Welcome to our October Newsletter

If I am not thinking about specific processes at Brigidine that are working or not working, I am thinking about how to respond to the enormous challenge posed to our school by the lawlessness of the virtual world. Some argue that the virtual world is free of values; a free space for self expression where we can all be our own publishers. I would argue that there are values in the online world and some strong ones are to do with creating outrage; angry voices abusing without restraint, ideas and images that outrage because they are deliberately and unashamedly destructive, words and pictures that subvert well tried wisdom and a riotous celebration of excessive alcohol and drug use. This is a world where saying whatever you like without recompense is considered normal.

I take enormous hope from the goodness of the girls. Despite being exposed to so many unhealthy ideas and images, the great majority of girls continue to be reasonable, cooperative and have a strong understanding of the behaviour and attitudes they need to build a happy meaningful life. We don’t want any of the girls believing that somehow they are not normal because they have decided, and their parents have taught them, to live with well defined restraints.

This experience of having two worlds to live in must be confusing for our girls especially those in the junior secondary years. These girls are engaged in the unique journey of working out their identity and testing people and relationships to find out what they can rely on as being real and trustworthy in living a life. At Brigidine we have administered the policy of the Federal Government and Sydney CEO and the girls have their own computer. The girls are told that the skills of online communication are vital for living and learning in modern times. These skills open for the girls a space where their growing sense of self is very vulnerable.

Here at Brigidine, there is always a situation to manage where girls have been hurt by something written about them or an image has been passed on or we are trying to help girls realize that these activities are very hurtful to themselves and others. Human beings using words and images to hurt is not new, but what it now is the speed with which “bad news” spreads through the virtual world. Cyberbullying is very upsetting for the girl and her family and very time consuming for us. We need to try a number of things to get the girls to realize that in fact they can’t just say and do anything they like in the real and virtual worlds, even though they have appalling examples of older people who are doing so.

COMING EVENTS

Monday 22 October 2012
HSC Continues

Monday 29 October 2012
Year 10 Assessment Week

Monday 5 November 2012
Years 7, 8 and 9 Assessment Week

Thursday 1 November 2012
All Saints Day

BRIGIDINE BASICS
- The hem of a student’s uniform touches the floor when kneeling.
- Every girl is to be at school by 8.30am at least.
- Teaching commences at 8.40am
- Supervision of girls begins at 8.20am. Girls should be in either the Main Quad or the Canteen Quad.
- Parents should not drop and pick up daughters in Aeolia Street.
We do try different things here to get the girls to realize that in fact they can’t and shouldn’t say whatever they like in the real and virtual worlds. The latest attempt is what I have called the Brigidine Pledge of Online Decency

**PLEDGE OF ONLINE DECENCY**

As a Brigidine student I am committed to personal honesty and decent behaviour in the real world and the online world.

I know that it is wrong to write in social media what I know to be untrue.

I know that it is wrong to send images which would be judged at Brigidine to be embarrassing and immodest.

I know that others can see what I do in the online world.

I will never write anything or send anything through the online world which I would not be happy for my Brigidine teachers to view.

I have asked the homeroom teachers to have the girls say this pledge after they have prayed together. Perhaps if the girls say this often enough they will have more strength to avoid the temptation to say and do what is mischievous and cruel. The pledge is “corny” and I asked the staff if the girls laughed at having to do it. One teacher said that her class had laughed and then she told them that it was reported that a girl committed suicide last week because of what was being said and shown about her in social media sites. The laughter stopped then. The way to overcome the lawless space is through the empathy and personal integrity of each one of us. This is what Brigidine has always worked at.

Ms Kate Edmondson  
Principal

**WYD RIO FUNDRAISER** will be held at Bondi Beach Public School this Sunday 21 October. Brigidine Staff and students will be running the canteen for the Sunday markets.

This will be our final fundraising event for 2012. Please come to Bondi for brunch, lunch or just a browse.

