

**Welcome to Year 6!**  
**St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School, 2017**

Phone: 9174 7000 Email: [batchelor.elise@cathednet.wa.edu.au](mailto:batchelor.elise@cathednet.wa.edu.au) School website: [www.stcecilia.wa.edu.au](http://www.stcecilia.wa.edu.au)

**YEAR 6**

**2017**

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### Introductions...

Welcome to 2017 and the adventures of Year 6. This is a year of several rites of passage for our students and I am privileged to be journeying with them in this pivotal year.

My name is Ms Elise Batchelor. Most students know me as "Ms B" and I happily go by this moniker with parents too. I have been teaching since 1996 and have qualifications both as a secondary English and Literature teacher as well as a primary school teacher. Furthermore, I have lectured in education at Curtin University and in TAFE with the Teacher Assistant course. In a nutshell, I love teaching and am drawn to all year levels for an overarching array of professional reasons.

#### TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My philosophy of teaching centres around the relationships I build with my students and, where possible, their families. In coming to understand the motives for student behaviours and the ways in which individual young people think and enjoy learning, I find I can better address the learning goals of students and enhance their skills.

Perhaps as much as this, my focus in skill building is to encourage all students to TRY. The benchmark of your child's success will be their willingness to give everything their best shot – not to be perfect – but to believe they CAN do things. The reality is, as we move through the middle primary years, trying for many young people can and will mean HARD WORK. But reward often does come with effort and I aim to appreciate and recognise this effort all the way.

### Year 6 specialist teachers

Mrs Lee – Sport and Health  
Mrs Claire Wellbeloved (Mrs Wellbe) – Science and Technology  
Mrs Mandy Sheen – Library  
Mrs Jankovic – student support in Years 4-6.  
Mr Hayward - Religion

I will be teaching all subjects outside of these, including, Art, Dance and Music, History and Geography (HASS).

### Administration

#### School Times

School begins at 8:25am. The classroom doors will be open to students from 8:15am to allow the children time to organise themselves for the day. Please do not allow your child enter the classroom if a teacher is not present, for safety/legal reasons.

Should you arrive at school early, children are instructed to leave their bags on the hooks provided and wait until 8:15 in the undercover area. NOTE: No supervision is provided at the school before 8:00am.

Recess: 10:20am – 10:40am

Lunch (eating): 12:20pm – 12:40pm

Lunch (play): 12:40pm – 12:55pm

The school day ends at 2:35pm when the children will be dismissed from the classroom.

All parents and guests entering the school between the hours of 8:45am and 2:15pm are required to report to the front office to receive a visitor's badge.

Punctuality is important to ensure that your child has the best start to their school day. If for any reason you are running late to school, you as the parent are asked to accompany your child to the office and fill out the required late book and your child can bring a red 'late' card from the office to the class teacher.

Should you need to collect your child from school before the end of the school day, you need to collect a green 'early departure' card from the front office.

### Important weekdays for Year 6

Library – Thursday. Students must bring a library bag.

Students need to remember to bring their library bag and previous week's library book.

Sport – Tuesday. Students are to wear sports uniform.

Test day – Friday. Each week we will have Maths and Spelling tests on a Thursday. These are quick tasks which include spelling and basic number facts.

Homework – Is completed weekly and due FRIDAY.

Homework for the following week will then be put onto the Year 6 page of the school website. We mark homework each Friday and encourage all students to submit it weekly. There are encouragements on offer in class and the small amount of homework we do allows you to participate actively in your child's learning.

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Spelling is an important practice task each week and I am currently devising six spelling groups for weekly spelling. Research indicates that students who fare best as they move through school with their written work and significantly correlates with students who develop a solid phonemic awareness in the early primary years. It's not a given, but it is seen now to be a highly relevant and vital skill. And still, it's all about trying 😊.

**READING – gives us the keys to the kingdom!**

**"If you want to make your child intelligent, give them a Book. If you want to make them more intelligent, give them more Books".**

Author Jackie French.

The most powerful thing you can do for your child is to encourage them to read. This may be with daily school Lexile books, magazines, their own books at home, reading aloud TO them, giving them fun reading challenges at the shops or when out driving, or on the computer.

Reading crosses almost all areas of life. Much of what we do in maths becomes possible when we can read. This goes for reading a science experiment, learning about history, using the internet, reading public signs, reading birthday cards. The more your child practises reading, the stronger chance they have of improving across ALL subjects at school and in communicating their ideas in life.

