



A Message for Parents and Students

Cross-Curricular Initiative at Oaklands Catholic School

Welcome to learning at our school. In September we are going to plunge into learning through the lens of the book you have all been given tonight, *Trash* by Andy Mulligan. This stirring narrative of life, loss, love and resilience takes us all to the heart of the issues facing our world today and reminds us of our common humanity. Set in a slum, built around a massive landfill site, the story covers the adventures of three courageous young people when they discover a deadly secret during their daily scavenge for survival: faced with death threats, police brutality and social injustice, our heroes embark on a quest for justice and survival. Along the way they meet others whose kindness, generosity and compassion offer powerful role models in the war against poverty and neglect.

What do parents and students need to do?

Please read the first couple of chapters over the summer holiday so that you know the story and understand some of the characters. Your learning in September will arise from this text, so the better you know the book, the more comfortable you will feel in every lesson. For students who are not yet totally independent readers, perhaps parents could get involved and support the reading through some book sharing? Do not worry if you find the book a challenge to read, however; we will offer plenty of structured lessons in September to help you appreciate the main ideas.

Every lesson?

Yes! Every teacher you meet in the first week will reference the book and will offer you a learning scenario which arises from the themes, characters and issues we discover in the text. So that means you will be totally immersed in this text for the first few weeks and you will see that there are some very interesting links between all your early lessons.

Why are we doing this?

We believe that this cross-curricular approach will help all our students settle into school more quickly and enable all students to make academic progress within their first few weeks with us. The book offers a profound moral message which matches our Catholic ethos as well as providing a cracking story to entertain and enthral. In essence, we believe this approach will create a stimulating and enjoyable start to Year 7 for all of us.

What next?

You have been sent a PDF copy of the book – read it and enjoy it! You will receive a physical copy in your English lessons as this will be our first point of study in September.