Congratulations to staff, students and families for making the beginning of 2013 a happy, exciting time. It was wonderful to have 20 of our school families come together on Saturday to make the school grounds tidy and safe. Staff have set up the learning spaces beautifully, despite slightly crowded conditions. And when students came through the doors yesterday it was a delight to welcome them back from holidays, welcome them in as new students and to see them catching up with or making new friends. We look forward to a great year of learning, loving and living together.

Next Tuesday 12th February you are strongly encouraged to come to St Francis school for our first PIP (Parents in Partnership) Annual General Meeting. 7.30—8.30pm

There will be a report of our first year’s achievements and challenges, as well as a presentation of our focus for 2013. We need as many parents as possible so that we can develop an effective Action Plan for our partnership this year (staff and parents for the benefit of our children).

Traffic Management
We have grown from 180 students to 267 students! As a result there is more traffic! For safety reasons please note the following:
- Limited parking is available in the car park—entrance from Manna Gum Dve. (The disabled car spaces may only be used if you have a valid disabled car parking sticker displayed. And please be careful as you enter the driveway as the curbing is longer than you may expect—look for the bollard as a guide).
- On Fairview Pde one gate is for entry and the other for exit (the one closest to the school office is an exit gate).
- Turning into the school on Fairview Pde is by left turn only (proceed to the round about past the school and come back rather than attempting a right hand hand turn)
- Use the school crossing with children even if it means going out of your way
- When using the drop off & pick up zone, children are only to move in and out of cars between the cones, for safety reasons
- If parking off site park legally—along the curb, keeping clear of driveways (parking officers do patrol school zones and fines are expensive)
- Please walk / ride to school whenever possible to reduce the road traffic
- By 3.25pm a number of cars have cleared the area—consider arriving those few minutes later and you may find it less chaotic.

Staff will continue to monitor the situation—please speak with any of us if you have concerns.
Time of Arrival
The best time to arrive in the morning is between **8.40 – 8.45am**. This allows children time to greet staff & friends and for them to prepare for the day. Children should not arrive earlier than 8.30: this is when supervision begins in the school grounds.
Please be mindful that Out of School Hours Care operates in the shared learning space before & after school.
No entry to the school should occur prior to 8.40am other than students who are moving to or from Thomas Carr College.

Ash Wednesday & Lent
The season of Lent begins next **Wednesday 13th February**. We will be having a **9.15am mass** at St Francis. You are invited to attend along with any parishioners who may like to join us.
In preparation for this Ash Wednesday mass, we will have a liturgical burning of last year’s palm branches. If you have kept your blessed palm branch from last year’s Palm Sunday celebration please send or bring it to school on Monday. At 11.30am Fr Mario will lead the school in prayer and burn these branches to create the ash for Wednesday’s mass.

Uniform Shop
The Uniform shop is open every **Tuesday, from 8am—10am**.

School Hats
Reminder: All children need a hat for playing during terms 1 & 4. Those who have not yet purchased one please provide your child with a hat until next Tuesday when you will be able to purchase one from the uniform shop. If your child does not have a hat to wear their playing is restricted to the verandah area.

Food at School
Healthy food promotes healthy bodies and minds. Learning is best when children have healthy eating habits. Only healthy food should be sent to school—treats are great at home!
Please send manageable amounts of healthy food in your child’s lunch box as well as a water bottle that can be refilled if required. Any uneaten food will be sent home so that you are able to monitor your child’s eating.
Feel free to speak with your child’s home group teacher if you have any queries or concerns.
Reminder: The school has a **no nuts policy**.

**Curriculum Levy:** This levy is now due and should be paid **by Friday 15th February**.

**School Fees:** Statements will be sent home on Friday 8th February.

**EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance):** A payment to support lower-income families with education costs is available upon application. A parent/guardian must hold a current Commonwealth Pension Card or Health Care Card. **Applications for term 1 payment are due at school office by Thursday 28th February.**

**Stage 2 Building Program**
We are progressing—on schedule! Much work has taken place during the holidays. Plaster board is going up and the new learning spaces are taking definite shape. We are hoping to be able to move into the new section of the school at the beginning of March—it may be a little later but we are hopeful!

**Term Calendar**
This is available from the school website. Please refer to it there. Hard copies will be available from the office foyer on Friday.