included in the Tuition Fees. Please read the note included with this Newsletter very carefully to understand the changes involved.

Therese Seymour
Welcome to everyone, especially the new families joining us in 2017. Although it has been holiday time, it is often a time when we are busy travelling, catching up with people, or just getting away. Many are still at work and juggling kids and care. Whichever way it goes, it is lovely to breathe that “the kids are back to school” sigh of relief. I hope you all have made the most of the first day back because there will be some tired children coming home today.

The New Year also heralds new beginnings and change. I am very excited and pleased to be entrusted with my role as our School Chaplain and well-being ‘person’. While I have been the chaplain as well as a teacher in previous years, this year my sole focus will be making sure our students well-being needs are being met, providing additional support for those needing it, social justice activities, Seasons for Growth, Junior Joeys, special lunchtime activities including BINGO as well as other responsibilities. I will be working in the room next door to the computer lab but mostly I will be moving around working with students.

For those who have yet to meet me I am now in my ninth year of being a parent at this school with my son, Tom, beginning Year Six this year. I have worked here as a teacher and Enrichment Tutor since 2010 and School Chaplain since 2015.

You will find me at school on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays…… please don’t hesitate to ask a question. I will be in the undercover area on duty in the mornings during Term One.

Lyn