



### Principal News

#### Dear Families,

This is next week's newsletter. Due to an office staff member on leave, it was easier to send the newsletter out earlier, rather than later. Please note that next week there will be a variety of staff members assisting you in the school office.

At last Monday's assembly we formally acknowledged our Year 6 Leaders, presenting each one with a Senior 6 Polo Shirt. We place trust in our school leaders and rely on them to be role models for all our students. They lead by example, assisting in setting the tone and upholding our school's values, particularly being safe, respectful and responsible. We also presented our captains with their badges.

### 2026 SCHOOL CAPTAINS



**School Captains (Bottom l-r):** Mason Dinaro, Eliza Davidson, Sean Philipose.  
**House Captains (Top l-r):** McAuley (Gold) Lara Phillips, Mannix (Red) Evie Ruyg, Mercy (Blue) Olivia Umbrello.

This year we have introduced a new, weekly student award. The **'Spirit of St Mary'** acknowledges students who demonstrate the values of our Patron Saint, Mary the Mother of God. This will be announced and a certificate presented after recess, each Monday. Congratulations to **Sylvie** who is the inaugural recipient. Sylvie is a kind and compassionate friend, always willing to offer support to others. Sylvie, we are very proud of you!

Our first family social event is our **Parents and Friends' Family Picnic** which will be held on Thursday, 12 February at Barwon Valley Fun Park from 5:00pm - 7:00pm. The event is very relaxed and families are invited to attend, bringing their own picnic dinner. It is a fabulous opportunity to meet or reacquaint

with school families and strengthen our school community bonds. Staff will be in attendance from approximately 5:00pm-6:00pm. Everyone is most welcome and we hope to see you there!

Advanced notice is given that our first **P&FA** meeting for the year will be held on **Wednesday, 25 February**. It will be a great opportunity to get involved in our fundraising and 'friendraising' strategy for 2026. Thank you to the dedicated and hard working parents, who give generously of their time and talent for the benefit of everyone at St Mary's School. Every one is most welcome to attend, whether it is for only one meeting throughout the year or on a regular basis. There are many fund-raising and friend-raising events planned each year and I encourage families to support these initiatives. Every contribution is appreciated and benefits all our students!

**The Season of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, 18 February.** Please see the Term Calendar for all events and activities.

2027 Foundation enrolments are now open! If you have a child due to begin in 2027 or know anyone who would value an education at our wonderful school for their child, please direct them to our school website for enrolment information, including [school tour bookings](#)

On **Friday 27 February**, we look forward to welcoming our **2026 Foundation parents and staff to the Centra from 7:00pm for a gathering to welcome them to St Mary's School**. It is hoped that it will be a great opportunity for new friendships to be forged that will continue as their children learn and socialise together over the next seven years. Please respond to the nForma notification so that catering can be confirmed. Thank you to the Parents and Friends' Association who will support the event. All Foundation parents/carers are warmly invited to attend.

A reminder that students are not permitted to use mobile phones, smart watches and any other personal electronic or communication device while at school. If your child needs to communicate with you while they are at school, a member of school leadership or their teacher will make contact with the appropriate family member. If your child has any of these devices for use out of school hours, they must ensure they are kept in their school bag, either turned off, or on do not disturb or on silent mode. The 2026 St Mary's School Family Handbook is available via this [link](#). This handbook has all the information you will need to ensure your child and family is able to successfully engage at St Mary's School. All relevant processes and protocols are explained. Our School Website also has many of our [policies](#) available for families to read and abide by. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with all elements of the Family Handbook and School Website and let me know if there are any errors or omissions.

Kind regards, Annice



Annice Lappin  
Principal

#### School Links

2026 Staff Email

Family Handbook

School Website

Parent Portal  
password:  
mary175



**Facebook:**  
[@St.Mary'sPrimaryGeelong](#)  
**Instagram:**  
[stmarys\\_ps\\_geelong](#)



St Mary's School acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

## Deputy Principal News

Dear Families,

This week, information regarding the Sacramental Program was sent to families with children in Year 3 (Penance), Year 4 (Eucharist) and Year 6 (Confirmation).

