# St Mary's School
## Geelong

## Principal News

**Dear Families,**

Week 5 already! Thank you to everyone who has been able to attend the variety of events and activities to date, including; Ash Wednesday Mass, PSGs, Parents and Friend's Family Picnic, Parent/Teacher Conversations, Interschool Sporting Events and Assemblies to name a few. Your presence has been appreciated.

2027 Foundation enrolments are underway, with a significant number of families showing interest in enrolling their child. Conducting the tours with **Deb Boland** has been an absolute pleasure, showcasing with pride, all our school has to offer. Of particular note to celebrate is the amazing learning happening in classes and the exemplary behaviour of our students. This has been commented on by prospective families and in many ways, sets us apart from some other schools.

**Thank you to all families who have attended or will attend, a Sacramental Enrolment Mass. This is the only opportunity you have to enrol your child/ren to celebrate a Sacrament this year.**

A **Baptism preparation program** will be held at St Mary's School next term, during school hours. This program will teach the enrolled children about Baptism and what to expect during the Sacrament. If you would like you child to be Baptised, please email me principal@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au Once your child/ren have completed the Baptismal program, they will be eligible to celebrate the Sacrament through the St Mary of the Angels' Parish, at the Basilica on a designated Saturday.

Tonight, our first P&FA meeting for the year will be held. Every one is most welcome to attend, whether it is for only one meeting throughout the year or on a regular basis. Last week, we were excited to launch our first St Mary's School Parents and Friends' fundraiser for 2026, featuring the delicious and much-loved **Billy G's Gourmet Cookie & Biscuit Dough**! This is a fantastic opportunity to support our school while stocking your freezer with premium-quality cookie and biscuit dough that makes baking at home easy, fun, and absolutely delicious. If you are in a position to do so, please register and make a purchase (see details on page 8 of the newsletter). Funds raised will go directly towards supporting our students and the redesign of our school oval space. Your participation, whether big or small, will make a real difference to our school community. Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can make this fundraiser a great success! Please note that this fundraiser is in place of the Cadbury fundraiser, traditionally held in Term 2.

Thank you to our students who represent themselves, their families and St Mary's School so well while in the wider community. The students recent behaviour and participation at Masses, Interschool Sports, Family Picnic and at the pool for the Water Safety Certificate has been commendable.

We look forward to welcoming our Foundation parents and staff to the **Centra** this Friday evening. Thank you to the Parents and Friends' Association who will support the event. All Foundation parents/carers are warmly invited to attend.

Today is our Foundation students' final rest/testing day. We look forward to welcoming them for the whole school week from Monday.

Foundation to Year 4 Swimming Lessons begin next week. A reminder that it is a requirement for all students to wear a rash vest and swimming cap. Please see the nForma notification for all other details.

**This Friday, our Whole School Photos will be taken. Please ensure that your child/ren are in their correct Summer uniform.**

**Kind regards, Annice**

Annice Lappin
Principal

**Sacrament of Confirmation**

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

**Sacrament of First Eucharist**

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

**Sacrament of Penance (Yr 3)**

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

St Mary's School has an excursion mobile phone. If you are contacted by the school via the mobile, the caller ID number is: 0475 521 510

**Please click below for 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,**

Our whole school **Swimming Program** will commence in Week 6 of Term 1 and is an important part of our Health and Physical Education curriculum. Through participation in the program, students develop confidence, water safety awareness and fundamental movement skills in line with the Victorian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education outcomes, particularly those related to personal and social capability, safety and movement competence. Swimming is a vital life skill in Australia and this program supports students to build strength, coordination and resilience while learning how to keep themselves and others safe in and around water. We look forward to seeing our students approach this learning opportunity with enthusiasm and a growth mindset.

**NAPLAN** will begin in Week 7 for students in Years 3 and 5. NAPLAN is one assessment point that provides useful information about student progress in literacy and numeracy, alongside the rich assessment data we gather every day in classrooms. We encourage families to support their children by reassuring them that this is simply an opportunity to show what they know and to try their best. At St Mary's, we focus on consistent, evidence-informed teaching and strong core knowledge across all year levels and NAPLAN is just one way we reflect on how our students are progressing over time.

