Issue 79 – 7 February 2014

Dear Parents and Guardians

Welcome to the first issue of Braemar-in-Brief for 2014. For those who are new to our College community, Braemar-in-Brief is a fortnightly electronic publication which provides information about College events, celebrates student achievement and provides staffing and other updates.

You will already have noticed that in addition to this publication, the College communicates with parents via email and SMS. Please notify the College Registrar of any changes to email addresses or mobile phone numbers: registrar@braemar.vic.edu.au

The Braemar Blog provides a wealth of information about College life. I encourage all families to subscribe to the blog. Please click here to do so: http://braemarcollege.wordpress.com/author/braemarcollege/

Feedback has shown that parents place significant importance on timely, accurate communications and I hope you find that the College meets these expectations through this multi-pronged approach to keeping you informed

Staffing

At the commencement of this year, we welcomed five new members of staff:

- Mr Adam Clissold joined us from an International School in Bali, as Head of Information & Learning Technology;
- Ms Chloe Edwards (Old Collegian 2008) has joined our Health & Physical Education learning area;
- Ms Ann McLarty has commenced in the role of Director of Learning Enhancement;
- Mr David Rogers has joined our Humanities team;
- Mrs Paula Speed joined us in the role of Hospitality Assistant.

Sadly, we also bade farewell to two members of staff last month. Mr Andrew Grindlay, Manager Property & Compliance, has accepted a role with the Mt Alexander Shire Council. Mr Grindlay joined the staff in 2010 as a member of the Leadership Team. He has been an exceptional member of the team and I wish him every success in his new role.

The highly energetic, ever enthusiastic Mr Daniel Garcia has left the College, having accepted a position of leadership in a Catholic primary school. His superb technical skills and the creative way in which he embedded technology into the learning and teaching process, was inspirational.
Welcome BBQ

On Friday 31 January the College, in conjunction with the Parents & Friends’ Association (P&F), held a welcome barbecue for our Year 5 and Year 7 students and their families. We were delighted with the level of attendance and hope it provided an opportunity to meet other parents/students in an informal atmosphere. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the P&F and thank them for their support of our College and parent community.

One small glitch marred an otherwise enjoyable evening; we ran out of sausages! Please accept my apologies if you were one of the families who arrived later in the evening and may have missed out on dinner.

Attendance at College Functions

With student enrolments in excess of 750 and a very busy College calendar, we frequently use an online booking system called “Trybooking” to gather attendance data. “Trybooking” helps us plan for the provision of adequate seating and catering at College events. Parents will usually be provided with an electronic link to our booking system to facilitate the process.

Depending on the nature of the event, parents may instead be asked to RSVP to a particular member of staff via email. I’m sure you will appreciate that whilst we do not want to overly complicate matters, we are mindful of our fiscal responsibility and would prefer to avoid over-catering because of the waste this entails. We would very much appreciate your assistance by providing timely indications of your attendance at College functions, as per invitation guidelines. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Our annual Commencement Service was held this morning, and incorporated the induction of new members of staff and the College Student Leaders for 2014. This event always has a wonderful sense of occasion and today was no exception. I was delighted to receive feedback from one of our parents, describing our students’ behaviour as exemplary. They were a credit to themselves and their teachers.

Commencement Service

Today’s Commencement Service was conducted by the Reverend Ian Howarth. Rev Howarth and his family are new to area, having relocated from Newcastle to Kyneton, where the Reverend has been appointed Rector of St Paul’s Anglican Church. I was delighted he was able to participate in this important College event.

This evening, our senior student leaders will have an opportunity to celebrate their induction at a family barbecue, which will be held at the College.

Total Fire Ban Days

In view of the warm weather we have been experiencing lately, we were relieved only one Total Fire Ban (TFB) was declared during the school week. Whilst the College will always endeavour to provide a confirmation to parents via email and/or SMS, you can also ring the College Weather /Emergency Information Line on 0418 570 095 for an update. Under our current Emergency Management policy, students do not attend the College on days of Total Fire Ban. Learning and teaching takes place remotely, with teachers accessible to students online.

College events that are due to be held at Braemar College will automatically be cancelled and where possible, rescheduled to a later date. If the planned event is off-site, each program or event will be considered on its merits, with the welfare of students and staff uppermost. In each case, the College information line will be updated and an email or SMS sent to parents/guardians.

I appreciate that the closure of the College on TFB days presents some logistical challenges for families; however, we believe that this is in the best interests of our College community.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries about our Emergency Management policy.
Bus Arrangements

Please note that Braemar students can only be allocated one seat on an Organs bus. If your son/daughter needs to travel on another bus for any reason, it is essential that you contact Organs Coaches directly on 5422 1788 to discuss variations. Some of the buses are filled to capacity and regular travellers take priority. Organs will endeavour to assist where possible, but cannot guarantee a place for your child on another bus. If an agreement has been reached, your child should present a note for the bus driver, explaining the arrangement. Please keep the College informed of any changes to bus travel by contacting Mrs Vivienne James on 5427 9136 or via email: v.james@braemar.vic.edu.au

College Picnic on 21 February – Save the Date!

