Coming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8 (B)</th>
<th>Beginning Monday 2nd September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.9.13</td>
<td>Years 7-10 Summer Sport Selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9.13</td>
<td>Year 12 Hospitality Excursion to Novotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9.13-7.9.13</td>
<td>CHS Athletics at Sydney Olympic Park</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9 (A)</th>
<th>Beginning Monday 9th September</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.9.13-19.9.13</td>
<td>Year 11 Preliminary Course Yearly Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.9.13</td>
<td>Years 8&amp;9 NAIDOC Debate at Tarrawanna PS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.9.13-11.9.13</td>
<td>Stan Jones Tennis State Final – West Wyalong</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.9.13</td>
<td>NSW All Schools Touch Football Competition at Dalton Park</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10 (B)</th>
<th>Beginning Monday 16th September</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.9.13-19.9.13</td>
<td>Year 11 Preliminary Course Yearly Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.9.13-19.9.13</td>
<td>Year 8 Students complete ESSA readiness test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.9.13</td>
<td>All Year 7 and Year 9 Boys Vaccinations</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.9.13</td>
<td>Year 12 Picnic Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.9.13</td>
<td>Year 12 Graduation Ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.9.13</td>
<td>Last Day of Term 3</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 (A)</th>
<th>Beginning Monday 7th October (Public Holiday)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.10.13</td>
<td>Start of Term 4 Students return to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.12.13</td>
<td>Last Day of Term 4 for students</td>
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</tbody>
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Principal’s Report

Minister's Award for Excellence in Teaching and in Student Achievement

The Minister’s Award for Excellence in Teaching acknowledges quality teachers and teaching in Departmental preschools, primary and secondary schools and TAFE NSW. The Minister’s Award for Excellence in Student Achievement recognises students’ achievements over their secondary school years with particular emphasis on achievements in Years 11 and 12. In 2013, excellence in Teaching and Student Achievement has been recognised with these prestigious awards being presented to Mrs Jennifer English (Head Teacher Science) and Rhys Kilian (student Yr 12).

The Award presented to teachers is for their demonstrated degree of high accomplishment in teaching and a commitment to excellence. It recognises the achievements of individual teachers in delivering high quality education to students and contributing to their professional communities. In particular, teachers must be addressing the seven standards found in the National Professional Standards for Teachers to be eligible for this Award.

At the recently held ceremony, it was noted that Mrs English leads her staff with outstanding skills, knowledge and pedagogical practices that are researched and workplace based. She also creates Edmodo groups for Science teachers to share resources.

The Award presented to students acknowledges students’ academic excellence, sporting and/or cultural achievements, leadership skills and commitment to the school community. It also acknowledges the importance of values such as integrity, excellence, respect, responsibility, cooperation, participation, care and fairness.

To this end, Rhys Kilian has demonstrated the highest standards and commitment to these values throughout his secondary education. His leadership, integrity and respect for all people is to be commended.

PBS VALUES

Week 8: LEARNING
Move quickly back to the classroom at the end of the break

Week 9: RESPECT
Be at the canteen only to buy for yourself
Figtree High School is proud of the achievements of all our teachers and students and congratulates in particular Mrs Jennifer English and Rhys Kilian on their Minister’s Awards.

David C Deitz
Relieving Principal

FHS Core Values: A focus on Safety

This week is National Child Protection Week and so the focus of this article will be on student safety in the online environment. Students have a broad range of online tools to use to establish and maintain networks with friends and acquaintances. New sites, apps and games are being developed all the time and the best way to ensure that your child is safe online is to ensure that you stay well informed about the applications your child is using.

The Australian Government has developed the cybersmart website to help inform kids, teens, parents and teachers about strategies to ensure that children and teens are well informed and safe in online environments. The link to this accurate and reliable website can be found below.