Parking is a nightmare but Sculptures by the Sea 2012 is on and you might enjoy the walk. Hope to see you there.  
Mrs Robyn Ross YMC

**LINK TO CAREERS BULLETIN**  
For up-to-date Career’s Information go to Link to Bulletin No.14  
[Careers Bulletin No 14](#)
FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Welcome back to Term 4 everyone! I hope that the holidays were relaxing and re-energising for all. Hopefully each and every student is ready to give her very best in all that she does during this final term for 2012. Every single student can still make a difference in her performance if she really wants to by being prepared to work very hard and to do her absolute best at all times.

Our Year 12 students began their HSC this week. We remind all members of our community to keep these girls in our prayers during this time. May the strength and gentleness of St Brigid guide, nourish and keep them safe and focused during this time.

PARENTING
There are many resources out there to help, guide and advise parents. There’s no right or wrong way of parenting as long we remember that we cannot bury our heads in the sand. The Raising Children Network – the Australian Parenting website, http://raisingchildren.net.au/, is a website full of information for parents. It has resources, ideas for all age groups. The following comes from this website.

**Staying connected: You and your teenager**

**Being connected**

Adolescence is a time when parents and children begin to spend more time apart. This is partly because teenagers need to explore relationships with friends and others outside their family. It helps them:

- develop a sense of independence
- understand their place in the world as young adults
- work out independent values and beliefs.

But your teenager still needs a strong relationship with you to feel safe and secure as she meets the challenges of adolescence.

**Staying connected is about building closeness** in a relationship by being available and responsive to the other person. It’s more than just spending time around each other – after all, family members can sometimes share the same physical space without really connecting.

Connecting can be **casual**, which involves using frequent everyday interactions to build closeness. Or connecting can be **planned** – this is when you schedule time to do things together that you both enjoy.

**Keeping it casual**

Casual connecting is a way of using everyday interactions to build closeness. The best opportunities for casual connecting are when your child starts a conversation with you – this generally means he’s in the mood to talk.

**Tips for casual connecting**

- Stop what you’re doing and focus on the moment. Even for just a few seconds, give your child your full attention. Connecting works best when you send the message that ‘Right now, you’re the most important thing to me’.
- Look at your child while she’s talking to you. Really listen to what she’s saying. This sends the message that what she has to say is important to you.
- Show interest. Encourage your child to expand on what she’s saying, and explore her views, opinions, feelings, expectations or plans.
- Listen without judging or correcting. Your aim is to be with your child, not to give advice or help unless she asks for it.
- Just be there – you might be in the kitchen when your child is in her bedroom. Teenagers benefit from knowing that sources of support are available.
You can also actively try to create opportunities for casual connecting, but don’t push it if your child doesn’t want to talk. Trying to force a conversation can lead to conflict and leave the two of you worse off.

When you stop what you’re doing and really listen to your teenager, you’re telling her that she’s important, respected and worth your time. You might like to read more about listening to your teenager.

Planning your connections
Planned connecting involves scheduling time to do things with your child that you both enjoy. Busy lives and more time apart can make it difficult to spend fun time together. That’s why you need to plan it. Teenagers aren’t always enthusiastic about spending time with their parents, but it’s worth insisting that they do – at least sometimes.

Tips for planned connecting
- Schedule time together. You need to find a time that suits you both. Initially, it can help to keep the time short.
- Let your child choose what you’ll do, and follow her lead. This will motivate her to want to spend time with you.
- Concentrate on enjoying your child’s company. Try to be an enthusiastic partner and actively cooperate with what your child is doing – the activity itself is less important than shared fun and talking with your child.
- Be interested and accepting, rather than correcting your child or giving advice. It’s not easy to give up the teaching and coaching role, but this is a time for building and improving your relationship. So if you see a mistake or an easier way to do something, let it go without comment.
- Keep trying and stay positive. At first, your child might not be as keen as you to take part in these activities, but don’t give up. Keep planned times brief to begin with, and your child will come to enjoy this time with you.

