Introduction:

Welcome to the Middle Unit. This information outlines the teaching pedagogy and curriculum guidelines which we employ to best promote and facilitate successful learning. We hope that with your support we can assist your child to achieve his/her potential - socially, academically, emotionally and spiritually. We believe that POSITIVE and OPEN COMMUNICATION between home and school plays a vital role in achieving this and we look forward to working with you in 2015.

Teaching Staff:

Dolores McCluskey: 7M & Nick Wright: 7W
Natalie Emberton: 6E & Meredith Smith 6S
Leader of Learning: Meredith Smith

Specialist teachers:

Margherita Pardoe & Martino Vaudo: Italian
Bill Giles: Science

What is Middle Schooling?

Middle Schooling pedagogy is driven by the teaching principles and practices advocated by constructivism, which is child centred, focusing on collaborative learning and reciprocal teaching. This also embraces the principles of Reggio Emilia philosophy which highlights respect, responsibility, community, discovery and learning within an enriching environment. Middle Schooling also acknowledges the importance of future based learning for scenarios that we cannot predict.

The aims of the Middle Unit centre on encouraging excellence and equity and to promote successful learning outcomes for all of our children. Learning is active, productive and a blend of theory and practice. Responsibility is transferred to the children to set challenging goals, strive to complete all learning tasks and to demonstrate one of the most important skills of all - resilience (“working tough”). Children will keep track of their learning by record keeping, discussion, sharing, asking for and receiving feedback, exhibiting work and evaluating. This includes developing negotiation skills which enhances ownership of learning.

We approach bullying, harassment and conflict using a restorative practice approach. This emphasises the importance of repairing the harm done to relationships during conflict and taking ownership of behaviour. It creates opportunities for those involved in conflict to work together to understand, clarify and resolve the situation, with support from adults.
General Organisation:

- **Diaries:** Each child has a diary which is the main form of communication between school and home, as well as a record of nightly homework which all students are expected to complete. (See Homework Grid) It is important that the diary is signed at least once a week. We encourage children to organise their homework time in an appropriate manner and use their diary as an important organisational tool. It is the child’s responsibility to record homework and other information accurately. We ask that parents/carers check their child's diary every afternoon/evening and sign it accordingly.

- **Homework Grid:** The Middle Unit utilises homework grids, based on research by Ian Lillico, recognising the value and importance of the wide range of activities pursued by our children after school. It encourages positive family interaction and manageable time frames, as well as building up a repertoire of life skills, not just academic skills. The teachers will explain the Homework Grid to their class and the expectations involved.

- **Lost Learning Time (LLT):** All children in the Middle Unit are encouraged and supported with their learning. However, at times when children repeatedly make poor choices such as disrupting the learning of their peers or not finishing a task within reasonable time frames, a LLT may result. This allows the child to use some of their play time at lunch to work in the library to catch up. If this occurs, a slip will be stapled into your child's diary which parents/carers will need to read and sign. Strategies to manage time, organisational skills and being a positive learner are skills which are constantly reinforced in the Middle Unit.

- **Uniform:** All children attending All Saints are required to be in the correct school uniform. Sports uniform is only worn on PE/Sports days, which have been discussed with your child and should appear in their diary or timetable. If your child is out of uniform for whatever reason, a note is required. If a note is not supplied, an infringement note will be sent home. Please refer to the Uniform policy which outlines the school uniform. This can be accessed via the school's website: www.allsaints.catholic.edu.au or ask for a hard copy from the front office. This includes correct shoes and socks. NO Globe socks are permitted. NO makeup or jewellery (except for plain gold/silver studs or small sleepers) is permitted. Good choices in uniform result in children receiving a raffle ticket to go into the regular Middle Years Uniform draw to win fabulous prizes. 😊

- **Personal Effects:** ALL mobile phones and other electronic devices must be placed in the class box in the morning, which is then locked and stored in the front office until the end of the day. Phones must be turned off. Please ensure that all of your child's belongings are clearly labelled. It is an expectation that all work books are covered with the plastic sleeves provided by the class teacher and kept in a good condition.

- **Environmental Sustainability/Nude Food:** All Saints is working towards environmental sustainability and part of this is our commitment to “nude food”. This policy encourages all children to eliminate wrappers, plastic and other environmentally unfriendly packaging. Food scraps are collected and used to...
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2015

feed the chooks! Any other rubbish that is generated by your child must go home with them, in their lunchbox. Brain food is eaten at 10am every morning and can include fruit and vegetable pieces, dried fruit and cheese. Hydration is vital so children should have a bottle of water with them every day. We recommend lunch boxes and containers that can be washed and reused.

- **Sunscreen**: Children should be applying and reapplying sunscreen throughout the day, especially so in the hotter months. Hats MUST be worn during all break times, at PE/Sport and Fitness.

- **Volunteers**: If you have completed the All Saints Volunteer screening and police check process, and would like to assist with classroom activities, such as reading, excursions and craft, please let the class teacher know. Thank you!

### Curriculum:

**Asian perspectives**: In accordance with the Australian Curriculum capabilities for the 21st Century, children will be immersed in multiple Asian perspectives throughout the curriculum.

