



Columba College
**SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER**

Issue 8, 2005

Dear Parents and Students,

With the school holidays nearly over, it is time to be thinking of the term ahead. Term Three is only nine weeks long, but there is a lot to be achieved in it as the calendar of events for the term indicates.

The term will end with a **school play**, performed in the Caroline Freeman Theatre on Wednesday, 21st September and Thursday, 22nd September at 7.30 p.m. "Passengers" by Fiona Farrell is directed by Dr J. Devereux.

Attention is drawn to the dates of the four "Meet the Teacher" functions to be held in the coming term:

- Junior School** **Thursday, 28th July**
 3.30 p.m. – 7.30 p.m.
- Years 7 and 8** **Tuesday, 16th August**
 4.30 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.
- Years 11 to 13** **Thursday, 25th August**
 4.30 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.
- Years 9 and 10** **Tuesday, 6th September**
 4.30 p.m. – 7.30 p.m.

We hope these functions will be well attended as they are important opportunities to discuss students' progress.

For the girls in Years 11 to 13, more than half the 2005 academic year has passed, and they must set themselves clear priorities and commitments for the nine-week term ahead.

The school end-of-year examinations for Years 11 to 13 are in Weeks 1 and 2 of Term Four and the **release dates for study leave** prior to the commencement of NCEA are as follows:

- Year 13 Tuesday, 8th November
Year 12 Wednesday, 9th November
Year 11 Thursday, 10th November
 (Week 5 of term)

The NCEA examinations start on Tuesday, 15th November (Week 6 of term).

One cannot emphasise enough how important it is for the girls to do a “reality-check” on the time left, on everything that has to be fitted in and on how they went in the mid-year school examinations. NOW is the time to be doing very steady revision and consolidation of previous work as well as keeping on top of new work to be covered this term. Term Four is too late to be starting one’s run.

During the holidays we were very sorry to hear from Mrs H. Cryer, Deputy Principal, that she had decided to resign from her position and to remain in England. Mrs Cryer has been on sick leave for the past term and has been in the UK for some weeks where she is recovering in strength. We wish Mrs Cryer all the very best for her full recovery and for the future.

Arrangements have been made for Mrs Cryer’s classes for the remainder of the year : Mrs Butt will continue to teach Years 11 and 12 English, Mrs Skerten will teach Year 10 Dance and Drama and Miss McIntosh will continue with Year 9 Dance and Drama. Miss Page will remain as Year 9 Form Teacher.

Clearly, other decisions have to be made regarding the position of Deputy Principal and these are likely to be finalised in the near future.

Mrs Dineen has advised she is unlikely to be back this year because of the ongoing treatment that is required. There is a possibility she may be able to return for some part-time work in Term Four, but this is only a possibility at this stage.

Dr Dineen who has been teaching Year 13 French will continue for the first three weeks of term until Mrs E. Collins is able to start on the 15th August. Mrs Collins who was previously HOD Languages at Queen’s High School is currently overseas. We are very fortunate that she has agreed to teach the Year 13 French class.

Mrs McMahon, Head of ICT/Computing, will be on leave for the first three or four weeks of term to have an operation in Christchurch next week, followed by time for mobility to be regained. This has come up unexpectedly for Mrs McMahon and we will all miss her cheerful and helpful presence in the school for the next few weeks.

The First XI soccer team has returned from a very successful time at the Southern Skies Tournament in Brisbane. It was good to see Miss Dillon in the holidays, and she gave a very good report on the trip and the team which came 4th overall in the girls’ soccer – an excellent result. The next newsletter will contain an article about the trip and photographs.

The Uniform Committee has approved the introduction of **a new tracksuit for Years 7 to 13** for 2006. We have been mindful of the success of the compulsory tracksuit in the Junior School (Years 3 to 6) and how smart it looks to see it on everyone, and also of the need for more warmth for the older girls when going to and from sport. Quite a few of the girls have been looking very untidy going to sport with several different kinds of multi-coloured garments being worn over the regulation sports uniform. The various sports uniforms for netball, basketball, volleyball, for example, are looking good as they have recently been upgraded, but the overall smart look is being affected by the variety of garments being worn on top.

Final decisions on make, colour and style will be made this term with the new tracksuit available for purchase through the School Office at the beginning of 2006. It will be compulsory for all girls in Years 7 to 13 playing sport in school teams.