While Facebook has been widely used for several years and many parents are users of Facebook, changes occur to Facebook on a regular basis and the privacy features on a student’s Facebook account should be reviewed regularly. In particular parents can talk to their children about;

- Only accepting friend requests from people they actually know and are friends with in person
- Only allowing friends to see their updates, activity and photos
- Only allowing friends to send them messages and write on their wall
- Keeping information about themselves private – don’t put address or phone numbers online
- Blocking people who behave inappropriately towards them online and report this to both Facebook and their parent/s or teachers at school.

For further information about managing privacy settings on social media sites, an excellent resource for parents to support their children is http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/site/index.asp

A newer social networking site, ask.fm, is a risker site for students to be engaging with, as it has less restrictions. On this site anyone can engage with you online, and there are options to engage anonymously, so that it becomes very hard to identify who is making the comments that are posted. At school, there have been an increasing number of concerns expressed by both students and parents regarding this social networking website. Our advice to students over the past month is to stay off this site, and choose other social networking sites where you have control over who can engage with you online. Further information about this site can be accessed from the CyberSmart website on the link below.


Ellie Donovan
Deputy Principal
Excellent Attendance Improves Student Learning

In previous newsletters we have discussed the importance of high levels of student attendance and the relationship to achieving the best possible outcomes for student learning. This term, we would like to extend our congratulations to those students who have so far maintained a 100% attendance record, which also includes 100% punctuality. This excellent record has been achieved by 131 students this term:

33 Year 7 Students  
26 Year 9 Students  
13 Year 11 Students  

We take this opportunity to remind parents that students are expected to be at school for every day that the school is open. Parents can apply for leave for their child if they are sick, injured or need to attend a medical appointment. If a student is late to school, needs to leave early or is absent from school, parents/carers are required to provide a note of explanation. The school has booklets for this purpose and they are available at the front office, Deputy Principals and Year Advisers.

Where possible, we ask that parents make appointments for their children before or after school hours, so that their learning is not interrupted. This also applies for Wednesday afternoon Sport sessions. The Department of Education and Communities mandates that students MUST attend and participate in Sport, unless they are granted an exemption, due to medical reasons. The number of students requesting leave on a Wednesday afternoon during sport time has been increasing, so we take this opportunity to remind parents that Sport is a compulsory learning activity in the week that students must attend on a regular basis.

Ellie Donovan  
Deputy Principal

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Handy tips:

Exam stress busters
The mere thought of an exam can make kids nervous. Help create the right study conditions for your child in the lead-up to exams and know the warning signs if it’s all getting too much.

RSL winners Weeks 6 & 7

Congratulations to Scott Borst (Year 12), Elyse Kambisios (Year 11), Simone Stiff, Olivia Harris (Year 9) Ashlee Currinckx (Year 8) Daniel Armstrong, Rose Ciocca, and Andrew McLean (Year 7) who each won either an 8 gigabyte thumb drive (very useful for assignments etc!), an iTunes voucher or a $5 canteen voucher because they had their RSL tickets drawn out on assembly. RSL tickets are given to students who are seen to be practising the school’s values of Respect, Safety and Learning. Students are encouraged to drop their RSL tickets into the box in the administration block so that they can be included in the weekly prize draw. These tickets are also tallied for each student and count towards earning merits for Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards.

Science News

This year 27 students competed in the Big Science Competition against 45 576 student from 585 schools across Australia.

Congratulations to the following students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation (0 – 59%)</th>
<th>Dylan Ward</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gabrielle Livingston</td>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Treza Booth</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jarrod Twigg</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jessica Trudgett</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kimia Rahmannia</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Hubert</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maree Dsilievksa</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deon Jauleski</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>James Mckinnon</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirra Somerville</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marius Polhill</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley Heino</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam Ross</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Valceski</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aaron Cunningham</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit (60 – 84%)</td>
<td>Andrew Watson</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan Power</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hayden Hunt</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Savannah Reali</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sean Power</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction (85 – 94%)</td>
<td>Mikaela Frame</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Neal</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wes Roberts</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucas Wegener</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhys Kilian</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High Distinction (95 – 100%)</td>
<td>Lloyd Kellermann</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The science faculty would also like to wish all our HSC students the best of luck in their exams. Hopefully all the hard work and dedication to your studies will pay off for you in all your future endeavours.