Families wishing to enrol their child/ren in the Sacramental Program facilitated by the school are required to attend **one Sacramental Enrolment Mass** at St Mary's Basilica held over the following two weekends:

**Saturday 21 February, 2026 - 6:00pm**

**Sunday 22 February at 7:30am, 9:30am and 11:00am**

**Saturday 28 February, 2026 - 6:00pm**

**Sunday 1 March at 7:30am, 9:30am and 11:00am**

At the conclusion of the Sacramental Enrolment Mass, you will be required to complete a Sacrament Enrolment form. This year, these will be digital so please bring along a phone or smart device to access a QR code.

**A reminder it is a requirement of the Parish that there will be a completed form for all students celebrating a Sacrament this year.**

[This year's Sacramental dates for St Mary's School are as follows:](#)



### Sacrament of Confirmation (Yr 6)

**Wednesday 25 March  
5:00pm, St Mary's Basilica**



### Sacrament of First Eucharist (Yr 4)

**Sunday 9 August  
2:30pm, St Mary's Basilica**



### Sacrament of Penance (Yr 3)

**Friday 27 November  
12:00pm, St Mary's School**

Warm Regards,  
Deb Boland



Deborah Boland  
Deputy Principal



## Foundation Assessment Days & Parent and Teacher Conversations

We are delighted to share that the transition into the 2026 school year has been very settled and positive across the school. Classrooms have been calm, welcoming learning spaces, with teachers dedicating time to establishing clear routines and expectations. This strong start has supported students to feel secure, engaged and ready to learn as we move into the year ahead. For our Foundation students, teachers will be meeting with children for one hour each Wednesday throughout February to carry out a range of early assessments. These sessions are an important part of getting to know each child as a learner and will help inform teaching and learning programs.

In addition, all families with students from Foundation to Year 6, are warmly invited to attend Parent and Teacher Conversations on Tuesday 17 February and Wednesday 18 February. These short meetings provide a valuable opportunity to connect with your child's teacher and discuss how your child has settled into school, and give you the chance to discuss any other important information about your child that you need to share. **Please refer to the 'nForma for Parents' app for further details about these notifications and to make your booking.**



## Wellbeing

### Why Arriving on Time Matters

Arriving at school on time each day helps set children up for a calm and confident start. Those first minutes of the school day are important — they're when teachers explain the day ahead, take attendance, and help students settle into learning. When children arrive late, even by a few minutes, they can miss key instructions and feel rushed or unsettled as they try to catch up.

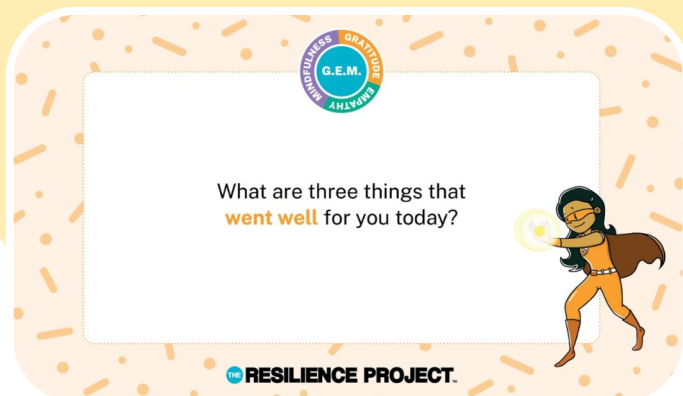
Being on time also supports children's wellbeing. A predictable morning routine helps reduce anxiety and builds independence, responsibility and confidence. Over time, punctuality becomes a valuable life skill that supports learning, friendships and positive habits.

We appreciate the efforts families make to get children to school each day. By working together to prioritise punctuality, we can help every child start their day feeling calm, connected and ready to learn.

### What are GEM chats?

Our GEM Chats are designed to spark discussions and inspire the practical use of **Gratitude**, **Empathy** and **Mindfulness** principles in a range of settings. We encourage you to ask the fortnightly question on the way to school, on the way home or even over the weekend.

This week's GEM chat focus is **GRATITUDE**.



