

From Ken Bell (Year 10-12 Sub-School Leader)

Welcome to the 2nd Later Years Newsletter for 2009.

This newsletter will appear nearly every month to keep parents informed of what is happening in the VCE, VCAL, Year 10 and other issues relating to the later years of education. Please make sure your child brings it home for you to read. This newsletter can also be downloaded from the school website (www.mortlakep12.vic.edu.au) or I can email the newsletter to you.

Later Years (10-12) Coordinators

Mr. Bell: Year 12 Coordinator and overall coordinator of the Years 10-12 Sub-School
 Mrs. Riordon: Year 11 Coordinator
 Mr. Bennett: Year 10 Coordinator
 Mr. Croucher: Careers/Work experience/MIPs Coordinator.

I would encourage all parents/guardians to contact us on any issue relating to your child's education at Mortlake College. Our aim is to establish regular communication between ourselves and all parents/guardians

TERM DATES FOR 2009

TERM 1 Monday February 2 – Friday April 3 (9 weeks)

TERM 2 Monday April 20 - Friday June 26 (10 weeks)

TERM 3 Monday July 13 - Friday September 18 (10 weeks)

TERM 4 Monday October 5 - Friday December 18 (11 weeks)

IMPORTANT VCE SEMESTER DATES

House Athletics Sports	Monday 16/3/2009
Parent Teacher Interviews	Tuesday 24/3/2009
Good Friday	Friday 10/4/2009 (During Holidays)
Easter Monday	Monday 13/4/2009 (During Holidays)
Tertiary Information Service Day (Year 12)	Wednesday 22/4/2009
MWC Physics Day	Thursday 23/4/2009
MWC Athletic Sports (Warrnambool)	Friday 24/4/2009
ANZAC Day	Saturday 25/4/2009
Year 10 Work Experience	Monday 27/4/2009 – Friday 1/5/2009
Last Day to withdraw from Units 1/3	Monday 27/4/2009
Year 12 Biology Excursion	Wednesday 29/4/2009
House Cross Country	Wednesday 6/5/2009
May Race Day (Holiday)	Thursday 7/5/2009
Top Arts Excursion (Art & D & T)	Friday 8/5/2009
Year 11 Exam Week	Monday 18/5/2009 - Friday 22/5/2009
MWC Cross Country (Lake Bolac)	Tuesday 26/5/2009

Last day of Semester 1	Friday 5/6/2009
Queens Birthday Holiday	Monday 8/6/2009
Start of Semester 2	Tuesday 9/6/2009
VCAA June Exams: Day 1 Biology & Physics	Tuesday 9/6/2009
VCAA June Exams: Day 2 Psychology & Chemistry	Wednesday 10/6/2009
GAT Exam (Final Mid-Year Exam) Compulsory for all students studying a Year 12 sub.	Thursday 11/6/2009 10:00am to 1:15pm
Report Writing Day	Friday 12/6/2009
Year 12 Biology Excursion	Wednesday 15/7/2009
Last Day to withdraw from Unit 4	Friday 17/7/2009
VCAA June Examinations results available	Monday 3/8/2009
Year 11 Exam Week	Monday 24/8/2009 – Friday 28/8/2009
Parent Teacher Interviews	Tuesday 8/9/2009
Year 10 Work Experience Week	Monday 12/10/2009- Friday 16/10/2009
Last Day of classes for Year 12 students	Thursday 22/10/2009
VCE Lunch	Friday 23/10/2009
VCAA Exams Begin: English	Friday 30/10/2009
Last day of Semester 2 (Year 11 only)	Friday 6/11/2009
Year 10 Camp	Monday 9/11/2009 – Friday 13/11/2009
Year 11 Work Experience Camp begins	Sunday 15/11/2009
Year 11 Work Experience Camp finishes	Friday 27/11/2009
2010 Year 12 Orientation Week	Monday 30/11/2009 - Friday 4/12/2009
Last Day for Year 10	Friday 4/12/2009
Presentation Night	Tuesday 8/12/2009
VCE Results Available to students	Monday 14/12/2009

1. Leadership: Congratulations to our senior student leaders. The successful applicants are:
School Captains (and Year 12 Class Captains):
 Nicole McLennan and Todd Ryan



School Vice Captains
 Sam Crisp & Louise Williamson

Year 11:
 Emily Grant & Josh Spokes

Year 10:
 Melissa Burt, Chantel Reynolds & Jordan Thulborn
 Congratulations to these deserving students.

2. Progress Checks: Last week, Mrs. Riordon sent out to the parents of Year 11 students, a progress check which gives a quick snapshot of how their child is progressing. This week, a progress check of Year 12 students will also be sent out to their parents. By the end of this week, Mr. Bennett should have a pretty good idea on how each Year 10 student is progressing. Where there are problems, we will contact you. Parents should feel free to contact us if you want a report on your child's progress. I would encourage all parents/guardians to attend the Parent-Teacher Interviews on Tuesday 24th of March. We encourage all parents/guardians to attend, not just those parents/guardians who have been given a special invitation to attend.

