

## NEWSLETTER



ST. JULIAN'S  
SCHOOL  
PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

# IMPACT

Parents' Association News

March 2010



**International Children's Day:  
A chance to have breakfast with  
your kids at school!  
8am - 9am Tuesday June 1<sup>st</sup> 2010**

How do your kids normally eat their breakfast? When they're running around at home picking up their things for school? In the car on the way? You can't say because they don't usually bother?

'We all know how important it is to give our children the best possible start to the day with a substantial breakfast,' Andrea Almeida from St. Julian's Primary School told ImpACT, 'but somehow other things just end up taking priority. This year we want to invite Primary parents from Nursery to Y6 to join their kids for a wonderful breakfast on June 1<sup>st</sup> and help us celebrate International Children's Day.'

The food will include all the things parents and kids love such as fresh juice, fruit, coffee, croissants, ham and cheese and cake and will be on sale from 8am-9am, just inside the Primary School Main Entrance.

'All the pupils will be invited to join in and will be supervised, whether their parents are there or not,' added Andrea. 'The food will be priced at cost and any additional funds raised will be reinvested in activities for the primary students.' An invitation will be sent out nearer the time, but anyone who would like to know more now should contact Andrea Almeida via the Primary Office. *HS.*



### *In this edition ....*

Welcome to ImpACT March. The ImpACT newsletter in PDF format is in its second year now and the Committee wanted to know what you, the readers, thought. The parents I spoke to all remembered being notified via email that the new edition was available to download and read; they all were happy to access it via the St Julian's website <http://stjulians.com> and all liked the fact that (not having a print edition) meant that we could include lots of colour photos of events, of them and of their kids. The cost saving, too, is significant, both in financial and ecological terms.

There was one thing they wanted me to change, however, and that was to include more about events coming up. New parents don't often know what we mean when we say 'the Sports Festival' or 'the Summer Lunch' so for this edition I found as much information as possible about the regular summer goings on. We'll all be asked to volunteer our time; at least now we will know more about what we're volunteering for.

In addition there are new events to look forward to: a fundraising concert by Prof. Silva and his ten fledgling 'rock' bands and a special International Children's Day Breakfast for Primary School pupils AND their parents. With healthy food in mind, you'll also find a report from the School Nutrition Action Group on developments in changes to the provision of food, drinks and snacks at St Julian's.

In the meantime, thanks go to PACT Committee Members for their contributions and to Catarina Coelho for photos and all the whizzy stuff. If you wish to follow up or comment on any of the articles in ImpACT please contact me via the PACT email box on [pact@stjulians.com](mailto:pact@stjulians.com)

Have a wonderful Easter break.

Helen Sterling  
Editor

### *The PACT Summer Lunch - Tuesday June 8th 2010*

The PACT Summer Lunch takes place in June each year in the beautiful setting of the Headmaster's Garden. It is a wonderful opportunity for parents to join in an informal buffet and for PACT to acknowledge and thank the people who have helped them throughout the year. Senior members of staff from both schools normally attend the lunch.

'The sun always seems to shine,' said Jessica Hubert, PACT Co-Chair, 'and the atmosphere is calm and relaxed. The Head's garden is beautiful at this time of year and this is an event not to be missed.' *HS.*



### St. Julian's Sports Festival - Thursday - Saturday April 15, 16 and 17 2010

In the first week of Summer Term the St. Julian's Sports Festival is a community event with students competing from schools all over Portugal. Whilst the competition is open to Secondary School pupils, all parents are warmly encouraged to volunteer an hour or so to help with PACT catering.



'It's a great opportunity for parents of Primary School pupils to help out and let their kids stay a while after lessons to support St. Julian's in the competition,' said Jessica Hubert, PACT Co-Chair. 'Older Primary pupils will be able to gain a valuable insight into Secondary School activities. The weather is generally very good; it's a vibrant and exciting event for everyone at school, but we need LOTS of help,' she added. 'Lots of parents putting in an hour is better than a few doing the whole event.' Volunteers are involved in bringing baked goods for sale and in preparing food to sell throughout the event. Those parents who would like to help should contact their Year Rep or Jessica on [jessicahubert@btinternet.com](mailto:jessicahubert@btinternet.com) HS.

### Parents' Forum - Jane White (PACT Secretary) reports.



The latest Parents' Forum took place in School on Tuesday 2nd February at 7pm. Mr Connolly and Mr Smith (above) gave an update on the implementation of the whole school development plan. Questions submitted prior to the meeting were answered in a wide-ranging discussion. Subjects covered included changes to the main Curriculum throughout School and Pastoral Care in Primary School. JW.

### 'AliveAid' Evening Concert Fundraiser - June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010



Anyone who finds themselves in St. Julian's around home time will be aware of Prof. Silva's 'band practice', when the unmistakable twang of the electric guitar can be heard all through school. Prof. Silva (above, left) leads the creative development of ten 'rock' bands comprising small groups of enthusiastic musicians from Primary School. Now we all have the chance to see and hear these fledgling groups in concert. On the evening of June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010 Prof. Silva will be staging the 'AliveAid Concert Fundraiser' in the Primary School grounds.

'The ten students' bands and a staff group will play the music they have written themselves to raise money for charity,' Prof. Silva told ImpACT. 'The effect we're aiming for is along the lines of 'Rock in Rio' (below). It will be a family oriented evening for the whole school. We've been contacted by a children's TV channel, although details have to be confirmed.' And Prof. Silva would like to include a parents' band too.

'Any parent who plays a musical instrument and is interested in taking part should contact me,' has said. A letter from the Music Department will follow shortly but anyone who would like to know more about this event should contact Mr Silva on [nsilva@stjulian's.com](mailto:nsilva@stjulian's.com) or call 965 508 883. HS.