Teenagers who have stable, warm, trusting and open relationships with their parents are better equipped to develop independence and grow into responsible adults. They’re also more likely to be successful at negotiating commonly encountered high-risk situations (such as drug use and sexual activity). You might like to read more about teenagers and family relationships.

Overcoming obstacles
Your child avoids spending time with you
Making the most of everyday opportunities to connect – such as chatting during the drive to school – can help you get over this hurdle. If your child is reluctant to spend scheduled time with you, you could try the following:
- Keep it brief to begin with – a cup of coffee at a favourite café after school, for example.
- Let your child choose the activity (even if you do have to sit through a teenage romantic comedy or action movie!)
- Don’t give up – it might take a little while but the more time you spend together, the more you can both relax into it.

Your child refuses to talk with you about what she’s doing
You and your child might feel closer if you make the most of casual conversations during the day. Every little chat is an opportunity to listen and talk in a relaxed, positive way.

You feel you’re the only one who’s making an effort
If you’re kind and considerate with your child, this can help
create goodwill and positive feelings. Often, simple things make a big difference – for example, saying please, giving hugs, pats on the back, knocking before entering a bedroom, cooking a favourite meal, providing treats or surprise fun activities.

This approach creates a more positive environment, even if your child isn’t joining in. Make a point of doing kind things, even when you don’t feel like it. If you wait to feel positive before you act positively, you might never do it.

There is no doubt that parenting can be very rewarding even with the challenges. The most important thing to remember is that you are not alone. There is help through many different avenues – all you have to do is ask. Keeping all lines of communication open is vital especially with your child’s school and Year Coordinator.

HOUSEKEEPING
I thought it is timely to bring to your attention a few housekeeping matters for the beginning of term. So I remind parents and students of following points:-

- Both Informal and Formal Assessments are critical to the learning of all students. ALL assessments count towards their final reports.
- Every student should have homework, revision and preparation to do EVERY NIGHT. If this is not always possible, then extra time should be set aside on the next night to compensate.
- If your daughter is absent from school, please ring. A note of explanation is required on the first day of her return.
- All students should now be in their Summer Uniform. No makeup is to be worn. One pair of earrings (studs preferably in the lowest part of the lobes). Hair tied back with ribbons in uniform colours. The PE uniform is only to be worn to school on the days that the student has sport.

Students are always reminded to remain focused, think positively and strive for their personal best in all they do. Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

Mrs Antoinette McGahan

INDIGENOUS IMMERSION TO BROOME & BALGO, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
I was given the great opportunity by Kate our Principal and the CEO Sydney in conjunction with Catholic Mission to participate in an Immersion Experience to Broome & Balgo in Western Australia. An Immersion through Catholic Mission is about building relationships between the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples of Australia. My reasons for wanting to attend this Immersion were to further develop my knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture, education and issues concerning Indigenous people. My son is a proud Indigenous young man and being able to attend this Immersion has made me understand him and his culture a lot more.

On Saturday 15 September I flew to Broome to begin my Immersion to Balgo in Western Australia. The next day we packed the Troopie and began our journey to Balgo, which is 12 hours inland from Broome. It was a long and bumpy but funny ride but we survived. We arrived in Balgo at about 9.30pm.
For the next week I would work in the local Catholic School in Balgo. In this community the people still speak their native language so English is their second language.

Each day I attended a different K-6 classroom. I worked with the children listening to them read, helping them write a story or just simply watching them do what they had to do. The smaller children were very cute wanting lots of cuddles and attention.