3. Year 12 Camp

On the whole:

- Students were excellent. They made it a most enjoyable camp to be on.
- Nearly all of the 12 students attended the camp.
- Accommodation was excellent.
- Past Year 12 students Sarah Murphy and Ted O'Connor spoke very well at their respective sessions.
- We ran the same sessions as last year and will use the student's feedback survey to plan next year's camp.
- Students had plenty of free time to pursue own interests.
- **Thank you to Mrs. Allinson for staying both nights at this camp.**
- **Thank you to all the many Year 12 teachers and parents who attended the Year 12 Dinner and Information Session.**



4. Next Year 12 Excursion: Tertiary Information Service Seminar: Wednesday, 22nd of April:

All schools in the South West will attend. Year 12 Students will travel to Deakin University, Warrnambool where more than 20 Tertiary Institutions will be present. This is a great day to collect brochures and information from a wide variety of TAFE and University Institutions. It is an opportunity for students to collect information about tertiary courses. In six months time, students will be applying to VTAC for tertiary entrance and also applying for accommodation next year. Any further enquiries should be directed to our Careers Coordinator (Mr. Croucher).

5. Interruptions in Term 1. Some simple advice for students wanting to do well.

Term 1 is traditionally the term with the most interruptions to the academic program. With so many school days lost due to camps, sporting days, public holidays, etc, it is very easy to fall into the trap of not doing homework on these days. Remember, your study score in a subject is a statewide ranking of where you sit compared to all other students in the state. For students wanting to do well in their subjects, making sure that you are still doing homework on these missed school days can give you the competitive edge over fellow students and students from other schools.

6. VCE Vacation Homework (also applies to Year 10 students doing a Year 11 subject)

The vast majority of VCE teachers will be setting homework to be done over the Easter Holidays. For Year 12 students, this should be about one school day per Year 12 subject. For Year 11 students, this should have be about half a school day per Year 11 subject. This will allow plenty of time for students to have a break from study. Many students will do all of the required homework. Some will do much more than was expected of them. Some will do a little less than expected. The concern will be for those few students who will do no homework over the break. For Year 12 students aiming to go to University, failure to do vacation homework can have it drawbacks. With exams in Biology, Chemistry, Physics & Psychology occurring in early June, doing vacation homework can help you gain those vital extra points in your study scores.

7. New Attendance System: A big thank you to all those students and parents who are making our job easier by contacting the school through notes, phone calls, emails, face to face conversations, etc.... when they know their child is going to be away. It really is helping us to keep accurate rolls and monitor student attendance through the *"It's not O.K to be away"* program (see next page). Morning assemblies are much more enjoyable.

***“It’s not O.K to be away”*: Frequently asked questions**

What is my responsibility as a parent/caregiver?

Make sure your child:

- Attends school on **ALL** school days
- Is on time every day

Make sure you:

- Provide the school with an explanation if your child is away
- Contact the school if your child does not want to go to school
- Try to arrange doctor and dentist appointments out of school hours
- Arrange personal shopping trips with your son/daughter or birthday celebrations out of school hours
- Do not allow your child to stay at home for minor reasons

Is regular attendance at school important?

- Yes – from the first day. If your child misses the basic skills in primary school they can experience difficulties with their learning
- Regular attendance is essential to make sure learning is not disrupted. Regular learning provides building blocks for the future
- Schools help children to develop important social skills, such as friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and a healthy self-esteem

What can I expect from the school?

- Monitoring of student attendance and review progress on a weekly basis
- A phone call from the school if your child has not turned up to school and you have not already contacted the school to inform us of your child’s absence.
- Strategies to help you as a parent encourage your child to go to school

What help can I get if my child refuses to go to school or is truanting?

The school can offer a range of support options:

- Teacher working with the student in a supportive, counselling role
- School student welfare coordinator working with the student
- Provide a mentor for your child
- Home visits to identify the problem and help work it through with parents
- Identify reasons why your child doesn’t want to go to school
- Strategies to help you encourage your child to go to school
- Develop an incentive program to encourage your child to attend school
- Link with community agencies

Must I send my child to school every day?

Yes, unless:

- Your child is too sick or injured to go to school
- Your child has an infectious disease
- The principal is provided with any other genuine and acceptable reason for absence.

Will my child be marked absent if they are doing a TAFE, VET or community program?

- No – as long as it is recognised as part of the school program.

Will my child be marked absent if my child is involved in sport?

- No – as long as it is part of the school program.

Do I need to let the school know if my child has been away?

- Yes – for the wellbeing of your child, Department of Education & Training has an attendance policy and teachers and schools are required to follow up student absences.