**Whole School Photo Day** will take place on Friday 27 February. All students are expected to arrive on time and be dressed in full summer uniform. We ask families to ensure that students meet our uniform expectations, including having long hair neatly tied back. Photo Day is a special opportunity to capture our community for 2026, and we appreciate your support in helping students present themselves with pride in our school.

**Warm regards,**

**Deb Boland**

Deborah Boland
Deputy Principal

### NAPLAN TEST SCHEDULE 2026

**MAR 11**
9:05am
Writing Yr 3 (40 mins) & Yr 5 (42 mins)

**MAR 12**
9:05am
Reading Yr 3 (45 mins) & Yr 5 (50 mins)

**MAR 16**
9:05am
Conventions of Language Yr 3 (45 mins) & Yr 5 (45 mins)

**MAR 17**
9:05am
Numeracy Yr 5 (50 mins)

**MAR 18**
9:05am
Numeracy Yr 3 (45 mins)

acara AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY

You can support **Project Compassion 2026** through the donation boxes or by scanning the QR code to donate online.
You can also donate:
**Online at**: projectcompassion.org.au
**By phone at:** 1800 024 413

## Year 6 Leader Initiatives

**The St Mary's School Grade 6 Student Leaders** have had a positive and productive start to the year. Together, we have been exploring key leadership concepts by creating shared definitions for important values such as role model, inclusion, charity, environment, wellbeing and social justice, considering both what these mean for students in their own words and how they relate to our school community.

**Student leaders** meet each week with **Mr Nic** and have reflected on the responsibilities and the expectations that come with being school leaders. As part of the school's social justice initiatives, they have organised and distributed **Project Compassion** boxes to the eldest child in each family, supporting fundraising efforts for Caritas Australia.

Additionally, the student leaders have been actively brainstorming ideas for programs, lunchtime clubs and school feast day celebrations to promote engagement and a strong sense of community throughout the year. They are also looking forward to representing St Mary's School at the Geelong Region Pilgrimage in Queenscliff on 18 March, where they will gather with student leaders from other Catholic primary schools.

# Wellbeing

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

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

## Safer Internet Day

**Safer Internet Day** returned on **Tuesday 10 February 2026**, encouraging schools and communities across more than 180 countries to focus on creating safer, more positive online spaces.

The internet is where we learn, connect and share, but it also comes with risks. Safer Internet Day gives us the opportunity to pause, reflect and talk about how we can all contribute to a safer digital world. Small actions – like starting conversations, sharing tips and building healthy online habits – can make a big difference.

During **Week 3**, students here at **St Mary's School** participated in lessons and activities promoting safe and responsible Internet use.

**Students explored:**

- Protecting personal information
- Being respectful online
- Knowing what to do if something feels unsafe

We encourage families to continue the conversation at home. Ask your child what they learned and how they can stay safe online.

**With children under 16 no longer able to access social media many will be communicating via Messenger or Phone Apps. It is imperative that parents/carers know what and how their children are communicating with their peers.**

By working together, we can support our students to be safe, confident and positive digital citizens all year round.

## Morning Drop-off

It has been such a joy watching your little ones settle into school life over the last few weeks! As we move further into the term, we wanted to share some gentle tips for a smooth morning drop-off. Even if your child is currently a "pro" at saying goodbye, establishing a consistent, confident routine now helps prevent future wobbles and builds their independence.

To help your child start their day with a sense of "I've got this," we recommend the following strategies:

**The Quick Goodbye:** While it's tempting to give "just one more hug," lingering can actually increase a child's anxiety. A confident "I love you, have a great day!" followed by a swift departure tells your child that school is a safe, happy place where you trust them to be.

**The Buddy System:** Consider walking into school with a friend's family. Walking in with a peer is a fantastic distraction and turns the entrance into a social event rather than a separation.

**The "Launch Zone":** Please try to say your goodbyes at the **bottom of the atrium stairs**. This allows the children to take those final few steps into the classroom independently.

**Morning Duty:** Arriving early is ideal! If you arrive early, feel free to hand your child over to the friendly teacher on morning yard duty. We are there to help bridge that gap!

**Beat the Bell:** If you choose to play on the equipment before school, we suggest saying your goodbyes and **leaving a few minutes before the bell rings**. This avoids the frantic rush of the line-up and lets them transition calmly with their peers.

