



# MARIST LEARNING ZONE

An occasional newsletter for our friends and supporters

## Fundraiser Lunch

Our thanks to our many supporters who attended our luncheon and to all those who supported our raffle. We are grateful to Denise Long and her hardworking team of Marist Mothers who planned, organised and hosted the function. It certainly was an enjoyable and successful day. Our students are enjoying the benefits of the funds raised ... additional equipment, art, kitchen and garden supplies and planned outings are now possible, thanks to your generosity.

## Catholic Education and Marist Partnership

While MLZ is a Marist project, strongly supported by Marist Schools Australia, we also benefit from the many services offered by Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta. Professional learning for staff, counselling services for students and strong links with Diocesan schools are among these advantages.



## Who we are

Marist Learning Zone offers a new start to students who, for a variety of reasons, have stopped regular school attendance. Currently we have 15 students enrolled at MLZ. Each has an individual attendance plan, where they come to us on specified days each week, ranging from 2 to 5 days. On the days they are not with us, they are expected to attend their school, where their enrolment is maintained. We are experiencing a lot of success in improving the attendance rates of all students. Ultimately, our aim is to get our students excited about learning again, and facilitate their return to mainstream schooling as soon as possible.



*Our Team*





**It's not all hard work!**

We regularly prepare and enjoy food together, some of it grown in our own garden. We have a small, but attractive campus, which includes a basketball half-court, and space for ball games. Each day we have a prayer time followed by 20 minutes of quiet reading. Besides outdoor activities, we relax with students with indoor games and puzzles. And we enjoy just chatting with our young people. We recently had an excursion to nearby Featherdale Wildlife park. Other outings are planned.



*Check out our website:*

<http://www.mlz.catholic.edu.au/>

*What happens at MLZ?*

We maintain daily contact with each of the students' schools, and so we are informed of the school work each student has missed, or should be completing. Most of our time is occupied with what we call regular lessons, where, individually, or in small groups, students continue their study of school subjects. However, our teaching is quite different from what they experience at school: individualised attention, learning based on projects, educational activities which are fun, cross-curricular learning. Our centre is more like a family than a traditional school. By getting to know our students and their families well, we try to discover and remove the blocks which are keeping them from school.

If a return to mainstream school is not possible, we seek other options, such as work, trade experience or other educational pathways.



*What is success?*

Our students enjoy MLZ more than their schools! Taking the next step is a challenge. However, we are in the process of placing one of our students in TAFE and two others are about to return to a more appropriate school setting. That's success.