**Religious Education**: The teaching of Religious Education is founded on the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels and follows the framework and guidelines set by the Catholic Education Faith Formation team. The learning program provides opportunities for children to discover and develop an understanding of Scripture and to grow in their understanding of the message of Christ. All children attend Masses, liturgies and other celebrations of faith. The Middle Years holds two Retreats— one each for children in Year 6 and one for Year 7. Information and further details will be forthcoming.

**Made in the Image of God**: is a human sexuality program that has been developed for Catholic schools via consultation with parents, teachers and members of the wider Catholic community. Throughout the Middle Years, children will cover content from the different strands: Being Human, Being Sexual, Being Connected and Being Moral. Parents/Carers with any questions or concerns about this program are encouraged to discuss these with the class teacher, member of the Leadership team or the APRIM (Assistant Principal Religious Identity and Mission).

**English**: English is comprised of three strands: Language, Literacy and Language. Together the strands focus on developing knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. Learning in English builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in the earlier years and teachers will revisit and strengthen these as needed.

**Mathematics**: The Australian Curriculum outlines three proficiency strands which are: Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving and Reasoning. These are an integral part of Mathematics across the Content strands, which are: Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. Children are encouraged to
warm up (mathematically!) before undertaking problem solving tasks, which are then recorded, discussed and shared.

**Design and Technology:** Children are challenged to apply knowledge and skills to solve problems. They identify needs, generate ideas, plan, design, hypothesize and test to find possible solutions. Design and Technology can be integrated into many other learning areas including Mathematics, English and Science, just to name a few!

**History:** Children will participate in a variety of learning tasks and investigations, expanding their knowledge and understanding of their own and other societies, of ancient and modern history, the birth of Australian democracy and the interdependence between peoples and cultures.

**Geography:** Children will investigate concepts such as place, space and interconnections through two key strands: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding, and Geographical Inquiry and Skill.

**Science:** The strands are: Biological Science; Chemical Science; Earth and Space; Physical Science which follow the Australian Curriculum and utilise Primary Connections resources.

**The Arts:** Children will experience a range of different music, drama, dance and art forms and mediums, experimenting with design, colour, form and structure.

**Physical Education/Health:** All students have Fitness sessions (or 'huff 'n' puff') which involves short activities, exercises and games with continuous movement to raise the heart rate. Physical Education/Sport entails learning the skills and rules of various team sports with the aim to increase knowledge and participation in sporting activities. Health units encompass a range of topics and themes and is integrated across many other key learning areas.

**LOTE: Italian:** Perche`imparare una lingua e perche`L`Italiano? (Why learn a language, and why Italian?) Intercultural understanding through language learning provides children with knowledge and skills that enriches their growth as effective members of the increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse world that is developing. Learning a second language also enhances a person's abilities in their first language and provides them with a greater understanding of how language works. In South Australia, Italian is the most commonly used language other than English and many high schools (including Cardijn College) offer Italian within their curriculum. We aim to heighten children’s understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures, foster a passion for language learning, and to equip children with skills that they are able to further build on in high school and in their continued life learning.

**Leadership:** Children will have the opportunity to apply for different positions such as SRC (Year 6 & 7), School Captains and Vice Captains (Year 6 students write applications for these positions at the end of 2015 for the following year), Sports Captains and Vice Captains (Year 7). We regard all of our Middle Years children as
potential leaders and provide experiences to encourage and promote leadership. One of our most successful programs in the field of Leadership is the Leadership Program. ALL children will be given a Leadership booklet (most Year 7 children will already have their copy from last year, which can be built upon) which is used to record their leadership activities, collect points and receive recognition.

**Independence Day:** In support of a whole school initiative which promotes independent organisation and resilience (on Fridays for the junior children), we ask that you encourage your child to be independent by organising their own equipment, bag, books, lunch, etc.

**Contact information:** If you wish to speak to any of the Middle Years teachers, please make an appointment via email, phone call or a note in your child’s diary.

If you would like the teachers to contact you via email, please fill in the slip below and return to the class teacher.

If you are able to assist in the classroom (and have an All Saints volunteer and police clearance) please fill in the slip below and return to the class teacher.

Thank you.

*Meredith Smith*  [msmith@allsaints.catholic.edu.au](mailto:msmith@allsaints.catholic.edu.au)

*Natalie Emberton*  [nemberton@allsaints.catholic.edu.au](mailto:nemberton@allsaints.catholic.edu.au)

*Dolores McCluskey*  [dmccluskey@allsaints.catholic.edu.au](mailto:dmccluskey@allsaints.catholic.edu.au)

*Nick Wright*  [nwright@allsaints.catholic.edu.au](mailto:nwright@allsaints.catholic.edu.au)
I / We can be contacted via email.

Name: ____________________________________________

Child’s name: ____________________________________  Year: _____________________

Email address: ________________________________________________________________

I / We would be available to assist in the classroom for reading art/craft other: __________

(please circle)

Name: ________________________________________________________________

I / We give permission for my/our child to view PG rated films, documentaries, clips and programs as part of the Middle Years curriculum.

Signed: __________________________       Date: __________________________

Please return the above slips by Monday Week 3.