### This week's GEM chat focus is EMPATHY:

## **Term 1** School Calendar, 2026

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | **FEB 2**<br>**2:50pm School Assembly**<br>(Year 5/6) Student Leadership<br>**2027 School Tour Bookings Open via school website** | **FEB 3** | **FEB 4**<br>Foundation Students REST DAY | **FEB 5**<br>Music Bus Commences | **FEB 6**<br>Chess Club Commences |
| 3 | **FEB 9**<br>Safer Internet Week | **FEB 10** | **FEB 11**<br>Foundation Students REST DAY<br>Newsletter | **FEB 12**<br>**PFA Family Picnic; 5:00 –7:00pm** | **FEB 13** |
| 4 | **FEB 16**<br>**2027 Enrolment School Tour; 9:15am**<br>**PSG Meetings # 1**<br>**3:00pm School Assembly**<br>(Year 3/4Q) | **FEB 17**<br>**SHROVE TUESDAY**<br>P&T Conversations; 3:30 to 6:00pm | **FEB 18**<br>**ASH WEDNESDAY**<br>Foundation Students REST DAY<br>P&T Conversations; 3:30 to 6:00pm<br>Interschool Cricket/Basketball | **FEB 19**<br>**School Fees:**<br>DDR Fortnightly & Quarterly Commences | **FEB 20**<br>**School Fees:**<br>DDR Monthly Commences<br>Yr 5/6 Swim Testing<br>**(FEB 21/22—Sacrament Enrolment Mass)** |
| 5 | **FEB 23**<br>**2027 Enrolment School Tour; 9:15am** | **FEB 24**<br>Parish Mass; 10:00am Yr 5/6 | **FEB 25**<br>Foundation Students REST DAY<br>Newsletter<br>**PFA Meeting 7:00pm**<br>Interschool Volleyball | **FEB 26** | **FEB 27**<br>**WHOLE SCHOOL PHOTO DAY**<br>Foundation & New Families Parent Welcome Night<br>**(FEB 28/MAR 1—Sacrament Enrolment Mass)** |
| 6 | **MAR 2**<br>**2027 Enrolment School Tour; 9:15am**<br>F-4 Swimming Week<br>**School Fees:** DDR Annual processed. Annual Fees due (NB 28/2/26 falls on a w/end) | **MAR 3**<br>F-4 Swimming Week | **MAR 4**<br>F-4 Swimming Week | **MAR 5**<br>F-4 Swimming Week | **MAR 6**<br>F-4 Swimming Week<br>**World Day of Prayer (Year 5/6)** |
| 7 | **MAR 9**<br>**SCHOOL CLOSED**<br>**Labour Day Holiday** | **MAR 10**<br>Interschool Swimming | **MAR 11**<br>**NAPLAN Begins**<br>Newsletter<br>**Billy G's Cookie Dough Sales Close** | **MAR 12**<br>**PFA Easter Raffle Opens**<br>1:30pm, *Geelong Advertiser* Foundation 2026 Photo<br>**NAPLAN** | **MAR 13**<br>**MANNIX Feast Day (students wear Red & casual clothes)**<br>**PFA FRESH FRUIT FRIDAY** |
| 8 | **MAR 16**<br>**3:00pm School Assembly**<br>(1/2 Crystal)<br>Catholic Education Week<br>Neurodiversity Week<br>**NAPLAN** | **MAR 17**<br>**PSG Meetings # 2**<br>**NAPLAN** | **MAR 18**<br>**SAC Meeting; 7:00pm**<br>**NAPLAN** | **MAR 19**<br>**2027 Enrolment School Tour; 9:15am** | **MAR 20**<br>**2027 Enrolment School Tour; 9:15am**<br>Lunch Order Day-Hot Pastries<br>**Parish Mass; 10:00am Yr 3/4 & Foundation**<br>**Mass of St Patrick (Melb)** |
| 9 | **MAR 23**<br>School Cross Country (Yr 3-6) | **MAR 24** | **MAR 25**<br>**Sacrament of Confirmation (Yr 6) 5:00pm**<br>Newsletter<br>**Billy G's Cookie Dough Delivered** | **MAR 26**<br>**PSG Meetings # 3**<br>Music Bus—Final | **MAR 27**<br>**Parish Mass; 10:00am Yr 1/2 & Yr 5/6**<br>Chess Club –Final |
| 10 | **MAR 30**<br>**2027 Enrolment School Tour; 9:15am**<br>**3:00pm School Assembly**<br>(5/6 Sapphire) | **MAR 31**<br>**PFA Easter Raffle Closes** | **APR 1**<br>**2027 Foundation Enrolments Close**<br>**Open Classrooms; 3:15-4:15pm** | **APR 2**<br>**HOLY THURSDAY**<br>**End of Term 1;** students dismissed 1:00pm<br>PFA Easter Raffle Drawn | **APR 3**<br>**GOOD FRIDAY** |

