Dear Parents,

Thank you to everyone who came along to our Information Evening last Thursday. It was great to see so many of you there. We hope that you now feel really well informed of our focus for the evening, Wellbeing, and have a clear understanding of why it is such an important part of our school curriculum and life. Thank you very much to Angela Glennie, our Wellbeing Leader, and Jenny Foley, our Religious Education Leader, for presenting and a big thank you also to all our wonderful staff for their great contribution to the evening. As always, should you have any further questions or wonderings, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Our Year 1/2 classes, as part of their learning topic of Community, have kicked off the year with a walking excursion around the Mt Evelyn township that focussed on the town’s historical landmarks. After their long walk, it was a tired, but happy, group of children and adults who returned to school with their information. Thank you to all our parents who assisted on the day; I am sure that the walk must have saved you a day (or a week) at the gym!

I am sure that you have now started to see some children wearing the new sports tops. As you were informed last year, the new sports tops are being introduced, but will not be compulsory until next year, to allow everyone to have the opportunity to purchase one without too much stress. The general consensus seems to be that they are very smart and much more appropriate for sporting activities. Thank you to our P & F for their work in getting the tops organised. And speaking of our P & F, don’t forget that our P & F AGM is on next Monday, 15th February at 2pm, so please come along, even if you would just like to help out occasionally or in an adhoc manner.

Congratulations to our Students of the Week:

PB: Brodie M    PF: Ben G 1/2F: 1/2P: Alexander McC
1/2R: Georgia S 1/2H: Tommy P 1/2F: Sophie B
3/4F: Willow P 5/6B: Xavier B 5/6L: Keira T
5/6F: Olivia B 5/6S: Carissa M

With my prayers and best wishes for the coming week,
Mrs Lynne O’Meara  Principal

Don’t Forget! School Closure Days – 25th and 26th February

You are the sunshine of our lives! Well done!
Ash Wednesday

Wednesday is Ash Wednesday.

The beginning of Lent.

Ashes are what remain after a fire has gone out. They are a symbol for us—of death and of grief. Many Christians today receive a cross of ashes on their foreheads. This cross of ashes signifies that we are blemished; we are not perfect; that a fire has gone out in us too and needs to be rekindled. This cross of ashes signifies that we are ready to change, and to make efforts to set out lives firmly on the way of Christ.

Receive Lent with gladness!
Be strong and turn your life toward God.

Merciful God, you called us from the dust of earth; you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism. Look upon us as we enter these forty days bearing the mark of ashes. Bless us as we journey through the desert of Lent to the font of rebirth. May our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts. All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus, for in his cross you proclaim your love now and forever. Amen.

Adapted from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers

What's Coming Up?

**Week Three**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday, 8th February</th>
<th>8.45am</th>
<th>School Assembly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 10th February</td>
<td>3.30pm</td>
<td>Staff Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 11th February</td>
<td>9.15am</td>
<td>Prep Rest Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.15pm</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday – whole school Mass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Week Four**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday, 15th February</th>
<th>8.45am</th>
<th>School Assembly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 17th February</td>
<td>2.00pm</td>
<td>P &amp; F AGM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 19th February</td>
<td>3.30pm</td>
<td>Staff Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.30pm</td>
<td>Prep Rest Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Assembly – Please note the new time for assemblies. Parents are most welcome!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What’s Coming Up?

**Wednesday, 10th February** – Ash Wednesday

**Monday, 15th February** – P & F AGM

**Thursday 25th and Friday 26th February** – School Closure Day

**2nd – 4th March** – Year 6 Camp & Year 5 Bike Ed

**8th March** – School Photos

**16th March** – First Reconciliation

**22nd March** – House Sports Day

**23rd March** – Parent Teacher Interviews

**Thursday, 24th March 2.30pm – End Term 1**

School Closure Days for 2016

**Thursday 25th and Friday 26th February** – School Improvement Review

**Monday 14th March** – Labour Day

**Thursday 5th & Friday 6th May** – Staff Professional Development

**Monday, 13th June** – Queen’s Birthday

**Monday, 30th October (Day before Cup Day)** – Reporting
Do you find that your child is having emotional or behavioral issues or is overly anxious?

OnPsych are a team of fully qualified and registered psychologists who specialise in child and adolescent services working in primary and secondary schools in both individual and group settings.