Furthermore, learning to read gives children access to stories. And stories tell us about other people's lives, journeys and experiences. They teach us empathy, they teach us wisdom, courage, how to strive, how to be a good friend, how to be a better friend. And they can bring joy.

This year I will be encouraging your child all the way with believing in themselves as a reader and working hard, if it takes that, to improve their skills, at whatever level of reader or ability they sit.

**Every day: READ. READ. READ!**

### Absences

Any absence from school is to be followed up with a written (or emailed) note of explanation.

Absence notes must please include the following:

- Student name
- Year level
- Date of absence
- Parent signature

Phoning the office on the day is appreciated, but this still needs to be followed up in written form.

If the school has not received a message either by phone or email then an SMS will be sent to the mother's mobile phone notifying you of your child's absence.

### Uniform

All students at St Cecilia's are required to wear the correct uniform with pride at all times. Particularly as Year 6 students, your child is seen as a leader in the school and should be encouraged to lead by example. All items need to be clearly labelled with your child's name. Children are required to wear their hats outside and sunscreen is provided in the classroom for application throughout the day.



A note explaining any deviation from the school uniform is required and relieves your child from any undue pressure. Any child who attends school with the incorrect uniform will be issued with a red uniform slip that needs to be signed by the parent and returned to school the next day. This includes inappropriate jewellery, socks, hair, temporary tattoos and nail polish.

### Games, toys, precious items

We ask that your child does not bring toys, games, iPods or any precious items to school.

### Allergies

St Cecilia's is an egg and nut aware school. What this means is simply being mindful when packing lunch boxes.

Should your child have any form of allergy or medical condition we ask that you inform the school so that we may be best prepared for any situation.

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### Birthdays

Birthdays are recognised in class and at Thursday morning assemblies. We kindly request that you do not send any cakes, lolly bags or treats to school to celebrate your child's birthday.

If your child is having a party and inviting the whole class, please let me know and I can give you a class list of first names. However, as the children are now increasingly aware of social ties, it would be great if any invitations for smaller numbers of your child's buddies are handed out after school so as not to cause (potential) social friction at school.

### Assemblies and Masses

This year we have re-introduced the Monday morning assembly in the undercover area. At this assembly we say our school prayer and sing the National Anthem during flag raising. This assembly is also an opportunity to educate the students about our school values and how we can express them. We also highlight ways to live our motto, "Faith Family Friendship" at school and at home.

Assembly is also held on Thursday morning at 8:30am in the school hall or undercover area. At this assembly class items are performed, birthday certificates are handed out and merit certificates are presented. I will endeavor to inform you via email the day before if your child is receiving a certificate; however, as this is a surprise for the students it's great if it can stay that way before the presentation.

Please see the term planner for the dates and times of all school masses. All parents are welcome to attend the Thursday morning assembly and any school Mass.

Year 6 students are buddies with Pre Primary and assist these little folk in getting to the church and entering their pews. Upper students tend to love this bonding experience and we do other activities together over the school year.

### Parent interviews

Parent interviews are scheduled towards the end of this term. An interview notice will be sent home for you to select preferred times closer to the day.



### Semester Reports

Semester progress reports are sent out at the end of Term Two and Term Four. We use the national curriculum and required curriculum assessment levels to report on our students. *The old A-E levels are not used any more.* Assessment is now like a competency based system, where, if your child is achieving at the required satisfactory standard for their year level, they will receive a 'C'. It does not mean a C as in 60%, but a C as in 'Working at a standard year 2 level'. On some occasions, students working well above this may receive a B, with a very small minority receiving an A. Students who are not yet working at a year level standard will receive a 'D'.

### Communication

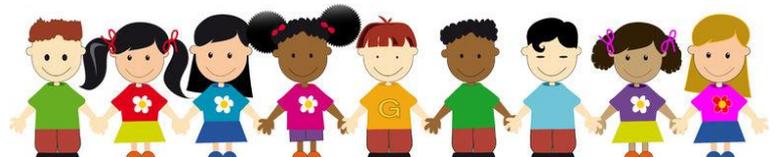
Please refer to the school website for regular updates. Select 'my classes' and then 'year 2'. All notes sent home as well as homework will be posted on this website.

Before school is a busy time and not conducive to having private conversations. For this reason I prefer to have an open door and to be able to chat to everyone in the classroom.