Jenny English  
Head Teacher Science
Preparing for Final Examinations

Andrew Fuller is a clinical psychologist who works with many schools and communities in Australia and internationally, specialising in the wellbeing of young people and their families. As our senior students approach their Preliminary and HSC examinations, we would like to share some of his advice (www.andrewfuller.com.au) to students in how to best prepare for and perform in their final examinations:

1. Study in silence. This is the single most powerful way to increase your marks. Spend at least 20 minutes of your study time in silence. Outcomes improve when you practice in the same conditions in which you want to perform.

2. Organise and transform the information you want to learn. Just reading your notes over and over again doesn’t really work. Your memory stores information best when you organise or transform it. The more times you can transform and reorganise the information the more firmly it is remembered.

3. Put off pleasurable activities until work is done. This is a painful one but if you play computer games before you get down to studying, the levels of dopamine in your brain lessen and you will lose the drive and motivation you need to study effectively.

4. Talk yourself through the steps involved. One of the things that highly successful students do is to explain out loud to themselves the steps involved in completing a task.

5. Ask for help. Teachers want their students to be interested and to do well.

6. Take notes. Just writing down the ideas that you have makes a powerful contribution to your marks. Don’t just write down what the teacher writes. Make notes of any ideas you have as well.

7. Write and re-write key points. Writing the main points of the area you are learning helps you to remember them. If you can add in re-organising and transforming them into different formats (drawings, flow chats, podcasts etc.) that makes it even more powerful.

8. Make lists and set priorities. Make a “to-do” list each week. Write down in your diary the most important things to be done in each subject each week. High scoring students do a little bit on each subject, a lot rather than doing a lot of work on one subject every so often.

9. Keep a record of how much study you have done.

10. Use memory aids. These are tools that help you to remember information. For example, the rhyme, “thirty days have September, April, June and November” helps us to remember the calendar. School requires more memory skills than any job you can think of.

11. Long-term filing works best if you go right to sleep – the minutes before bedtime are crucial.

12. Set study times. The last method is to decide when you are most alert and to set aside some time at that time of day to study. If you wait until you are in the right mood before beginning to study, you may wait forever.

We wish all of our Year 11 and 12 students all the best for their upcoming examinations.

Mr David Deitz
Relieving Principal

Learning Labs

Learning Labs is an enrichment program run by the University of Wollongong during the July holidays. It is also held during the January holidays as well. We were lucky enough to have two representatives from Figtree High School – Kimia Rahmannia from Yr8 and Taryn Brunskill from Yr9. Kimia and Taryn each selected a different workshop to attend and they have written about their experience below.

Kimia Rahmannia Yr8 – “Learning Labs is an awesome two day experience, where you learn about a certain topic in the first year of uni. Students come from all over NSW, from Sydney to the Southern Highlands. It's held at the University of Wollongong for two days and you get to choose which workshop to attend. It's a good way to make friends. I was lucky enough to be involved in: The Power of Make Believe - An Actor In Action. I had so much fun with all the fun games and the way of thinking. I never knew acting was so intense. My favourite part was all the acting games we played. I would definitely recommend it to others!"

Taryn Brunskill Yr9 – “Learning Labs is a program for students to go to the University of Wollongong and pick from a range of courses to study over 2 days. They range from history to engineering to Law; there is so much to choose from. You also get to meet so many new people from all around the area and who come all the way down from Sydney. I went to the Horrible History learning lab and we learnt about so many historical events, the assassination of JFK, the mystery of the Grand Duchess Anastasia and more! After learning the basics of all this and chatting with the lecturers we got to choose one to go more in-depth with. Either in a group or by yourself and at the end of the 2nd day perform it either in a show or PowerPoint or however you wanted. I had a great time and met so many new friends. I would definitely recommend it and I’m going again next time!”

