Can you believe we have been back at school for four weeks already? It seems like yesterday that I met my class for the first time. We have had a great start to this term. We have a fabulous group of 6s and 7s. The students are really bonding as a group and finding their place within the class. They are also settling into the routine of school and also the expectations of an upper primary class.

What’s been happening in the classroom?

Maths
I am really impressed with the positive attitude that the students have been displaying towards their mathematics. There were a number of students who lacked confidence in their abilities at the start of the year. As a class we have been following our “mathematics guidelines”, which has given the students choices as to how they tackle a problem, however insists that they need to seek to understand all they do whether they work individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Each lesson we have been focusing on the attitude of persistence. The students have realised just how much they can achieve (and enjoy themselves) if they ask questions and persist in every task, no matter how hard it gets.

Unit of Inquiry
The students have been spending the past couple of weeks grappling with the idea of national identity. They have analysed various Australian songs, completed reading comprehensions, have watched a documentary of the construction of the Sydney Harbor Bridge and have been investigating poetry. This week the students have been introduced to their summative assessments. There will be two parts to this task.

1. They will be asked to compose a ballad poem on an aspect of Australia – either addressing its history, culture or people.

2. The students will prepare for and complete a debate, arguing controversial Australian topics (eg, the current National Anthem should be changed to “We Are Australian” – which is extremely relevant, and is being questioned at the moment).

Christian Studies
We have begun our Christian Studies unit for the term. Our central idea is: Christians pray, worship and celebrate the sacraments

Last week, the students started thinking about worship and what it means. They completed an activity where they had to sketch their understanding of worship using words, colours, pictures and symbols. We have been further exploring this during our devotions and our lessons. The students have also been creating their own PowerPoint to accompany their chosen worship song.

Other information

Uniform
Generally the students have been wearing the correct school uniforms throughout this term. Just a reminder that students wearing incorrect uniform should be accompanied with a diary note explaining this.

Lawn Bowls
On Tuesday the 8th February the Year 6s participated in their first Lawn Bowls session. It was an exciting first session and a great opportunity for them to work with Mr Boesch’s Year 6s. They represented St Michael’s not only with their amazing skills, but with their manners as well.

On Tuesday the 15th February all the Year 7s went to their first Lawn Bowls session for the year with Mr McNicol. The Year 7s loved spending the afternoon with the other class. I heard that they also represented St Michael’s well with their skills and attitude, which is great to see.

Both the Year 6s and 7s have completed their final training session. Throughout this week, the Lawn Bowls Squad will be selected and the team will practise over the next three Tuesdays in preparation for the Allick Collins Cup which will be held on Tuesday 29th March.

Year 6/7 News
Week 5 Friday 4th March 2011
Year 7 NAPLAN Testing:
NAPLAN testing will be held early in term 2. Your child will be asked to complete some activities for homework during the coming weeks to become familiar with the kinds of questions they may be asked as well as becoming familiar with the format of the testing. As a class we go through the work and discuss any burning questions and revisit taught Language Conventions. These tasks will handed out each Friday and will be due the following Friday.

I will be handing these activities out to the Year 6 students to complete as well, as it will give them the opportunity to revise taught skills and also prepare them for their testing next year.

Other Items in Brief...

Thank you to Peta Byrne and Anne Slade who have volunteered to be our Class Contacts for 2011. I want to thank them for organising such a great coffee morning on Thursday (wk3). It was great to be able to meet as a group over a cup of coffee. They have also been so helpful already, offering their assistance in many Year 7 centred events. I really appreciate the extra mile they are going to ensure that all of our class members have a positive year.

Canberra Trip
I have had a couple of people ask me about the Canberra Trip this year. We will be traveling to Canberra in the first week of term four (Tuesday 18th October – Friday 21st October) and this will be the Year 6 & 7 camp for the year. It is truly a fantastic trip, and one which the students will remember in the years to come.

Information about this trip will come later on this year.

Year 7 Information:

Year 7 Graduation Photos
It seems crazy to be thinking about Year 7 graduation already, however this time creeps up so quickly. We would really appreciate it if you could bring in photos to help us to begin preparing various presentations for your child’s graduation. It would be extremely helpful if you could bring your photos in before the end of term 1, as we need to scan them onto our computers so we can use them to create a special presentation. We understand that these photos are special, so we will return them ASAP.

The photos that the students are required to supply are:

★ 1 baby photograph
★ 1 toddler photograph
★ 1 first day of school
★ whole class photos at St Michael’s (R-Yr 6)
★ any past photographs either of school life or friend life (i.e. camps, excursions, special events, sport, sleepovers, birthdays etc)

Remember to keep those cameras on you throughout the year as there will be many special events that we would like to have included in the presentations that we create for your child’s graduation.