Services are performed on site at school, at NO COST to the school, student or parent, through Medicare bulk billing.

These services are also available to parents.

We now have an OnPsych psychologist, Arabella Mayne, working here at our school. The approaches that Arabella use include:

- CBT (cognitive behaviour therapy)
- Client centred and solution focussed therapy.
- Employs a collaborative approach.

Issues covered by a mental health plan include: Anxiety, Attention deficit, Alcohol/drug abuse, Adjustment disorders, Bereavement, Conduct disorder, Depression, Eating disorders, Enuresis (non organic), Neurasthenia, Obsessive compulsive disorder, Panic, Phobia, Psychosis, Post-traumatic, Stress, Sleep disorders, Mood disorders, Spectrum disorders, Interpersonal, learning or behavioural disorders, exam stress, harming and adjustment difficulties (social and situational)

If you believe that this service may benefit your child or yourselves, please contact Lynne O'Meara or Angela Glennie on 9736 2219 for further information on how to access Arabella’s services.

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**2016 FEES**

**HAVE BEEN BILLED AND SENT HOME**

Please contact the office if you did not get you fee statement for 2016.

School fees include course and subject levies, and the costs of all curriculum excursions and activities. School Fee Statements will be issued at the commencement of the school year on 3rd February 2016 with payment schedules and forms for direct debits. Reminder Statements will be issued at the beginning of each term for your information.

Fee agreements and payment plans have been sent home and are due back immediately!

St Mary’s BSB/ACCOUNT Details
St Marys Primary School
BSB 083-347
Account Number 676054930

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(CSEF) CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS WITH A HEALTHCARE CARD**

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government’s commitment to breaking the link between a student’s background and their outcomes.

**IF YOU HAVE A CURRENT HEALTHCARE CARD**

Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from

IMPORTANT INFO FOR PARENTS

In addition to our existing forms of communication, which include blanket text messaging, we are also in the process of including ‘Skoolbag’ to our communication options. This is an app for iPhone and Android that will enhance communications with the Parent/Student community. Parents wishing to access this service will need to install the St Mary’s School ‘Skoolbag’ App. To install the app, search for our school name (St Marys Catholic Primary School Mount Evelyn) in either the Apple App Store, or Google Play Store.

**It will take 1 week for the Apple iPhone App to become available.** We will advise once confirmation of availability occurs. For Windows Phone, and Windows 8.1 or 10 users, search for ‘Skoolbag’ in the Windows store, install the app and find your school.

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ST MARY’S MASS TIMES
MOUNT EVELYN
Saturday 5.00 pm & Sunday

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DON’T LOSE THIS NOTICE
2016
ENROL NOW
KEYBOARD LESSONS AT SCHOOL
IN-SCHOOL TIME

YOUR CHILD DESERVES THIS CHANCE
THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY
Enrol NOW in .................
Piano on Keyboard Lessons
$16.50 half-hour lesson
* Convenient – in school time
* Inexpensive
* Learn with Friends
* All equipment provided
* INDIVIDUAL tuition

ONE FREE LESSON
IF YOU ENROL NOW
Phone 9761 9058
Uniforms

All St. Mary’s students are required to wear the full correct school uniform. We believe that the wearing of uniforms promotes the children’s pride in their school and self-discipline. Uniform items can be purchased or made at little cost. The uniform shop at St. Mary’s carries all uniform items, including school and library bags. There is a small amount of second hand uniforms available in the shop.

**Children are expected to have a school bag with the St Mary’s School logo.**

*Please ensure that your children bring their correct school bag.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls’ Summer Uniform</th>
<th>Boys’ Summer Uniform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s uniform school dress</td>
<td>Navy Shorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Length of dresses and tunics should not be above the knee</em></td>
<td>(no jeans, jean style or cargo pants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s windcheater</td>
<td>St Mary’s windcheater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy socks</td>
<td>Navy socks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black polished shoes</td>
<td>Black polished shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no sneakers/runners)</td>
<td>(no sneakers/runners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School hat</td>
<td>School hat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls’ Summer Sports Uniform</th>
<th>Boys’ Summer Sports Uniform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navy track suit pants</td>
<td>Navy track suit pants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s windcheater</td>
<td>St Mary’s windcheater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy unisex sports shorts or navy skort</td>
<td>Navy unisex sports shorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s polo shirt</td>
<td>St Mary’s polo shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White St. Mary’s sports socks or plain white socks and runners</td>
<td>White St. Mary’s sports socks or plain white socks and runners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School hat</td>
<td>School hat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St Mary’s School logo school bag

No jewellery – plain studs, sleepers, watches excepted.

