Dear Parents,

Welcome to Year 4!

We are looking forward to working with you and your children in 2014. At any stage throughout the year, if you have a concern, question, or just want to catch-up, please make a time to meet with us so that we can work together. If your concern is urgent please ring the school office. If you wish to be contacted by email please clearly PRINT your email address on the list provided. You can also contact us through the school email or directly at mjordan@parra.catholic.edu.au or dkemp@parra.catholic.edu.au

The school website is an excellent source of information and many notes and items of news are regularly posted there. The website contains the Parent Handbook which outlines a range of school policies including those relating to student behaviour and expectations. You can subscribe to the online newsletter from the website. The address is http://www.stmarysrydalmere.catholic.edu.au/

Another excellent form of communication is the Skoolbag app that can be downloaded free onto your Smartphone. This enables you to access the school website and to receive important messages immediately.

**ATTENDANCE**

To maximise your child's learning it is important that your child arrives at school before the first bell to join in school prayer. The official school starting time is 8:50am and the dismissal time is 3:10pm.

Whenever your child is late to school or needs to leave early, an appropriate form from the office needs to be completed. This is a legal requirement and is in the best interests of the safety of all students. If you child is absent from school please send a note, email or Skoolbag notification explaining whether they are sick or absent for family reasons. It is a legal requirement that we receive this within 7 days of the absence.

During school hours parent access to the school is via the main gate. Please sign in at the front office when you arrive and leave the school.

**AFTERNOON DISMISSEL**

All students are dismissed from the Marist Site at the end of the day. It is important for your child's safety that you follow our dismissal procedures.
**Curriculum Overview 2015**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religious Education is an important aspect of education at St. Mary's. Throughout the year the students will participate in a variety of liturgies, Masses and celebrations of Saints. Our Religion units have been developed using the Sharing our Story framework adopted by the Parramatta Diocese. As part of our Religion program students participate in Christian meditation each week. The aim of Christian meditation is to give the students the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the Gospels, to take time to listen to God and develop their own personal spirituality.

We invite parents to be involved in liturgy with us whenever possible. As part of our school community we participate in prayer each morning as a school. It is important that students join in and demonstrate reverence and respect and we encourage parents to do the same. To encourage parents to join in morning prayer we are including a copy of the school prayer which we said at the beginning of this meeting.

**Term 1**
- Talking and Listening to God
- An Invitation to Believe
- Easter Triduum Passover: Exodus

**Term 2**
- Easter Season: New Life
- Eucharist: Structure of the Mass
- The Bible: A Special Book

**Term 3**
- Reconciliation: God's Forgiveness and Healing
- Mission: Serving others with Jesus

In Term 3, all Year 4 students take part in the Religious Literacy Assessment.

**ENGLISH**

This year we will continue to work with the new English Syllabus that is aligned with the National English Curriculum. Students will study a range of authors and engage in activities using a wider variety of reading strategies and materials. These will include multi media, traditional stories, novels, poems, plays, rules and laws, propaganda, advertising and other areas where literacy skills are used.

The three broad headings for writing are Imaginative, Persuasive and Informative texts and each term students will cover examples of these text types either in English or another curriculum area.

We will continue to develop the students’ knowledge and skills of the writing process, which will involve teaching:

- Grammar/sentence structure
- Spelling rules
- Handwriting

Your children will again be encouraged to participate in the Premier’s Reading Challenge and borrow books from their local library as well as using our school and class library.

Students will be given a range of experiences where they can further develop their talking and listening skills.
**MATHEMATICS**
This year we will be implementing the new Mathematics Syllabus that is aligned to the Australian Mathematics Curriculum. At St Mary's we participate in the Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) initiative. All students were tested using the MAI (Mathematical Assessment Interview) in Week 3 and information from these assessments is used to plan Maths programs. Students will participate in learning experiences across all mathematical strands.

**INQUIRY - HSIE/SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**
This year we will be implementing the new Science Syllabus that is aligned to the Australian Science Curriculum. The following topics will be investigated this year during our Inquiry Based Learning (IBL) time:

- **Term 1**  Science - Packaging it Better
- **Term 2**  HSIE - British Colonisation
- **Term 3**  Science - What Class Are You In? (Classification)
- **Term 4**  HSIE - Who Will Buy?