Each afternoon we would go on excursion to different places in Balgo. The Trade Centre boys took us to Balgo Art Rock, two elders took us to Old Balgo where they grew up in the girls’ home, the younger kids took us on a bush walk out to the lookout where we watched the sunset; what an amazing, magical, beautiful experience this was, the children talking to me about their land, their stories that they’d been told by their parents and grandparents. I also went to the Prayer Cave which was near the lookout which looked out on the Kimberley Desert and where we watched the sunset. As we watched the sunset, we sat in silence thanking God for this beautiful landscape He has provided for us. The silence was just breathtaking and an experience I will remember for the rest of my life. We also went to Wolfe Creek, where a meteorite fell here about 20,000 years ago. I walked to the top, but was too scared to walk down into the crater as it was a long way down and you had to climb down on unsteady rocks. For our last day in Balgo, one of the teachers and his secondary class took us to Lake Gregory which is about 2.5 hours drive from Balgo. We drove through the desert, over hills, through the bush and then arrived at a beautiful lake in the middle of nowhere. It took breath away. Before we could go for a swim we needed to get mudded up so the Rainbow Serpent can’t smell you when you enter the lake. This is all part of Indigenous dreaming stories. The boys mudded me up and in I went. It was the most uplifting experience I’ll ever have.

Kimberley Desert

Church in Balgo

To sum up my Indigenous experience I must tell you I look at life with a whole new prospective. We don’t need to fix Indigenous living, we need to understand it. I’ve learnt so much from these children about the land and the dreaming stories they live by.

We need to LISTEN, LOVE, HEAR, and give children positive reinforcement. We need to understand that you don’t need to keep giving material objects you need to LOVE AND HEAR your children and they will become beautiful young girls and boys.

I would like to thank Kate, CEO Sydney and Catholic Mission for giving me this fantastic life changing opportunity of the Immersion.

Natalie Harkins
YEAR 7 ART TRIP TO TARONGA ZOO
On the 14 September the whole of year 7 went to Taronga Zoo. We entered the gates of the zoo and got our art work sheet for the day. We then had to complete the art work sheet by the next lesson. We had to choose an animal and draw/ sketch its enclosure and the animal. We had to choose some special features of our animal such as the pattern of a snake skin. We also had to take notes about the animal and about its enclosure. Everybody had a different animal making it very interesting. We also had to take about twenty photos of our animal and the way it lives. It took about an hour to complete our work.

We got a chance to visit the seal show, it showed us a few different types of seals and told us a little bit about each one, its habitat and why it lives there.

Once we had finished our work we were allowed to roam around looking at the animals so we can see how they live, what they look like, what their enclosure looks like and why they live the way they live in there.

The zoo is a great place to go with your family because it’s a great day out and we went with our second family, our year 7 year group. We learnt a lot about the different types of animals and the way they live at the zoo.

By Jessica Brown.
CONGRATULATIONS to Kate Murphy who competed in the National Touch Championships at Port Macquarie in September. Kate represented NSW Combined Catholic Schools and competed against a host of teams from all states in Australia and a team from New Zealand. This competition was of a very high standard and a great experience for Kate. The Combined Catholic Colleges team won 6 of their 9 games and their losses were very closely fought contests and the games could have gone either way. The CCC team just missed the cut to play through to the Semi Finals on Saturday. The U18’s competition was won by Queensland.

BASKETBALL
On 20 and 21 September, 10 girls represented Brigidine College Randwick at the NSW All Schools Tournament held at Bankstown. The first game against Riverside High school was a great way for Brigidine to start the tournament defeating Riverside 73-8. Their second game playing against Central Coast Adventist School was a challenging battle where the two schools were head to head the whole 40 minutes. Unfortunately the girls couldn’t come up with a win losing by only two points with 46-48. The crossover game to be played against Westfield’s Sports High school was a hard game. Initially the girls kept up with the scores but Westfield’s unfortunately took the lead winning 44-64. Congratulations to the following girls for a great effort:

- Jasmine Saltirov
- Tayla Saltirov
- Tamara Moskaleva
- Tatyanna Dumas
- Kate Ryan
- Natalia Katsionis
- Carolina knight
- Chloe Morrissey
- Dru Toleafoa
- Emma Job
- A special thank you to Ms Hakos, Lauren Brahe and Mrs Elder for your efforts supporting, coaching and organising.