No make-up

No extremes of hairstyles

Long hair to be tied back at all times with navy ties and ribbons

No nail polish

**An important note on Uniforms.** Whilst it is not compulsory to purchase uniform items only from our uniform shop, we trust that parents will only purchase items that are of the same as sold in the shop. We would ask that you continue to support us as we strive to ensure a disciplined atmosphere in our school, by ensuring that your children do wear the standardised uniform.

Your children may, at times, tell you that it is okay because, “others do it” or “have it”, but this is a good signal that it is NOT okay!

**A note about hair.** As we are a primary school, we feel that any change of colour is inappropriate for children. In the spirit of our practice at St Mary’s, to keep children as children, we ask that you cooperate with this and leave the hair colouring as something that they can look forward to in their older age. We also differentiate between “weekend hair” and “school hair”. The use of hair gel, etc., and styling, is considered to be a “weekend hair” practice. There is also the problem of styling hair so that it will fall over the child’s eyes or face when they lean forward, e.g., long fringes or strands being left out of ties. This then becomes a distraction when they are writing or reading. If we can all work together on this then not only does it assist in their learning and give a more disciplined and uniformed approach, but it will also save you time and money!
(CSEF) CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS WITH A
HEALTHCARE CARD

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government’s commitment to breaking the link between a student’s background and their outcomes.

Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from
School Procedures for the Bushfire Season

Fire danger ratings and warnings are used in Victoria to provide clear direction on the safest options for preserving life.

Schools and children’s services listed on the DET Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) will be closed when a Code Red fire danger rating day is determined in their Bureau of Meteorology district. **Our school has been identified as being one of those at high bushfire risk and is listed on the BARR.**

Where possible, we will provide parents with up to four days notice of a potential Code Red day closure by letter and SMS message. A Code Red day will be determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1.00 pm the day before the potential closure. Once we are advised of the confirmation of the Code Red day we will provide you with advice before the end of the school day.

**Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of improvements in the weather forecast.** This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child. It is also important to note that:

- No staff will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Code Red day.
- School camps will be cancelled if a Code Red fire danger rating day is determined for the Bureau of Meteorology district in which the camp is located.
- All bus routes will be cancelled.

On these Code Red days families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival Plan – **on such days children should never be left at home or in the care of older children.**

For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the CFA advise that when Code Red days are forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Code Red day.

As part of preparing our school for potential hazards such as fire, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan.

**What can parents do?**

- Make sure your family’s bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is closed.
- Ensure we have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers. Keep in touch with us by reading our newsletters and checking our website.
- Most importantly at this time of year, if you’re planning a holiday or short stay in the bush or in a coastal area, you should check warnings in advance of travel and remain vigilant during your stay.
- If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family’s bushfire survival plan.

For up-to-date information on this year’s fire season, visit the CFA website at [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au) or call the 24-hour Victorian Bushfires Information Line on 1800 240 667.
An abundance of fish are caught by Simon.

Jesus was standing one day by the lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats – it was Simon’s – and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking he said to Simon, ‘Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch.’ ‘Master,’ Simon replied ‘we worked hard all night long and caught nothing, but if you say so, I will pay out the nets.’ And when they had done this they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point.

When Simon Peter saw this he fell at the knees of Jesus saying, ‘Leave me Lord; I am a sinful man.’ For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon’s partners. But Jesus said to Simon, ‘Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch.’ Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him. The Gospel of the Lord

What sort of messages or errands have you been sent on?

When you are a messenger, what do you have to do? (e.g listen to instructions, make sure you know where to go, pass on the message clearly, etc.)

Jesus asks the fishermen in the Gospel to be messengers. What do you think he means when he tells them they will bring in people rather than fish?

Jesus calls us to be his messengers. How can we be good messengers?

Use the words in the fish to complete the sentence below....