Sport News

# Interschool Sport - Wednesday 18 February

Nic Coots, PE Teacher

**St Mary's School Grade 5/6 students** proudly represented the school in Interschool Sport for Basketball and Cricket. All students demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship, teamwork and school spirit throughout the day. We are incredibly proud of the way they conducted themselves both on and off the court and field.

## Basketball

It was a fantastic day of competition for our basketball teams.

The **Girls' team** had an impressive start, winning their first three games to earn a place in the Grand Final against Newtown. The girls showed tremendous determination and were close at half-time, but were ultimately defeated by a strong opposition in the second half. A special mention to the team for scoring the most points overall for the day — a wonderful achievement!

The **Boys' team** opened their campaign against a tough Herne Hill side. They finished the day with two wins and two losses, competing exceptionally well — especially considering they had no bench rotations for the entire day. Their resilience and effort were outstanding.

Our **Fun (non-progressing) team** also had a fantastic time, showing great teamwork, enthusiasm and improvement throughout the day. It was wonderful to see them enjoying the experience and supporting one another.

Well done to all of our basketballers!

## Cricket

Interschool Cricket was an outstanding success, with both teams showing great composure, skill and teamwork throughout the day.

The **Girls' team** were undefeated across all of their matches. The girls communicated exceptionally well in the field and supported one another every step of the way. Their positive attitude and determination were key factors in their success.

The **Boys' team** also had a tremendous day, winning three out of four matches, with the only loss coming by 4 runs. They displayed strong batting performances, smart running between the wickets and disciplined bowling. Their improvement across each game was evident and a credit to their preparation and teamwork.

Both teams have now progressed to **Division Cricket**, which will be held in Term 4. This is a fantastic achievement and a reflection of their hard work and commitment. We will continue developing our cricket skills throughout the year to ensure we are well prepared for the next round.

Congratulations to all of our cricketers on a fantastic achievement!

Well done to everyone involved — a wonderful day of sport for our school

## School Reminders

**2026 SCHOOL DATES**

**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 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

### 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

## ST. MARY'S SCHOOL CHOIR

No auditions.
New members welcome!