Near the end of last term, it was brought to the attention of Sports staff that some girls have been heard **swearing at sports games**. This had been reported by other parties on the sidelines to Sports staff with particular concern expressed about some Junior soccer players (not the First XI). The School has a clear view on this – it is to stop.

2004 NCEA Results

For comparison our **2003** results were:

<u>2003</u>		<u>Merit Grades</u>	<u>Excellence Grades</u>	
	Level 1	13.7%	9.3%	% of all Grades earned
	Level 2	10.8%	7.1%	% of all Grades earned

These results placed Columba College 1st overall in the South Island and among the top three schools in New Zealand in 2003.

NCEA Level 1	2nd	% of Merit Grades (1st St. Cuthbert's)		
NCEA Level 2	3rd	% of Excellence Grades (1st St. Cuthbert's, 2nd Diocesan)		
NCEA Level 1	2nd	% of Excellence and Merit Grades combined (1st St. Cuthbert's)		
NCEA Level 2	2nd	% of Excellence and Merit Grades combined (1st St. Cuthbert's)		

<u>2004</u>				
	Level 1	14.1%	9.7%	% of all Grades earned
	Level 2	10.9%	8.4%	% of all Grades earned
	Level 3	8.3%	5.1%	% of all Grades earned
	Scholarship	Highest number of Scholarship Grades attained in Otago and Southland		

An analysis of the confirmed 2004 NCEA results of other schools in the South Island indicates that Columba College again gained the highest overall percentage of Merit and Excellence results.

Nationally, our analysis indicates:

NCEA Level 1	2nd	% of Merit Grades (1st Samuel Marsden)	
	2nd	% of Excellence Grades (1st St. Cuthbert's)	
NCEA Level 2	1st	% of Merit Grades	
	2nd	% of Excellence Grades (1st St. Cuthbert's)	
NCEA Level 3	3rd	% of Merit Grades (1st Diocesan, 2nd Samuel Marsden)	
	3rd	% of Excellence Grades (1st St. Cuthbert's, 2nd Diocesan).	

% of Columba roll achieving NCEA qualifications

<u>2003</u>	<u>Columba</u>	<u>National</u>
Level 1	94.4%	53.0%
Level 2	90.4%	48.1%
Level 1 Literacy requirement	97.2%	70.6%
Level 1 Numeracy requirement	100.0%	74.5%
<u>2004</u>	<u>Columba</u>	<u>National</u>
Level 1	92.2%	55.4%
Level 2	85.9%	57.3%
Level 3	96.7%	48.5%
Level 1 Literacy requirement	93.5%	69.7%
Level 1 Numeracy requirement	97.4%	75.5%

Winter uniform is worn throughout Term Three. We would be very grateful if the girls' uniforms could be checked for repairs and cleanliness for the new term. We wish to maintain high standards with the girls' appearance in uniform (school and sport), and this comes down to each individual girl wearing her uniform well.

Some key uniform and appearance matters:

- Make-up is not permitted with school or sports uniform, neither is nail-polish.
- Students are not permitted to eat or drink in school uniform on the street or in public (this includes chewing gum).
- Gum is not permitted on the school campus.
- Non-Columba badges and jewellery are not to be worn with school or sports uniform.
- All girls from Year 3 to Year 13 are required to have a winter kilt and are to wear it in Terms II and III.
- The regulation navy blue pantyhose are compulsory for all girls in Years 9 to 13 ($\frac{3}{4}$ navy blue socks are an option only for Years 7 and 8 and the Junior School).
- The blazer is worn buttoned-up on the street and in public.
- Hair is to be above the collar or tied back.
- Toggles are to be navy blue or black with navy blue or Black Watch tartan ribbons over the toggles.

The majority of girls look good in their school uniforms and wear it with pride, and this should be acknowledged. There are others, however, for whom these reminders will be timely. Thank you to everyone for your help with this hardy school perennial.

Exchange with The Presbyterian Ladies' College, Armidale
(from the 9th/10th September for three weeks)

We have one vacancy on this year's exchange to The Presbyterian Ladies' College, Armidale. If there is a girl in Year 10 or 11 interested, and her parents are in support, could she please see me at school by Tuesday, 26th July (alternatively, parents are welcome to contact me direct).

My good wishes to you all for the new term,

Yours sincerely,



Elizabeth L. Wilson
Principal
20th July, 2005