**PD/H/PE**
Children will participate in sport each Friday with Miss Boulos. They will need to wear sports uniform on **Tuesday** and **Friday** this Term. In preparation for the Cross Country, part of our sport lessons will involve a fitness component to build stamina.

The Peer Support program will be a focus in Term 3. Our school continues to reinforce the skills and practices highlighted in our Anti-bullying Program. Through classroom lessons and whole school initiatives we continue to work as a school community on this topic. Year 4 children will commence the Rock and Water program next term. This program teaches the children to communicate more effectively when dealing with different kinds of conflict.

Students will engage in lessons relating to asthma awareness and protective behaviour skills and strategies. The school swimming program will occur in Term 4.

**CREATIVE ARTS**
Students will be involved in weekly lessons in art with their class teacher, Music with Mrs Dennis and Drama with Mrs Kirkness.

**HOMEWORK**
Please refer to the letter sent to all parents last week regarding homework.
**ALLERGY AWARE SCHOOL**
As per the note sent home, St. Mary's is an allergy aware school. Please remember peanut butter and Nutella are not suitable choices. For further information regarding allergies and food choices for your children, please refer to the communication sent home with your child earlier this Term. There is a firm 'no sharing' policy with food at this school. We also have a 'no birthday cake/lolly bag' policy.

The school rule “NO HAT, NO PLAY” always applies to all outdoor activities at school. Please ensure your child has their hat with their name clearly marked with them every day. All items of clothing need to have your child's name marked for ease of identification.

**PARENT HELPERS**
Parent helpers are always welcome. Parents assisting in class are legally required to complete the Child Protection Module. This is a simple procedure that you are able to complete online via our school website [www.stmarysrydalmere.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stmarysrydalmere.catholic.edu.au)

All parent volunteers are now also required to complete a simple Work Health Safety induction. This only needs to be done once. The paper work is available at the back of the classroom or from the school office.

If there is anything that you would like to further discuss or are concerned with, please contact us and we will happily organize a mutually convenient time.

**POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND ANTI-BULLYING**
Student safety is a priority at St Mary's and students are encouraged to identify bullying behaviour in themselves and others. If you feel that your child is being bullied you should contact us as soon as possible. Often bullying incidents are dealt with immediately at school. A note came home with the newsletter this week, please complete and return to the office if you wish to be advised of all incidents in which your child might be involved. The school believes in the rewarding of positive behaviour with CARE cards and awards.

**TECHNOLOGY**
Technology is used as learning a tool in our classroom. We have a Smartboard, digital movie cameras, computers, iPods and iPads for the students to use in each grade. All efforts are made to ensure the safety of your children when using the Internet and students have a procedure to follow if they encounter any inappropriate sites or things that make them feel uncomfortable. It is very important that similar measures are in place at home. Students with their parents are asked to sign a contract for use of technology, which outlines their rights and responsibilities and the consequences of misuse.

**CRUNCH’N’SIP**
St Mary's is a Crunch’N'Sip school. This means that we break for five minutes at around 10:00am so that students can eat a piece of fruit or vegetable and have a drink of water. We have found that this break reenergizes them for the rest of the morning session. Please ensure that your child brings a small piece of fruit or vegetable each day.

*Mrs Maree Jordan & Mrs Susan Dixon - 4J & Mrs Deborah Kemp & Mrs Susan Dixon 4K*
St. Mary’s School Prayer

Mary Mother of us all
Be with us today just as you stood by Jesus.

Grant your blessing upon those
who need your love and guidance.

May we serve God as you did
through your actions and prayer,

And may we show care and respect
to those whom we meet on this day.

May your Son Jesus be at the centre of all we do,
As we strive to grow in wisdom and love.

Through your faith,
may you help us listen to and trust in God,

And may our St Mary’s community
keep your name holy in all we say and do.

Amen
Year 4 Class Rules

Safety
Walk quietly from place to place.
Pay attention and follow instructions carefully.
Make safe choices.

Learning
Always do your best.
Don’t disturb other people when they are working.
Listen carefully to the teachers and others.
Wait your turn and don’t interrupt others.

Respect
Treat others the way you want to be treated.
Follow Captain CARE.
Respect our class property.