Learning Labs is held every July and January holidays and there’s a huge range of workshops available. If you would like to attend in the future, see Mrs Corbett in the HSIE Staffroom.
**Cross Country News**

Congratulations to the following students on their performance in the “Regional Teams Event” at the recently held NSWCHSSA Cross Country Championships.

- Cameron Lodge – Regional placing 3rd
- Jayden Smileski - Regional placing 3rd
- Joshua Head - Regional placing 3rd
- Adam Bassuni - Regional placing 1st
- Tim Tschentscher - Regional placing 2nd

Well done to all boys.

**Wednesday Sport**

Figtree HS has competed each Wednesday afternoon for sport against other schools in our zone. In week 8 we will have the finals and I am sure we will have a number of teams represented. Congratulations to the teams that did make finals but also a big congratulations to all students who play competition sport each week. They have represented Figtree HS with pride and great sportsmanship.

To all our competition coaches, thank you for the effort you give to each team every week. Your efforts are much appreciated.

**Athletics Australia All Schools Knockout Championships – State Final**

**Junior Boys & Girls (U15)**

**Thursday 22nd August, Sydney Olympic Park Athletic Centre**

Just when I thought the sporting year of 2013 couldn’t be topped, along came this event! The competition is run in a team’s format for boys and girls in the following age groups:

- Junior (U15)
- Intermediate (U17)
- Senior (U19)

The entire competition is coordinated by Athletics Australia whereby any school in Australia is able to enter and compete to be crowned Australian Champion. In the NSW Final, schools of the calibre of Trinity Grammar, Sydney Grammar, Knox College, Barker College, St Pius X, Shore and Pymble Ladies College were present. There were only a handful of government schools in attendance. Of these, the majority were sport.

In the junior boys and girls competition we had to enter 5 to 6 competitors with each competitor having to enter an individual event. The events being; 100m, 800m, 100m Hurdles, Shot Put, Javelin, Long Jump and 4x200m. We had to have 2 runners in the 100m and 800m. All other individual events required only one competitor. So it is a “true” test of the athletic talent of the school in each respective category.

Each state and territory conducts their own Schools Knockout Championship and the first two teams in each age division and gender automatically qualify for the National Final. This is conducted the day after Australian All Schools Athletics Championships. This year this will be in Townsville on Dec 9. The competition is capped at 16 teams in each gender and age division.

So how did we go in the state final?

**Girls (Teghan Barklay, Demi Westwood, Elle-May Wilson, Camelia Ali, Jade Gray)**

The girl’s involvement was always about preparation for the coming years in this championship as they can all participate next year, and for most, even the year after. The girls put in commendable performances, learning a lot about competing at this level. The notable performance within the team was by Teghan in the 90m Hurdles where she finished as the fastest ranked athlete on the evening in her age group and 2nd in the Long Jump.

Demi and Camelia ran strongly in the 100m being placed mid field. Demi being able to participate in this team for another two years, while Camelia three! Elle-May Wilson and Jade Gray again ran well in the 800m, again giving away two years, and Jade backed up to compete in the javelin. Camelia was our competitor in the Shot Put. Our 4x200m relay team consisted of Demi handing to Camelia who handed to Elle-May then anchored by Teghan. The girls put in a strong performance finishing 5th overall. I am looking forward to what this team can produce next year with a 10th placing out of 30 teams.
Boys (Jarrod Twigg, Momolu Sirleaf, Joshua Head, Sam Oyston, Joshua Byrne, Matthew Hobbs)

The competition commenced with Jarrod being the fastest ranked u15 Boy from the 4 heats. The team aspect kicked in with Momolu achieving a 4th ranking with a close 3rd in his heat. Figtree had hit the front.

Momolu then had to go straight to the Long Jump. After the first round he was leading, after the second round he was leading, after his third round attempt he was still in front. This remained until the very last jump of the competition where a boy from Killara bettered Momolu’s distance of 4:28 by 10cm. We were still in the lead!