**Bernie Hellard**  
Learning Diversity  
Mental Health &  
Wellbeing Leader



**Nicholas Coots**  
Wellbeing  
Leader, Physical  
Education  
Teacher

### Barwon Health CASEA

(Children's mental health and Schools Early Action)



CASEA is an exciting new program offered by Barwon Health CASEA in 2026! It is a program that supports young children's social, emotional and behavioural wellbeing. The CASEA program will be working with St Mary's School in Term 1 and 2, 2026. The CASEA program may involve a number of different supports including a therapeutic parent and child group, one-off parent meetings and parent information sessions.

St Mary's School is thrilled to be selected to be in partnership with this FREE and valuable program that has been run in many schools across the Geelong region.

This is a voluntary and free program which requires consent from families. To be eligible for this program it also requires a short survey to be completed and once returned members of the CASEA team will be in contact at the start of 2026. [Survey Link](#)

Don't delay as places will be limited.

We thank Barwon Health for their assistance and support of the wonderful school community of St Mary's School, Geelong.

## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL CHOIR

No auditions.  
New members  
welcome!

Tuesdays  
8:30 – 8:50am  
Upstairs in 3/4 space  
(Years 1 – 6 only)



ST MARY'S SCHOOL  
GEELONG

St Mary's School is committed to  
Child Safety.

We promote the safety, wellbeing  
and inclusion of all children.



## Term 1 School Calendar, 2026

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	<b>FEB 2</b> <b>2:50pm School Assembly</b> (Year 5/6) Student Leadership <b>2027 School Tour Bookings</b> Open via school website	<b>FEB 3</b>	<b>FEB 4</b> Foundation Students REST DAY	<b>FEB 5</b> Music Bus Commences	<b>FEB 6</b> Chess Club Commences
3	<b>FEB 9</b> <b>Safer Internet Week</b>	<b>FEB 10</b>	<b>FEB 11</b> Foundation Students REST DAY Newsletter	<b>FEB 12</b> <b>PFA Family Picnic;</b> <b>5:00 –7:00pm</b>	<b>FEB 13</b>
4	<b>FEB 16</b> <b>2027 Enrolment School</b> <b>Tour; 9:15am</b> <b>PSG Meetings # 1</b> <b>3:00pm School Assembly</b> (Year 3/4Q)	<b>FEB 17</b> <b>SHROVE TUESDAY</b> P&T Conversations; 3:30 to 6:00pm	<b>FEB 18</b> <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b> Foundation Students REST DAY P&T Conversations; 3:30 to 6:00pm Interschool Cricket/Basketball	<b>FEB 19</b> <b>School Fees:</b> <b>DDR Fortnightly &amp;</b> <b>Quarterly Commences</b>	<b>FEB 20</b> <b>School Fees:</b> <b>DDR Monthly Commences</b> Yr 5/6 Swim Testing <b>(FEB 21/22—Sacrament</b> <b>Enrolment Mass)</b>
5	<b>FEB 23</b> <b>2027 Enrolment School</b> <b>Tour; 9:15am</b>	<b>FEB 24</b> Parish Mass; 10:00am Yr 5/6	<b>FEB 25</b> Foundation Students REST DAY Newsletter <b>PFA Meeting 7:00pm</b> Interschool Volleyball	<b>FEB 26</b>	<b>FEB 27</b> <b>WHOLE SCHOOL PHOTO</b> <b>DAY</b> Foundation & New Families Parent Welcome Night <b>(FEB 28/MAR 1—</b> <b>Sacrament Enrolment</b> <b>Mass)</b>
6	<b>MAR 2</b> <b>2027 Enrolment School</b> <b>Tour; 9:15am</b> F-4 Swimming Week <b>School Fees:</b> DDR Annual processed. Annual Fees due (NB 28/2/26 falls on a w/ end)	<b>MAR 3</b> F-4 Swimming Week	<b>MAR 4</b> F-4 Swimming Week	<b>MAR 5</b> F-4 Swimming Week	<b>MAR 6</b> F-4 Swimming Week <b>World Day of Prayer (Year</b> <b>5/6)</b>
7	<b>MAR 9</b> <b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b> <b>Labour Day Holiday</b>	<b>MAR 10</b> Interschool Swimming	<b>MAR 11</b> <b>NAPLAN Begins</b> <b>Writing Yr 3&amp;5</b> Newsletter	<b>MAR 12</b>	<b>MAR 13</b> <b>MANNIX Feast Day</b> <b>(students wear Red &amp;</b> <b>casual clothes)</b> <b>PFA FRESH FRUIT FRIDAY</b>
8	<b>MAR 16</b> <b>3:00pm School Assembly</b> (1/2 Crystal) Catholic Education Week Neurodiversity Week	<b>MAR 17</b> <b>PSG Meetings # 2</b>	<b>MAR 18</b> <b>SAC Meeting; 7:00pm</b>	<b>MAR 19</b> <b>2027 Enrolment School</b> <b>Tour; 9:15am</b>	<b>MAR 20</b> <b>2027 Enrolment School</b> <b>Tour; 9:15am</b> Lunch Order Day-Hot Pastries <b>Parish Mass; 10:00am</b> <b>Yr 3/4 &amp; Foundation</b> <b>Mass of St Patrick (Melb)</b>
9	<b>MAR 23</b> School Cross Country (Yr 3-6)	<b>MAR 24</b>	<b>MAR 25</b> <b>Sacrament of Confirmation (Yr 6)</b> <b>5:00pm</b> Newsletter	<b>MAR 26</b> <b>PSG Meetings # 3</b> Music Bus—Final	<b>MAR 27</b> <b>Parish Mass; 10:00am</b> <b>Yr 1/2 &amp; Yr 5/6</b> Chess Club –Final
10	<b>MAR 30</b> <b>2027 Enrolment School</b> <b>Tour; 9:15am</b> <b>3:00pm School Assembly</b> (5/6 Sapphire)	<b>MAR 31</b>	<b>APR 1</b> <b>2027 Foundation Enrolments</b> <b>Close</b> <b>Open Classrooms; 3:15-4:15pm</b>	<b>APR 2</b> <b>HOLY THURSDAY</b> <b>End of Term 1; students</b> <b>dismissed 1:00pm</b>	<b>APR 3</b> <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>