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

THE MUSIC BUS

**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.**

## 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

**Please note the 6/3 class has been moved to Thurs 12/3** (due to the swimming program)

**Chessforschools**

## School PHOTO Day

### 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.**

**Students wear full summer School Uniform.** Sibling and family photos are taken on the day.

## School Reminders

## 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 are open via the school website.**

**FOUNDATION 2027 Enrolments Close**
Wednesday 1 April, 2026.

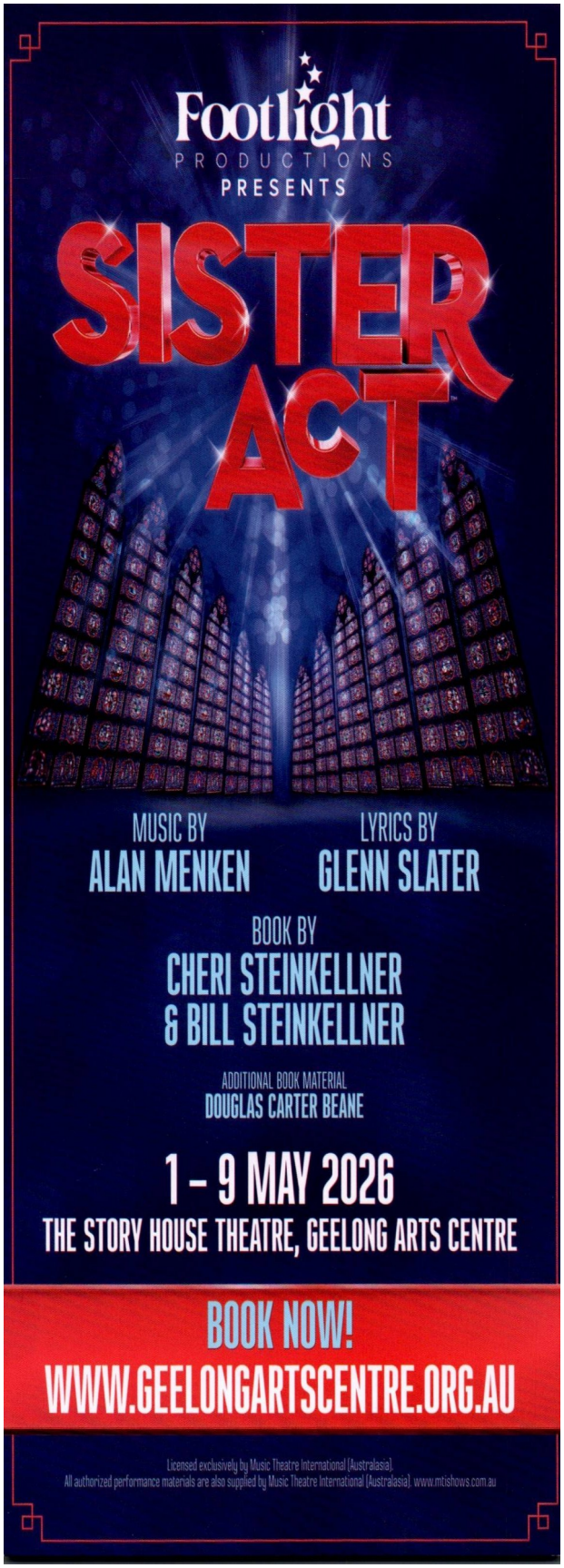
**FOUNDATION 2027 Applicant Interview with the School Principal**
Monday 27 April
Tuesday 28 April
Wednesday 29 April

ST MARY'S SCHOOL
GEELONG

**St Mary's School is committed to Child Safety.**

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

## Community News



## Parents & Friends

**PFA Meeting TONIGHT:**

The term 1 meeting of the Parents & Friends' Association is TONIGHT, 7:00pm at Centra. Even at late notice, we would love to have any people who wanted to come along and see what a meeting was about.

Please email pfa@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au with any questions, or if you would like to attend a meeting in the future.

**Volunteer sign-up:**

If meetings are not for you, we are trying to get together a database of people who might like to help the P&F Association at one of our fundraising or friendraising events over the year. No special skills required, just an interest to help out if needed (perhaps setting up cones for a Colour Run, sourcing donations for Trivia Night, or handing out trays of mangoes on Mango Delivery day). Please follow the link here.

**Term 1 goings on:**

Term 1 will see a new fundraiser for St Mary's School PFA Billy G's Gourmet Cookie Dough. This will replace our Cadbury Chocolate Fundraiser, so will be our major fundraising event for the first half of the year. We hope that it turns into a successful snackbox filler, and helps to earns funds that the P&F can use to support the school and students.

**Fresh Fruit Friday** will be on **13 March**, kindly supplied by the team at East Geelong Fruit. Please support this generous local business if you can.

Towards the end of term, we will also be holding our regular Easter Raffle for those with a sweet tooth.

We're excited to launch our first St Mary's School Parents and Friends' fundraiser for 2026, featuring the delicious and much-loved **Billy G's Gourmet Cookie & Biscuit Dough!** **Your child will have brought home a Billy G brochure last Friday, with all the information you require to place an order.**

This is a fantastic opportunity to support our school while stocking your freezer with premium-quality cookie and biscuit dough that makes baking at home easy, fun, and absolutely delicious.