Over to Josh Byrne in the Shot Put. Because Josh is competing a year up he had to throw a 1kg heavier shot. A boy from Knox was throwing well, easily winning by over a metre. Josh was able to achieve equal 3rd overall. We were still right up there!

Joshua Head and Sam Oyston were up next in the 800m. Josh and Sam were in the same heat. Josh absolutely blitzed his heat. A boy from Barker did a similar thing in the second heat nudging Josh out of the 1st ranked position by half a second. Once again the team aspect kicked in with Sam Oyston running the race of his life, following my race plan to the letter and never giving anything else but his best for each metre of the 800m, reducing his PB by over 10sec to achieve a 12th ranking out of the 30 odd competitors. We were still well in the mix!

Jarrod Twigg was up next in the 100m Hurdles. His performance was one of the most dominate performances of the night blitzing the field by over 2 seconds to be ranked 1st in the Hurdles for the U15 Boys. We were on our way to a State Championship!

Over to Matthew Hobbs, the youngest team member. Matthew was not competing in his favoured discus event and gave away 2yrs to most competitors. With a boy from Knox throwing over 55m! Matthew didn’t lose sight of focusing upon his own performance making each throw better than the next. Matthew finished 5th ranked in this competition. If we now ran a solid 4x200m relay we were in with a real show. The relay team of Momolu, Sam, Josh Head and anchored by Jarrod were absolutely brilliant. They won their heat and ranked 1st after the 3 heats of competition.
At this stage there were no "official" team results. The announcer commenced announcing the overall winner. He started from 10 down to first. When Figtree was not named in the 10th to 3rd positions we knew we were in with a great shot of the state title. When we weren't announced as 2nd we now knew we had won. When the Figtree HS team was announced as winners, a number of our followers, that had now gathered within the crowd, gave an almighty roar. With the announcer saying "and on debut the U15 boys winner is Figtree!" The boys, their families and I were beside ourselves with excitement. We had prevailed against the calibre of competition previously mentioned.

The boys have now booked a place at the National Final in Townsville. We go to this championship with a very realistic chance of experiencing further success. We now face the might of Victorian, Queensland, South Australian, Western Australian and ACT schools, along with, our competitors from the state final.

The boys and I will be doing some fund raising in the coming months trying to offset the $3000 it will now take the team to travel to Townsville to compete at these championships. Anybody out there that can help with sponsorship would be greatly appreciated. Mainteck have already generously supported us by providing $700 to kit the boys out in a team uniform for travel and to wear around Townsville and the track. If you would like to lend your support you may contact me at school.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the parents that helped transport students to and from SOPAC last Thursday and for their fantastic support. And finally, well done to our students, you were brilliant!

Mr Smart – Head Teacher PDHPE
Student medical forms

During Terms 3 and 4 we will be updating our medical records systems to ensure we have the most up-to-date information on your child’s health.

If you have a child with a medical condition you will receive a copy of the new forms in the mail and will need to fill them out and return them to us as soon as you can.

The good news is we have already started collecting some of this information, which means less for you to do.

The new forms will help us collect your child’s important medical information and the introduction of new systems will mean we’ll be able to better manage the daily and emergency health needs of your child.

We appreciate your support as we start collecting the information, and if you have any questions please call.

CANTEEN NEWS

Thank you to the wonderful parents who volunteer their precious time to help out in the canteen. Unfortunately over the past few years we have had very few new volunteers joining us here in the canteen. This makes waiting times for the students to make their purchases longer which does not allow them enough time to eat the food they have purchased.

If you can spare an hour or two once a fortnight or once a month, that would make such a difference for the students.

Please contact Narelle or Sharon in the Canteen on 4271 2787 as soon as possible.

Emergency Contact Details

If you have changed a phone number or address in the last 12 months and have not yet notified the school, could you please contact the school by: email figtree-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au, phone on 4271 2787 or fax 4271 6626 as soon as possible so we can update the student records.