_____ be _______! From ___ on you will _____ in ______ instead of _____.

Other news in Religious Education:

- Don’t forget to return enrolment forms for the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion or Confirmation. These need to be returned to school by Thursday February 18th.

- This Wednesday 10th February at 9.15am we will celebrate a whole school Mass in the church for Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season.

- Commitment Masses for children enrolled in a sacrament
On the weekend of the 20th and 21st February, all children enrolled in a sacrament need to attend one of the parish Masses. Times are 5.00pm Saturday, 10.30 am Sunday and 5.00pm Sunday.
NOMINATIONS FOR THE INCOMING 2016 COMMITTEE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 15th February @ 2.00pm 2016
ALL WELCOME

Please find the nomination forms in the newsletter and fill in which position you would be interested in helping with. All positions are available. We have listed the positions below for you to consider.
Please return your completed form to the office as soon as possible.

President - Vice-president – Treasurer – Banking - Secretary of minutes Tuckshop co-ordinators (4 people) – Tuckshop Rosters - Uniform shop co-ordinator - Uniform shop assistants (4 people) – Special Food Day (3 times a year) - Stalls (2 to 4 people) - Food Bank co-ordinator – Fundraising committees (disco, trivia night, field day chocolate drive etc) -General Committee Member

PLEASE COMPLETE NOMINATION FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

I, ________________________________________ wish to nominate

(Your name)

(Name of person you are nominating / self)

For the position of ________________________________________.

(Position you are nominating them / self for)

Signature ___________________________________________ . Date: ____________.

(Of person agreeing to be nominated if unable to be present at the meeting)

Signature ___________________________________________ . Date: ____________.

(Your signature)

Please return this slip to the school office by 15th February 2016

Help Urgently Required

We need to roster 6 people per week to run the St Mary’s tuckshop. We have not received enough volunteers to be able to effectively do this, this year.
If you have not put your form in, please do so ASAP.
If we do not receive more responses, we will not be able to run tuckshop in term 2. If we don’t get the volunteers required we will be unable to offer tuckshop in the future. Please commit by filling out the below form.

PLEASE COMPLETE 2016 TUCKSHOP ROSTER

The St Mary’s Primary School Canteen operates every Friday between 9.00am – 1.00pm. Volunteers are needed to help run the canteen. If you are able to help, please fill out the attached form and return to school office ASAP.

NAME ______________________ PHONE __________________ EMAIL __________________

ELDEST CHILD AND GRADE ____________________________________________________________

Availability (please tick)

☐ WEEKLY             ☐ FORTNIGHTLY        ☐ MONTHLY

☐ EMERGENCY          ☐ CO-ORDINATOR      ☐ OTHER ____________________________

Thankyou Parents & Friends Committee
2016 Registration Form for Basketball - Season 1 – 2016?

Any child interested in playing After School Basketball in Season 1 (commences early February 2016) will need to fill out the following form and return it to the school office by ASAP.

CURRENT PLAYERS: If you are currently playing After School Basketball in Season 2 2016, you will still need to fill out the following form so I can format the new teams. Games start at 4pm and finish at 7pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday afternoons at Kilsyth or Lilydale Basketball Stadiums.

- Monday: Grade 4 - Grade 6 Boys
- Tuesday: Grade 3 Boys
- Thursday: Grade 3 - Grade 6 Girls
- Friday: Grade 2 Boys & Girls

Name_________________________________________ Age 2016_____ Class 2016_____

Are you currently playing After School Basketball? Yes      No (please circle)

Have you played competition basketball before? Yes      No (please circle)

Parents Name__________________________________________________________________

Home No____________________________ Mobile_______________________________

Email Address__ __________________________________________________________________

Are you able to help as : Coach Yes/No    Team Manager Yes/No

NOTE: If you are currently playing After School Basketball and do not want to continue in 2016, could you please return your washed basketball singlet top to the office in a bag, clearly marked with your name and class on it. You will then be eligible for your refund.