### Why Billy G's?

Billy G's Gourmet Dough is:

- Made with high-quality ingredients
- Easy to bake – simply scoop and pop in the oven
- Perfect for lunchboxes, after-school treats, entertaining, or special occasions
- Freezer-friendly, so you can bake fresh cookies anytime
- From classic favourites to indulgent flavours, there's something for everyone in the family to enjoy.

### Why This Fundraiser Matters

Funds raised will go directly towards supporting our students and the redesign of our school oval space. Your participation—whether big or small—makes a real difference to our school community.

### How You Can Help

Register by scanning the QR code on the brochure or visit: http://cookiedough.com.au

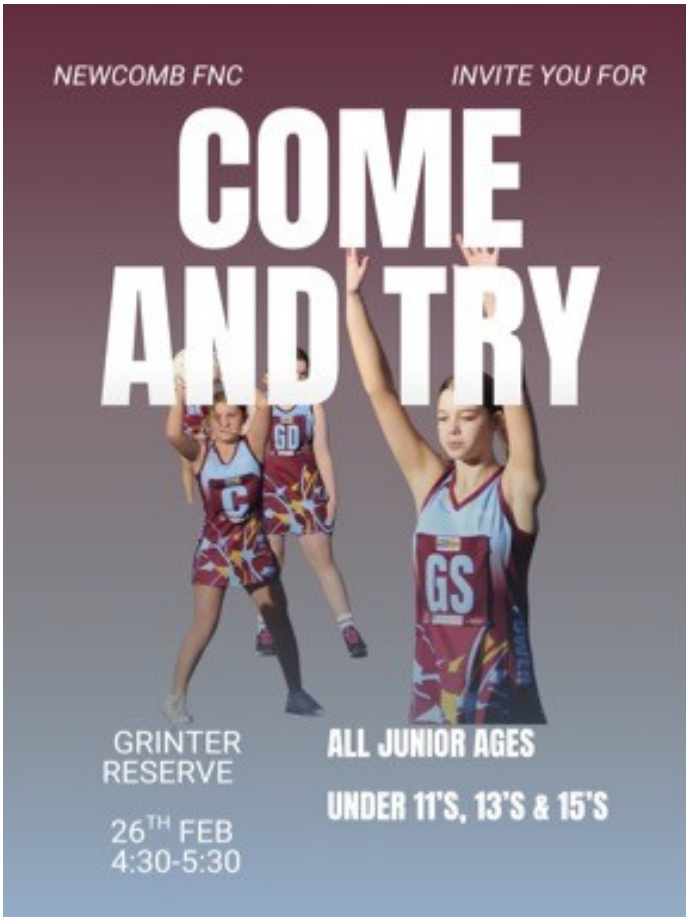
- **Ensure you nominate St Marys School (Geelong) (there is no apostrophe or comma when entering the Group name) before placing an order**
- Place an order once registered
- Share the fundraiser with family and friends—you can even create your own poster with QR code!
- Ensure all orders are submitted by **Wednesday 11 March**
- Collect your delicious Billy G Dough on **Wednesday 25 March** at St Mary's School

This is a simple and rewarding way to contribute—delicious treats for your home while supporting our school's goals.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can make this fundraiser a great success! Please note that this fundraiser is in place of the Cadbury fundraiser, traditional held in Term 2.

## Community News

INDOOR CRICKET
Register a team or as an individual player!
At our website:
geelongindoorsports.com.au
GEELONG INDOOR SPORTS
13 Gravel Pits Rd, South Geelong 3220
Seasons starting soon!
• Monday night: Mens 8-a-Side.
• Wednesday night: Mens/Juniors 6-a-side.
• Thursday night: Womens 6-a-side.
• Friday night: Juniors 6-a-side.
For more information:
Call: 52221822.
Email: info@geelongindoorsports.com.au


NEWCOMB FNC
INVITE YOU FOR
COME AND TRY
GRINTER RESERVE
26TH FEB
4:30-5:30
ALL JUNIOR AGES
UNDER 11'S, 13'S & 15'S

Year 7 2027 enrolment applications now open.
Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools
Saint Ignatius College Geelong

CLONARD COLLEGE GEELONG
Come and See
OPEN DAYS 2026
• Friday 13 March
• Wednesday 18 March
• Friday 20 March
clonard.vic.edu.au
Kildare EDUCATION MINISTRIES