### PACT Annual (General) Meeting - Monday May 10<sup>th</sup> 2010

All parents are *de facto* members of PACT and this meeting is where they can find out more about how the organisation works. Parents from all sections of school are warmly invited to join the Committee to find out what PACT has done throughout the year. It's a celebration of everyone's hard work to raise funds for St. Julian's and the wider school community.

'This year we plan to have a display of ImpACT photos of the kids and their parents at events throughout the year,' said Jessica Hubert, PACT Co-Chair, 'which people will be able to see whilst we wait for the meeting to be quorate.' There will also be tea and cakes.

'I strongly urge parents to come,' Jessica added, 'to learn about new events for next year, to find out how much PACT has raised and what we have spent the money on and to vote for individuals on the new committee.'

PACT are still seeking to appoint a Secondary School Co-Ordinator and a Treasurer.

'Next year I plan to create a new role in a Social Activities Co-Ordinator which will strengthen the PACT events team,' she said. 'Being part of PACT is an exciting way to get more involved in school life.' HS.

## Food At School

What our kids eat at school is a concern shared by many parents. School-aged kids have high nutritional needs and it's crucial that the meals and snacks they eat through the day are rich in nutrients and energy. The School Nutrition Action Group 'SNAG' was set up as a response to the 'Whole School Food Policy' (WSFP), introduced by Mr Fannon in 2007.

In June 2008 SNAG distributed questionnaires to the whole school community, including students, parents and teachers. About 600 questionnaires were returned and carefully analysed. During much discussion between SNAG, the Catering Committee including St. Julian's catering company, Pro-Catering, the Student Council and the Soft Rock Cafe, recommendations for improvements were put forward to SMT for approval.

'I am very pleased with the nutritional changes that have taken place (at St. Julian's) since the Survey,' said Lisa Bernstorff, PACT Representative on SNAG, 'and with the ongoing work to make further improvements to further implement the Whole School Food Policy.'

The changes that have already taken place as a result of this survey are:

### The School Lunch:

Reduction of fried foods

Introduction of more vegetables in the food

Improved quality of the meat

Removal of 'instant desserts' from the menu, replaced by better quality fruit-based desserts, fruit and yoghurts

Removal of cordial drinks

During lunch time the food queuing system has improved but still needs further implementation. Every day the menu is available for all to see in the dining room in both Portuguese and English. It is also updated weekly, contains nutritional information and can be seen on the School Website <http://stjulians.com/parents/foodmenu.html>

### School grounds:

Further changes for break-time are the addition of water fountains to encourage the students to drink more water and to make it more accessible. These have now been approved and are planned to be in place by the time the warmer weather sets in. For the students who eat packed lunches, tables and chairs have been moved to more strategically positioned places and additional seating options are being considered.

### Soft Rock Cafe:

Students and teachers who have been at St. Julian's over the last few years will have noticed the improvements in the nutritional value of food offered at the Soft Rock Cafe tuck shop. The fizzy drinks vending machine is no longer available for students until after 4pm. Certain sweets and crisps have been removed. And healthier food options have been introduced, such as pasta salads and fruits. Furthermore the Soft Rock Cafe will no longer be selling sweets before lunchtime to encourage the students to start the day with proper breakfast.

Any parents wanting more information on the Whole School Food Policy or SNAG or who would like to comment should contact Lisa Bernstorff at [lbernstorff@yahoo.com](mailto:lbernstorff@yahoo.com)

## Appeal for Books in Guiné-Bissau - WE CAN HELP!

PACT Rep Anne Whitcombe learned of the Guiné-Bissau books appeal recently and thought PACT and St. Julian's parents would be able to help.

'It's more directed at the Portuguese community,' she explained, 'but we can all help by spreading the word.' The NGO *Acção para o Desenvolvimento* (Action for Development) runs a programme for training Portuguese-language teachers in Guiné-Bissau and desperately needs books.

'By this,' Anne continued, 'they mean both books for trainee teachers to read to improve their Portuguese, and books for them to use as a teaching resource with their young pupils.' The appeal is to donate one book from our bookshelves. It can be any kind of book, fiction or non-fiction, for any age (but especially for children) but MUST be in the Portuguese language.

The books should be sent by mail, preferably in a padded envelope, to:

A/C Dra. Isabel Levy Ribeiro

AD - Accao para o Desenvolvimento,

Caixa Postal 606 - Bissau

Republica de Guiné-Bissau

The Post Office has a special rate for Guiné-Bissau of €2.98 for up to 2 kgs. For more information please go to <http://affectoscomletras.blogspot.com>

## Changes in Primary School - Cristina Fonseca (PACT Primary Coordinator) reports.

The first alteration to schedules was during Christmastide when the Foundation Nativity performance (below) took place in the early afternoon. This meant that the children didn't have to go home at noon, as was the case before.



Following this, we had two performances for the KS2 Christmas Production, one in the early afternoon and the other on the following day in the morning. In this way we were able to offer parents more options and, with the audience divided equally into two performances, everyone had a seat and the Hall did not become overcrowded. The overcrowding



issue was raised during several PACT meetings with Mr. Bienkowski during the previous academic year and we're all really happy that the school took our concerns on board. The feed-back from parents has been extremely positive.



The second trial meanwhile for Parents' Conference took place in February on Monday February 8 from 8.30am. In the past, Conferences with teachers have been on Tuesday. During Autumn Term, however, Primary School agreed to trial the first evening (4pm-8pm) conference and followed this with the first Monday (8.30-3.30) trial so as not to break up the week both for children and parents. This was also a concern parents have had for a number of years. CF.