

PRINCIPAL MR TONY PAATSCH

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

YEAR 7 2021 - INFORMATION NIGHT ADDRESS

Welcome everyone to 'your place'. I hope that you and your son will always feel part of this College and community.

At St Joseph's we are profoundly optimistic about the human potential and intrinsic goodness of each boy. We believe that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God. Your son is an image of the divine and we recognise this and treat him accordingly.

This College is a Catholic Boys' School in the Edmund Rice Tradition.

As a Catholic school we are part of Church, a Church with huge problems. At a time in our history we have been part of the problem, today we are part of the solution. In centuries past the Church formed Catholic Schools we believe that now it is time for Catholic schools to form church.

As an Edmund Rice School we are committed to the poor and marginalised, most current students are not poor or marginalised... but we aim to have each boy recognise and respond to those who are.

As part of Edmund Rice Education Australia we aspire to 4 touchstones; Liberating Education, Justice and Solidarity, Inclusive Community and Gospel Spirituality. These are central to our operation. Our strategic plan is structured around them as are our student leadership portfolios.

May I make some more pragmatic remarks.....

The only thing harder than teaching an adolescent is living in a home with one and there's only one thing harder than both of these things... and that's being the adolescent.

We are expert in dealing with young men and we understand what they need. Including:

- Clear rules and boundaries fairly applied.
- Forgiveness when they get it wrong.
- Really high expectations

- Encouragement to be authentically male by being artistic or musical or sporting or academic..... or all of these

In “Harry Potter and the Cursed child” the adult Draco Malfoy advises the adult Harry Potter about Harry’s son Albus, he says “Don’t lose the boy, you’ll regret it Harry... And so will he. Because he needs you **and** his friends whether or not he knows it now”.

We won’t educate your son **for** you. We will educate him **with** you.

Between February next year and November 2026 when he graduates we have him in class for about 18% of his waking hours:

It is important that we work together well, which means we must:

- Communicate
- Trust and support each other
- Encourage boys to get involved and model this ourselves.
- Aim for 100% attendance at school.

We know that some families have financial challenges at this time so we keep the fees as affordable as possible, about \$6000. We ask as firmly as we can that you contribute to the College building fund. It is ‘voluntary’ so that it is tax deductible, which we know is a great financial help to many families BUT we have a strong expectation that most families will pay it. If many don’t we must add it to the fees – which are not tax deductible.

For some families the fees are easy, for most of us they are possible but require sacrifices. For some families they may be impossible. If you are in this situation please contact the College. We will try to help.... As part of our commitment to social justice. The ‘justice’ part means that the rest of us who can, **must** meet our obligations.

Thank you for entrusting your boy to us. I look forward to getting to know you and him and to working with you both over the next 6 years. Thank you in anticipation for the contribution you and he will make to St Joseph’s.