## School Fees & Levies

**Family Statements** for the **2026 Annual Fees & Levies** will be sent home early next week. **Due date for payment is by 28 February unless you are on a Direct Debit plan or alternative payment arrangement.** Direct Debit payment schedule is listed below.

**Any queries regarding Fees & Levies**, including changes to your current Fee Commitment payment option, can be directed to Jacqui Kol (Admin Finance) at:

[schoolfees@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au](mailto:schoolfees@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au)

Phone 5229 9453 option 2 'Fees/Accounts'.

**To arrange a meeting to discuss Private Fee Agreements** please contact Annice Lappin (Principal) at:

[principal@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au)

## Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)

**Reminder:** Parents/Carers/Guardians holding a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent as at first student day, **28 January 2026**, may be eligible for the Victorian Government's Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) which assists eligible families by providing payments to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities. In 2026 the amount will increase from \$154 to \$400 for eligible primary school students. The allowance will be paid directly to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions/incursions, or sporting activities for the benefit of your child. **Application forms are available [here](#) for application in 2026.**

**NOTE:** Families who qualify for CSEF may also be eligible for Fee Assistance through the School Fees Concession Program.

## 2026 SCHOOL DATES

### 2026 STUDENT FREE Days

#### TERM 1

Tuesday 27 January

#### TERM 2

Monday 20 April

Tuesday 21 April

Friday 5 June

#### TERM 3

Friday 14 August

Monday 17 August

#### TERM 4

Monday 16 November

Wednesday 16 December

Thursday 17 December

**Term 1**  
27 January -  
2 April

**Term 2**  
20 April -  
26 June

**Term 3**  
13 July -  
18 September

**Term 4**  
5 October -  
18 December  
**Last day for  
students  
15/12**

### 2026 SCHOOL CLOSURE Days

#### TERM 1

Monday 9 March; Labour Day

Friday 3 April; Good Friday

#### TERM 2

Monday 8 June; Monarch's Birthday

#### TERM 4

Monday 2 November

Tuesday 3 November; Melbourne Cup

Friday 18 December

## PFA Secondhand Uniform Sales

Please see [here the price list](#) and contact/order details.



### DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT SCHEDULE

As per families' DDR Forms. [DDR Form link.](#)

#### ANNUAL

Processed on 28 February each year \*

#### QUARTERLY

Processed on the third Thursday in February, May, August and November

#### MONTHLY

Processed on the 20th of each month \*  
(February to November x 10 payments)

#### FORTNIGHTLY

Commences on the third Thursday in February  
(February to November x 20 payments)

(\*Payments falling on a weekend will be processed on the first business day following)



### FEE & LEVIES COMMITMENT AGREEMENT

**NEW FAMILIES** to the school

Please complete an [agreement](#)

**CURRENT SCHOOL FAMILIES**

Only complete a New Agreement if you wish to make a change to your current arrangement (i.e. Split Billing)



**St Mary's School  
Parents & Friends'  
Fundraiser**

**Term 1 School  
Fundraiser**

**Cookie Dough**

More details to  
come shortly via  
nForma.

# Italian



Jack Powell  
Language  
Coordinator

## Buongiorno,

Welcome to the Italian edition of our school newsletter!

At St Mary's School, Italian is a valued and vibrant part of our learning program. Each day, students engage in dedicated 15-minute Italian lessons that are carefully designed to build strong language foundations. Lessons follow a structured and explicit teaching approach, ensuring that students clearly understand new vocabulary, sentence structures, and pronunciation before applying their learning.

Through a gradual release of responsibility, students are guided from supported practice to independent use of the language. This approach allows learners to build confidence in a safe and encouraging environment, fostering both accuracy and enthusiasm for language learning. Students are actively involved through speaking, listening, reading, and interactive activities that make Italian meaningful and enjoyable.

Our commitment to high-quality language instruction ensures that students not only learn Italian but develop a genuine appreciation for the language and culture. As their confidence grows, students begin to express themselves with increasing fluency, proudly demonstrating their skills and enthusiasm for Italian learning at St Mary's School.

Recently within Year 3/4, students have been working towards retrieving the language of simple social interactions.

*Buona settimana!* Jack Powell

GREETING		
Ciao (Hi/Hello/Bye)	Buongiorno (Good morning/ Good day)	Arrivederci (Goodbye)
QUESTION	ANSWER	QUESTION
Come ti chiami? (What's your name?)	Mi chiamo... (My name is...)	E tu? (And you? [informal])
Come stai? (How are you? [informal])	Sto bene, (grazie)! (I'm well, (thanks)!) 😊	
Signore, come sta? (Sir, how are you? [formal])	Sto male. (I'm poorly.) 😞	
Signora, come sta? (Madam, how are you? [formal])	Sto così così. (I'm so-so.) 😐	

## School PHOTO Day

### School Photo Information

*Are you ready for 2026 school photos?*

St Mary's School

Friday 27th February 2026

**There's no need to do anything  
before photo day.**

**Further details will be provided when  
portrait and group images are ready.**

**Student access codes and order details will be provided to you  
when images are ready to view and purchase online.**

Arthur Reed Photos Pty. Ltd.  
A.B.N 48 528 494 590  
Telephone: (03) 5243 4390  
Enquiries: customerservice@arphotos.com.au



## This year our school photo day is Friday 27 February

**We are aware that a Sacred Heart Discovery Day is organised from 9:30-12:30pm on this day.** We will change our class schedule on Friday 27 February with Arthur Reed Photos to accommodate those students who wish to attend the Sacred Heart Discovery Day. If your child is attending this day, please return them to St Mary's for their school photo by 1:00pm and email Jack Flynn-French (5/6 Learning Leader) to make him aware of this.

**It is essential students wishing to have photos are present at St Mary's by 1:00pm as this is when class photos will be taken for Year 5/6.**

## School Reminders

Art



### St Mary's School Families

Welcome back, I hope everyone had a great holiday.

A friendly reminder to please send an **art smock for your child** to protect uniforms during art classes. An old oversized shirt or t-shirt, clearly labelled with their name would be fine. Art can be a very messy activity so it is important for the students to wear something to prevent little accidents.

Thank you in advance for your assistance, I look forward to another great year of amazing creations.

Liza Rosati  
Visual Arts



### The Music Bus has opened 2026 Enrolments

If your child wishes to join for Term 1, 2026, please complete the EOI link below:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/ee4627a5204c46158e1ab17e7c8069c6>

Lessons are available at school in Keyboard, Guitar, Ukulele, Drums and vocals.

Lessons will be held on a Thursday morning.