The 2014 College Picnic is scheduled to take place on Friday 21 February, from 6:00pm to 8:30pm.

Once again, this year’s family picnic will be held at the second campus site, 241 Romsey Road, Woodend. Our aim is to provide an opportunity to engage the whole College community in forging a link with our second campus. Attendance is not compulsory, but strongly encouraged. Further details regarding location, traffic management and parking arrangements will follow, but parents are asked to note the date.

Classes and buses will operate as normal on Friday 21 February, with lessons finishing at 3:30pm.

Students will need to wear House T-shirts and we encourage parents and other family members to dress in House colours too. Runners or comfortable outdoor shoes should be worn as the picnic ground is uneven.

No catering options will be provided at the picnic. Instead, families are expected to provide their own food, drinks, drinking water, picnic rugs, chairs, etc.

Please note that if a TFB is declared on this date, the picnic will be postponed to later in the year.

RSVP’s for the picnic are not required.

Immunisations

Immunisation forms have been provided to all students in Years 7 and 10, and to boys in Year 9. Please return completed forms to the College as soon as possible. They can be given to your son/daughter’s Year Level Leader, Learning Community Leader, or directly to the College Nurse. Immunisations of Year 7, Year 9 (boys only) and Year 10 students will be given on 13 March 2014. Additional immunisation dates for students in Year 7 and Year 9 (boys only) are 27 May and 14 October.

More information about the immunisation program will be emailed to parents of students in these year levels.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

An email about the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) was sent to parents/guardians on 5 February, along with an application form. If you are eligible for the EMA, please note that applications must be submitted by 28 February 2014. Queries regarding the EMA should be forwarded to the College Registrar, Mrs Trudy Shepherd: registrar@braemar.vic.edu.au

2014 Youth Mental Health First Aid courses

Information about the 2014 Youth Mental Health First Aid courses will be emailed to parents next week. This program links with the Live for Life initiative. Braemar College has a large number of staff and parents who have undertaken the training. The course is excellent and I would recommend this to all parents. Run by the Macedon Ranges Shire Council’s Youth Development Officers, the course teaches adults how to assist adolescents who are developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. Participants will learn:

- about adolescent development;
- the signs and symptoms of the common and disabling mental health problems in young people;
- where and how to get help when a young person is developing a mental illness;
- what sort of help has been shown by research to be effective;
- how to provide first aid in a crisis situation.
The course is free to parents with a young person at school in the Macedon Ranges. More information will be provided shortly.

**Upcoming Events**

The College calendar is accessible via the website: [www.braemar.vic.edu.au](http://www.braemar.vic.edu.au)

I encourage you to monitor this on a regular basis. Please note the following events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, time and venue</th>
<th>Event name</th>
<th>Overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 10 Feb</td>
<td>Senior School (Years 9 – 12) Parent Information Evening</td>
<td>Information provided via email on 6/02; RSVP not required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heyward Hall, 7:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 11 Feb</td>
<td>Middle School (Years 5 – 8) Parent Information Evening</td>
<td>Information provided via email on 6/02; RSVP not required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heyward Hall, 7:00pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 12 Feb</td>
<td>House Swimming Carnival (Years 5 – 12)</td>
<td>Note changes to bus times. Information provided via email on 6/02. Attendance compulsory for all students; parents welcome. RSVP not required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunbury Aquatic Centre All day</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 17 Feb</td>
<td>P&amp;F Meeting</td>
<td>RSVP not required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Room, Braemar House, 7:30pm</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 19 Feb</td>
<td>Scholarship testing applications close 4pm (Years 7 &amp; 10, 2015)</td>
<td>Information provided via email on 5/02.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online, 4:00pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 21 Feb</td>
<td>College photos</td>
<td>Full school uniform essential.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 21 Feb</td>
<td>College Picnic</td>
<td>Information to follow. RSVPs not essential.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Campus site – Romsey Road, Woodend. 6:00pm – 8:30pm</td>
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**In closing**

I look forward to working closely with all members of the Braemar College community in 2014 as we aim to realise our Vision:

*The vision of Braemar College is to become a leading Preparatory to Year 12 co-educational ecumenical school with a reputation for providing an exciting curriculum that stimulates and engages students and enables them to achieve high quality learning outcomes underpinned by sustainable practices, a global outlook and Christian principles.*

I encourage parent feedback so that we can celebrate what we do well, and strive to improve where the opportunity to do so exists. Please feel free to contact me via my assistant Mrs Donna Hobbs, or email me at: principal@braemar.vic.edu.au

**Regards**

Russell Deer  
Principal  
Braemar College