After school most days I am available to meet with parents and you are welcome to do this by making an appointment. Contact me via the school phone number: 9174 7000 or see me after school. I will also be setting up a class email database (with BCC list) to share whole class updates occasionally:

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If you have a quick message for me that doesn't require a meeting, you can email me here.



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### Restorative Practice

St Cecilia's has adopted a 'Restorative Practice' approach to behaviour management. This approach promotes the development of trust relationships between individuals. I use a '1 2 3' behaviour system in class, acting much like green, orange and red traffic lights. Students who reach a three may be asked to complete work in a 'buddy' class next door or have time out.



### Happy hair

Head lice is often a concern in school communities. Should a note be sent home informing that head lice have been found, please check your child's head and follow up with the appropriate treatment. Simple daily combing through of wet hair with the cheapest hair conditioner and a strong, metal nit comb can help break the six day nit (lice larva) cycle.

## Life in Year 6 means...

### Camp

Years 5 and 6 students will travel to Broome Camp School for week 2 of Term 2. This is a special week for students to get to know each other as senior members of the school community. It is also a time of bravery, with most students not having been away from home for this length of time. As such, it is one of those rites of passage which is important to teach them that they can do this for five days, with the support of teachers, in an independent environment away from mum, dad and normal carers. Nerves are normal, excitement is normal, parents' nerves are normal too! But letting them go is just as important for you as it will be for your child hopping on the bus. We will have a meeting in the next few weeks to outline the week with parents and carers in preparation for this term 2 experience.

### Leadership Duties

Students have the opportunity to perform a variety of weekly leadership duties around the school. This includes looking after the sports shed, the library and other tasks. In addition, school leaders, Faction Captains and Community Leaders are soon to be chosen. This will follow our Year 6 Leadership Day on Friday of week 3, where Mr Allen, Mrs Sheen and the parish priest will join forces to provide the Year 6 students a range of interesting and challenging leadership and collaboration activities in order to identify possible leaders of the school.

All Year 6 students can complete an application for the leadership positions on offer. This is not at all compulsory, but if they choose to do this, it is due at the start of week 4 to Mrs Sheen.

Leaders of the school will be announced shortly after this application is submitted.

### Pondering the 'OFF' switch

**DITCH THE BEDROOM TV!**

Studies have shown that when we watch television, we do not improve our intelligence much at all, especially if we are passively watching.

I would like to throw in the challenge to parents and carers that, *if you have a television in your child's room:*

- Remove the television from the room
- Sell it
- Use the money to go shopping with your child and buy them a bunch of books they'd enjoy, OR join a new sporting team.

Imagine a television or games console in a bedroom as another hurdle your child has to clamber over and pass to get to their learning potential or success. Research has also revealed that children with such devices in their rooms often perform more poorly on Maths and English tests.

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### DEVICES off

iPads, iPods, iPod touches, iPhones, tablets, xBoxes, Playstations ... etc.

As a class we will soon be having a chat about a little 'contract' they are encouraged to participate in. It will involve some careful thinking by them and by parents, to decide whether it's something achievable. This contract will be about choosing to abstain from using such devices as listed above on weekdays.

Rather, getting out and playing increases neural pathways in the brain; listening to music does the same; reading does it brilliantly, helping out with a daily chore or too is awesome, and then there's the little bit of homework.

Many of our children do have these devices now and use them daily. As a parent of primary aged children myself, I know all too well how I've tried to convince myself that the portable baby sitter is teaching them something. However, by and large, it's been random games, games, games, or tv shows, movies, Youtube and more games. Addiction IS EASY. Minecraft can be really clever and helpful, but how much is too much? Could time be better spent at least some of the time? Educational apps can be excellent, but how often are these in voluntary use?

Have a little look at the wisdom of children's educator, Maggie Dent, too. She's rather brilliant on all of this.

<http://www.maggiedent.com/common-concerns>

I'll be offering the children the chance to chat to you and choose one of three levels of contract:

Devices off for games: weekdays

Devices off for games: weekdays, with ½ hour limit each weekend day.

Devices off for games: all term

It won't be compulsory at all, but something to consider. I've seen its benefits with other children and am amazed at the amount of creative, imaginative and physical play which it can inspire.

While creative play, reading, music, sport and family participation help build those brain connections, guess how much brain connection passive game playing on devices adds?

I'm looking forward to the year ahead and am here should you wish to say hi or catch up!

# M B