## 2027 FOUNDATION STUDENT ENROLMENT

The application for enrolment period is now open for students commencing school in Foundation 2027.

New families and current school families are invited to book a school tour (this is optional) and apply for enrolment via the school website.

Foundation 2027 enrolments close on Wednesday 1 April, 2026.



### FOUNDATION 2027 SCHOOL TOURS in 2026

Monday 16 February; 9:15am

Monday 23 February; 9:15am

Monday 2 March; 9:15am

Thursday 19 March; 9:15am

Friday 20 March, 9:15am

Monday 30 March, 9:15am

**Tour Bookings Open Monday 2 February, via the school website.**



### FOUNDATION 2027 Enrolments Close

Wednesday 1 April, 2026.



### FOUNDATION 2027 Applicant Interview with the School Principal

Monday 27 April

Tuesday 28 April

Wednesday 29 April

## CHESS CLASS DETAILS at St Mary's School

DAY: FRIDAY

TIME: 1:35-2:15pm

LOCATION: Upstairs Library

DATES: 6 Feb—27 Mar

COST: \$145 per child, per term

**Chessforschools**



## Community News

### RAISING GRATEFUL HEARTS FORUM

#### PRESENTED BY POSITIVE PARENTING EXPERT ROD SOPER

Discover practical rituals and simple language to help children notice the good, practise thankfulness and turn appreciation into meaningful acts of kindness.

Learn everyday strategies to embed gratitude into mealtimes, school runs, bedtime and family routines.

Explore age-appropriate (birth to 12 years) activities, conversation starters and quick games backed by research, child development principles and real-life practice.

Build empathy, resilience and joy as a family through positive connection and shared appreciation.

Take home a mini gratitude toolkit you can start using immediately to encourage kindness and connection at home and in your community.



THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY  
7.00pm-9.00pm

VENUE  
Norlane ARC  
1/9 Cox Rd, Norlane

#### BOOKINGS

Scan the QR code  
or visit

[geelong.link/GratefulHearts](https://geelong.link/GratefulHearts)



This is a FREE event but  
bookings are essential.



MINIROOS AND JUNIOR

## KIDS SOCCER

2026

Sunday,  
15 Feb, 2026

11:00 AM

Howard Glover Reserve,  
5 Limeburners Rd East Geelong

- ✓ Have a try
- ✓ Meet Coaches
- ✓ Free BBQ
- ✓ Ask questions



For more info:  
[Geelongcityfc@gmail.com](mailto:Geelongcityfc@gmail.com)



Visit us:  
[geelongcityfootballclub.com](https://geelongcityfootballclub.com)



## ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE GEELONG

# COLLEGE TOURS

9.15am

Tuesday 17 March  
Friday 20 March  
Tuesday 24 March  
Wednesday 25 March

1.45pm

Wednesday 18 March  
Wednesday 25 March



BOOK HERE

St Joseph's College Geelong invite you to join our 2026 College Tours.

We are proud to continue offering an innovative education, and we welcome all senior primary school boys and their families to come and visit us.

Bookings essential [sjc.vic.edu.au](https://sjc.vic.edu.au)

Year 7 applications for 2027 are now open until Friday 8 May 2026





St Mary's School  
Parents & Friends' Association  
invite you to our

# 2026 Family Picnic

Thursday 12th February • 5-7pm

Please join us at  
Barwon Valley Fun Park, Belmont  
BYO picnic, rug & deck chairs

Some St Mary's School staff will be in attendance,  
but not supervising students.  
Families are responsible for the supervision of their children.



# 2027 ENROLMENTS ARE NOW OPEN

## Open Tour Dates:

- MONDAY 16 MARCH 4.15 PM – 5.45 PM
- TUESDAY 17 MARCH 11.00 AM – 12.30 PM
- WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 9.00 AM – 10.30 AM
- WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 4.15 PM – 5.45 PM
- THURSDAY 19 MARCH 9.00 AM – 10.30 AM

**ENROL ONLINE NOW**

**IONA.VIC.EDU.AU**



CLONARD  
COLLEGE  
GEELOG

## *Come and See* **OPEN DAYS 2026**

- Friday 13 March
- Wednesday 18 March
- Friday 20 March

**clonard.vic.edu.au**



## **Year 7 2027 enrolment applications now open.**