Dru Toleafoa
Year 10

TUESDAY TOUCH
Tuesday Touch begins on 23 October and meetings will be held with team captains to hand out shirts and draws. Please make sure you have the correct PE shorts and the school touch shirt. Bike pants will be available shortly through the uniform shop and we will notify you through daily notices when these are ready. Thank you to parent managers for your help and for volunteering to assist your daughter’s team. Good luck to everyone for a great season.

Mrs Kate Elder
Sports Coordinator
LIBRARY NEWS

Thank You

We offer our warmest thanks to Sister Marie Langtry, Sister Theresa Boyle, Eleanor McDonald, Alex Horne, Christina Day and Lindsay Cotterill for their donations of quality fiction and nonfiction books to the library. We also offer thanks to Barbara Harvey for invaluable copies of her father’s WW1 photographs. To capture just one of the photographs, picture the image of a group of horses, with rib cages clearly visible that somehow managed to survive the battle. The returning Australian soldiers, to their sorrow, were not able to bring these noble beasts home with them: in all probability, most of the horses would have been sent to the knackery or killed for human consumption. We are always happy for parents and friends to drop into the school to look at some of these materials if they make an appointment.

Resident Artists:

Each year the library will reward a College artist or a group of collaborative artists for their contribution of a stimulating artwork to the library collection. This year, the prize has been awarded to the four talented girls pictured with the creation below. The girls have been captured in their effort to tempt a delightful horse, constructed from found objects such as a plumbing pipe, rope keys, a smashed headlight casing and plywood, with a paper apple and carrot.
**Talented Bloggers**

The entertaining literary blogs of our resident Year 7 bloggers Brooke Wilson and Anthea Duffy are worth well worth the read and set a benchmark for aspiring young writers. These talented girls were also the winners of the poster competition in the first semester. The girls have supplied the promotional text which follows:

‘Have a look at the latest online fiction novels today! Young writers, Annie Duffy and Brooke Wilson of Year 7, have been busy writing their own online novels in the form of blogs. One chapter of the books are published each Saturday. Anne writes the humorous, intriguing tale of five very different people trapped in a lift at a shopping mall, the main character being a headstrong, pregnant 26 year old who develops and changes greatly through the book. The name of her novel is ‘Life in a Lift’. Brooke writes the thrilling adventure of a rather normal girl who gets caught up in very abnormal situations. Inside a fantasy novel come to life, she encounters life threatening incidents, makes new friends and sees sights she never thought possible. The name of her book is ‘The World of Words’. Their books can be read for free at


**Events**

Author Talks: Mamdouh Habib

In the interests of enriching the cultural literacy and HSC readiness of the Year 12 class of 2013, Mamdouh and Maha Habib addressed our current Year 11s in our College Library on October 11. Mamdouh, an Australian citizen who was unjustly imprisoned at Guantanamo, released without charge after four years and then denied a passport for a lengthy period of time, had much to say that was of relevance to the HSC English Area of Study Belonging, with a compelling focus on the need to recognise our shared humanity and to contest practices that deny our ethical and communal selves.

The girls were utterly engaged by Mamdouh’s recounts of the profound injustices of the world beyond the school and were clearly moved by the dignity and sincerity of this truth-teller, as were we all. In addition, Maha Habib, the epitome of a strong and gentle woman, briefly spoke to the girls about the imperatives of love and loyalty that fuelled her resilience in the terrible years of Mamdouh’s absence. We all agreed that we would have liked to have heard a little more from Maha, so perhaps next year...

