St Augustine's College - Sydney

UNITAS PROGRAMME 2014
January 29 2014

Dear Year 9 Parents and Guardians,

I am happy to inform you that the College will again be running the very successful ‘Unitas’ programme in Year 9 this year.

The aim of the programme is to engage Year 9 students in interesting activities that create a sense of unity among their Tutor Group and year level and help develop a sense of connectedness within their local community.

We are also very aware that these middle years of high school require something different, something challenging and exciting to stimulate interest and engagement at school. We see this programme working side-by-side with Year 9 Outdoor Education experience that encourages working together as a unit within a bush setting and participating in fun activities that challenge the young men both mentally and physically.

Your son will be involved in a variety of challenging, worthwhile and fun activities every second Wednesday (Week B) after Period 3. The boys will participate in their Year 9 Tutor group consisting of 15 or 16 boys and rotate through the programmed activities so that by the year’s end most activities will be covered. Please refer to the yearly planner and details of the activities within this booklet. The costs of this programme will be covered by the existing College fee schedule.

It is the College expectation that all Year 9 boys participate in the programme and contact and medical information will be gleaned from the Student and Family Medical Information Form that is updated each year. Please ensure that any updated information is given to the College before ‘Unitas’ begins.

All the activities will conclude by the end of the school day and all off-site activities will be held at local venues and lunch will need to be supplied for your sons on that day.

Mark Downey, Year 9 Student Formation Leader, will coordinate the programme and I ask that any questions be directed to him. In addition, if any parent or guardian, has concerns with their son’s participation in any activity, I ask them to contact Mark as soon as possible.

I look forward to being involved in, and also witnessing the continued success of, this exciting initiative.

Yours sincerely

Peter Nolan
Dean of Middle School
PRIMARY IMMERSION

This activity involves a Tutor Group working with the younger children of Brookvale Public School (BPS). Boys will assist with reading, art & craft, sport activities, computers, gardening, lunch time activities and other general classroom activities.

BPS Pittwater Road, Brookvale. School Principal, Beverley Maunder

12:40pm: Walk to BPS
3:15pm: Return to College
Requirements: School Uniform or Sports uniform, Hat & Lunch

SERVICE PROJECTS/CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA

This will involve students providing community service in partnership with ‘Clean Up Australia’. Boys will ‘clean up’ Narrabeen Lakes and surrounding areas. A College staff member will accompany the students on this activity.

12:45pm: College bus departs for Narrabeen Lakes
2:45pm: Bus returns to College
Requirements: Sports uniform, hat and sunscreen & lunch

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Students will be lead by a representative from “Relationships Australia” using classrooms on College grounds. A College staff member will also oversee the seminar.

This course will cover -

- An understanding of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships
- Basic understanding of aspects that can impact on a relationship
- Reflection on ways we communicate and the differences in ways to communicate
- Strategies for a good outcome when building relationships

GROOMING & ETIQUETTE

These activities will all be completed on College grounds run by Philippa Sherwood, Mary Smith and Penny Mason. While not taking away from the wonderful work parents are already doing, this experience is aimed at further exposure to some daily duties many boys and men need to master. We will improve skills in ironing, sewing, bed making, tying a Windsor knot, phone etiquette, preparing a menu, setting a table, basic food preparation, baking a loaf of bread.
Boys will be engaged in 3 different ‘Taste of TAFE’ courses.

**AUTOMOTIVE**
Introduction to car maintenance/motor mechanics

**HOSPITALITY: COMMERCIAL COOKERY**
Basic cooking lessons/meal preparation

Both courses will be run by qualified TAFE teachers and a College staff member will be present to oversee the afternoon’s activities.

12:40pm: Bus to TAFE *Accompanied by St Augustine’s College Staff Member*
3:10pm: Bus returns to College

Requirements: School Uniform, leather school shoes *(if available—work boots can be worn)* & Lunch

**POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**
Students will be lead by a College staff member using classrooms and computer labs in the College grounds.

Every boy is strong in something. The key issue is many do not actually realise what it is they are strong in. The Positive Psychology unit will allow students to explore and identify their key signature strengths. Using this information they will then be guided through ways that these strengths can be used in a positive way to influence many aspects of their lives and well being.

**MEDITATION AND YOGA**
Students will be lead and instructed by Catherina Sheppard one of our College teachers who is a qualified Yoga instructor and a keen proponent of meditation. A new and appropriate venue at Brookvale TAFE *(NORTHERN SYDNEY INSTITUTE* Old Pittwater Road, Brookvale) will be used. Mats will be supplied.

12:40pm: Bus to TAFE *Accompanied by St Augustine’s College Staff Member*
3:10pm: Bus returns to College

Requirements: College sports uniform & Lunch
FENCING

Students will have two introductory lessons by a qualified instructor and learn the finer skills of this ancient Olympic sport. This activity will be held onsite with a College staff member overseeing the activity.

12:40pm: Mary MacKillop Centre
3:20pm: Conclusion
Requirements: Sports uniform, sports shoes & lunch

GOLF

Boys will receive a ‘one off lesson’ and two sessions of play at the Terry Hills PAR3 short course. A College staff member will accompany the students on this activity.

12:40pm: Bus to Terrey Hills
3:00pm: Bus returns to College
Requirements: Sports uniform, hat & lunch

CPR

Students will undergo basic CPR training from Greg Egan, a qualified instructor, and receive a certificate and the end of the 2 hour course. The course will be held in a College classroom and College mannequins will be used.

MEDIA and TELEVISION PRODUCTION

Students will learn the finer points of producing a television show, including script writing, camera usage, and ‘green screen’ technology. A college staff member will accompany a qualified NIDA instructor and the course will be run in a suitable venue on College grounds.

SINGING FOR OTHERS

Under the guidance of Ben Marshall, boys will learn the 2 or 3 songs and by the end of the second session they will perform to a group of willingly listeners, either a group of elderly at a nursing home or a group of children at a special school such as Fisher Rd School. The boys would travel to that performance by College mini bus accompanied by Ben and a College staff member.