2016 BASKETBALL CO-ORDINATOR REQUIRED
FOR ALL QUERIES PLEASE CALL LIZ RHODES
ON 0414 761 088

St Mary's Basketball Singlet Tops

Children playing in the after school basketball competition are to wear navy blue shorts (the shorts you wear for PE at school are perfect), runners and the St Mary's Basketball Singlet Top. Tops are $25.00 to hire, however, once your child returns the top back to school they will receive a $20.00 refund. Payment can be made by cash or cheque. Cheques need to be made out to "St Mary's Parents and Friends Committee"

Could all payments for the singlet tops and this form please be given to the office ASAP, in an envelope, clearly marked "Basketball Singlet Top Money". If you still have your top from last season, you DO NOT need to pay any more money, just hang onto the one you have and use that again.

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St Mary's Basketball Singlet Tops

Players name:_________________________________________ Year Level:__________________________

Class:__________________________

Mum's name:______________________ Dad's name:______________________

Mum's mobile:______________________ Dad's mobile:______________________

Amount enclosed:__________________

If you already have a basketball top, please fill out below.

Number_____________ Size_____________

________________________________________________________________

Office use:

Top number given:__________________ Amount enclosed:__________________

Cash Yes/No    Cheque details________________________

Date top given:__________________ Date top returned:__________________

Date refund of $20.00 returned:__________________
It’s not okay to be away … nor to be late to school

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem.

One of the most important things you can do to ensure your child has a bright future is to make sure he or she goes to school every day—and gets there on time.

It sounds simple, but it’s true. The correlation between school attendance and children’s achievement levels is well-established. The more time kids spend at school, the more likely they are to experience school success.

Conversely, according to a report from the Victorian Auditor General, students who are regularly absent from school are at the greatest risk of dropping out of school early, and of experiencing long-term unemployment.

When kids miss school, not only is their academic progress impeded, forcing them to catch up on missed work (which some never do), they often miss important interactions with their peers which can compound issues of social isolation and low self-esteem. Also, many teachers tell me, it’s often the kids who can least afford to take time off school who are most likely to be serial absentees.

Of course, most people know this intuitively, yet school absenteeism is a huge problem in Australian schools—and much of it is parent-condoned.

It’s hard to get an accurate picture across the country but it would appear that Australian students miss an average of between 12 and 15 days per school year, with parent-condoned absenteeism highest among young primary-aged children.

That adds up to a year’s lost schooling over the school-life of a child. In today’s highly competitive world, this rate of absenteeism is alarming, putting our kids at a distinct disadvantage.

That’s not a reason to be away!

It’s now commonplace for children to stay away from school for reasons that would have been unheard of just twenty years ago. These include staying away to celebrate their own or a sibling’s birthday; being absent because they stayed up too late watching television; going shopping for clothes; an extended long weekend; and kids not wanting to take part in a sports day or special school event.

This type of absenteeism sends a strong message to kids that parents don’t really value learning or their children’s school experiences.

Australian children only spend 15% of their total time at school. They spend more time asleep than they do at school. So we need to maximise every day to get full value. That means turning up to school every day, on time.

Being late is not okay either

Missing a few minutes each day may not seem like a big deal but your child may be missing more than you realise if he or she is continually late.

Current research shows that mornings for most children are the most productive time of the day, with 10.00am the peak period for productivity. When children arrive late and take time to settle as they inevitably do, valuable learning time is lost.
... It’s not okay to be away... nor to be late to school...

It takes strong parenting...

As a parent myself I know how persuasive children of all ages can be when it comes to taking a day off school. It takes a strong will to resist the persistent pressure that kids can bring to bear, particularly if they play the guilt card with comments such as “It’s not fair that I have to go school today because Aunty is coming to visit!” Nice try. But the answer should be “No!”.

As parents we need to make a commitment that our kids make the most of their precious time at school. That means that we send them to school every day, on time and ready to make the most of the school day.

Of course, there will be times, such as illness or genuinely extenuating family circumstances, when kids should be away. But these need to be a rarity rather than the norm.

It’s reassuring to know that you increase their chances of future success just by making sure they turn up to school every day. And of course regular school attendance also helps kids prepare for the workforce, where it will be expected that they turn up each day work-ready. The real world is unforgiving of those who stay away with NO EXCUSE.

AS A PARENT:

- Commit to sending kids to school every day.
- Make sure kids arrive at school and class on time.
- Inform the school when they are away, sending medical certificates and other evidence of genuine absence.
- Consider catching-up on missed work.
- Make kids who are away stay in their bedroom – that is where ill kids should be.