If any parent wishes to purchase a copy of ‘My Story: The Tale of a Terrorist who Wasn’t’ (2008) there are copies available in the library at the retail price of $35.00. However, keep in mind the fact that this book is discounted to the girls at the price of $20.00. It must be emphasised that there is no pressure to purchase the book and the College receives no profit.
Tony Penteado, Senior English Teacher and Deidre Brennan, Art Coordinator, and the Habibs

Year 11: a thoroughly engaged audience at the Habib Talk

Janet Morrissey, ex-student of Brigidine College, and the Habibs
Belinda Murrell
On October 16, Australian writer Belinda Murrell, pictured below (permission to publish photo granted by Murrell on 16/10/12), addressed Years 7 and 8 about the joys of reading and writing literature. Belinda – whose great, great granny wrote the first Australian children’s book – is the author of popular time slip novels such as *The Ivory Rose* and *The Ruby Talisman*.

We offer our warmest congratulations to Anthea Duffy and Loretta Morrison of Year 7 who were the winners of the Belinda Murrell Novel Review Competition.

Annie was awarded an ‘ivory rose’ ring while Loretta opted for a ‘ruby talisman’ bracelet. Well done, girls!

Exciting Discoveries
We are still making exciting discoveries about our collection, the legacy of extremely light ‘weeding’ over the decades. The old maxim ‘you can’t judge a book by its cover’ is certainly the case with the recent find by our library technician, Anne Jarman.

The first edition book, ‘Australia at War: A Winter Record’, published in 1918 with an introduction by G. K. Chesterton, features the works and text of the Australian war artist Bill Dyson. The achievement of this enormously affecting book is captured in the words of the artist: ‘This selection of drawings, made during the winters at Ypres and on the Somme reflects more of the misery and the depression of the material conditions of the campaigns than it does any of their exaltations or their cheerfulness’. One image depicts a soldier returning to his quarters to find his companions drinking. Dyson’s accompanying text reads: ‘M___ was very liberal to them with Hurley’s whiskey – and they needed it. This sort of need for a drink is something that bears no relation to anything you and I could ever know in a nicely regulated life. It is of a world which the temperance die-hard had never envisaged, and in which the drink does nothing more criminal than make man more stoical of conditions that in themselves are cruel enough to justify him in committing the seven cardinal sins if that would procure alleviation of those conditions.’

Ms Trish Kennedy
Teacher Librarian
We at T’s Textbooks have been selling second-hand and new textbooks for over 25 years; we do all the guesswork and legwork in obtaining and supplying the correct textbooks for each student.

**Ordering**

- **Online** - The booklist will be available on our website [www.tstextbooks.com.au](http://www.tstextbooks.com.au) please select Brigidine College, Randwick and the year from the drop down menu and follow the prompts to complete your online order.
- **In person** – All buying and selling of textbooks is only done at warehouse/shop 13/77-79 Bourke Road Alexandria NSW 2015 (near Bunnings, closest crossroad Gardeners Road).

**Textbook Orders**

With regards to second-hand textbook orders we operate on a “first come, first served” basis. So the earlier the student places their order, the more likely they are to receive second-hand textbooks. Where a second-hand textbook is unavailable we can supply new at the RRP.

**Payments**

- **Credit Card** (Mastercard/Visa/Eftpos) – the payment will only be deducted as each book is allocated to the student and if shipping is selected this will be deducted when the order is complete and ready for dispatch.
- **Cash** – payment to be made in person.

**Collection**

- The student is welcome to pick up their books from our warehouse/shop, or
- We can organise a courier (a $10.00 shipping surcharge is applicable) to deliver the books directly to the student’s address in Metropolitan Sydney, (someone must be present for collection and signature).

**Buying textbooks – The “buy-back system”**

We only buy current edition good condition textbooks. The student is welcome to bring their books to our warehouse/shop for inspection or they can email us a list of books for sale and we will let them know which ones are of interest.

- **Cash** - The student may choose to receive a cash payment; or
- **Credit** – The student may choose to receive credit towards their textbook order which is calculated at a higher rate than a cash payment.