



St Mary's Primary School

We aspire, we include, we achieve.

Newsletter # 1 | 31 January 2024



News from the Principal

Dear Families,

Welcome! We hope you've had a relaxing holiday break and that you've had a chance to prepare in readiness with your child/ren, for the new school year. We are delighted to welcome all our new and returning students and their families. This year again promises to be an exciting school year with strategic planning and careful preparation undertaken to ensure great success.

This year we welcome two new staff members; **Nicole McNamara** (3/4 Onyx) and **Ella McCartney** as our Italian Expert, assisting classroom teachers to teach Italian to all classes. We also welcome 31 Foundation students and 3 new students to St Mary's School across Years 1 to 6 and we look forward to a positive association with these students and their families.

All St Mary's School staff began last Monday and it was lovely to begin with a staff breakfast, followed by a liturgy, then an orientation and induction regarding 2024 processes, protocols and expectations. Once again, St Mary's School is blessed with staff who are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and have the best intentions for all members of our school community.

Tomorrow, our whole school will be attending the 10:00am parish Mass. All members of our extended school community are warmly invited to join us. In the afternoon, all families are invited to our **Welcome Picnic** that will be held at the Barwon Valley Fun Park from 5:00pm until 7:00pm. If attending, please bring everything your family will require to enjoy a social picnic dinner. Many of our teachers and staff will be present for approximately an hour.

As the new school year commences, it is timely to remind all families of the following expectations;

1) All students are to be in the correct school uniform. Students are to wear their sports uniform on their Physical Education Day and on other days as required by their classroom teacher. The school's 'No Hat, Play on the Atrium' policy is in place from September 1 until May 1 each year.

2) **Students are not to enter the school grounds until 8:30am.** This is when the school gates will be opened. The OSHC service is available for families between 7:00am-8:30am. Please ensure your family utilises this service if children need to arrive at school before 8:30am. This expectation will be directly communicated with students, particularly older students who ride. Arriving before 8:30am is unsafe for students as they are unsupervised and staff are arriving and preparing for their day of work.

3) Students are expected to adhere to the St Mary's School Behavioural Expectations.

4) Parents are expected to adhere to the St Mary's Parent Code of conduct.

5) As our school timetable has been adjusted, a reminder that dismissal is at 3:15pm and this is when students are collected.

For further information please see the [School Policies on the school website.](#)

A vacancy on the **School Advisory Council** exists for 2024/2025. The SAC meets once each term. If you are interested in applying, please send an expression of interest to:

principal@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au

The P&FA have a number of activities planned for this term. In 2024 the P&FA will continue to "fund-raise & friend-raise" with their first meeting to be held on **Tuesday, 6 February from 7.00pm in the school Staffroom.** Everyone is most welcome to attend. We are currently looking for volunteer/s to fill some P&FA positions; President, or Co-President. If any of these positions are of interest to you, please contact me directly by emailing, principal@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au

As a P&FA initiative, they have decided to generously supply classrooms with wipes and tissues this year. These have traditionally been donated by families. If you would still like to donate these items, they will be gratefully appreciated.

Looking forward to a positive and productive 2024!

Kind Regards, Annice Lappin

CALENDAR 2024

TERM 1

Week 1

Thursday 1 February

10:00am Whole School Parish Mass

5:00pm-7:00pm

Family Welcome Picnic

Barwon Valley Fun Park

Week 2

Tuesday 6 February

P&FA Meeting, 7:00pm

School Staffroom

Year 5/6 wear Sport Uniform instead of Wednesday 7 February

Wednesday 7 February

Foundation Rest Day

Friday 9 February

School Assembly, **2:50pm**

(Year 6 Polos)

Gates open 2:45pm

Week 3

Tuesday 13 February

Shrove (Pancake) Tuesday

Wednesday 14 February

Ash Wednesday

Foundation Rest Day

Friday 16 February

Foundation Families' Welcome

Evening, 7:00pm

Week 4

Monday 19 February

School Assembly, 3:00pm

(3/4 Garnet)

Gates open 2:55pm

2024 Staff Email List

Follow the [link](#)

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Scan the QR

Code or

follow the [link](#)



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.



News from the Deputy Principal

Dear Families,

Benvenuti! The 2024 School Year has begun and it's great to be back!

In speaking with our students it appears that families have enjoyed a memorable break of togetherness - whether it was at the beach, in the pool, on day trips, away for an extended holiday, being with grandparents or simply relaxing at home.

For me, my break was spent with **Esme**, my now 4 month old puppy, and **Valerie**, my just-turned-two niece. I am happy to report that Esme "can usually" sit, stay, drop and come; Valerie "can usually" refrain from tipping the day's kibble ration into the dog bowl at once and they both "can usually" be calm when in each other's (well supervised) company.

Playing with, cuddling and training Esme (and Valerie!) have certainly kept me busy. However, it was an opportune time to 'take a step back' and witness the world through the delicate eyes of a growing puppy and inquisitive toddler. It also serves as a healthy reminder, particularly as we all return to our usual work and school routines, to take notice of, prioritise and enjoy the wonder and awe of God's creation - the important people in our lives, our special pets and the natural surroundings around us.

Just before Christmas, our music teacher, **Ruth McGurk**, launched her picture story book, **The Dinosaur Did It**. The book is about a girl named Imogen, a big mess she made and her imaginary friend - a dinosaur. It is such a delightful read and the story's moral of being honest and cleaning up after yourself would be a familiar scenario in many households. **The Dinosaur Did It** is available for purchase at Kmart and Big W for \$10 as well as through all leading bookstores. We congratulate Ruth and look forward to her 'book signing' when the school's copies arrive soon.



Term 1 is shaping up to be fun-filled. Along with tomorrow's whole school attendance at the **10:00am Parish Mass** and the **Family Welcome Picnic**, there are many events scheduled for this term. I have included the **Term 1 Calendar** along with some important reminders of **school processes** on pages 3 and 4.

With each school year, there is always a sense of optimism, excitement and renewal. We have so much to be grateful for in our community and as I enter my fifth year at this great school, I thank all staff and families for the way we work in partnership.

Here's to a rewarding 2024 School Year ... See you at the gate.

Cari Saluti, Marie Monea

School Fees & Levies

2024 Annual Fees & Levies are currently being finalised for all families with statements schedule to be sent home next week.

Details of charges for 2024 are available on the school's [website](#).

Any queries regarding Fees & Levies, including changes to your current Fee Commitment payment options such as **split billing or **direct debit frequency**, can be directed to Jacqui Kol at jkol@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au or contact made with Annice Lappin (Principal) to discuss.**



Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)

Parents/Carers/Guardians holding a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent as at 29 January 2024, 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 2024 the amount increased from \$125 to \$150 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 2024.

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

Term 1 School Calendar, 2024



Wk	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1			JAN 31 Foundation Students; 8:50am-1:30pm <i>Newsletter Day</i>	FEB 1 Foundation Students; 8:50am-1:30pm 10:00am Whole School Parish Mass attendance 5:00pm-7:00pm Family Welcome Picnic at Barwon Valley Fun Park	FEB 2 Foundation Students; 8:50am-1:30pm
2	FEB 5	FEB 6 7:00pm Parents & Friends' Meeting, School Staffroom	FEB 7 Foundation Rest Day	FEB 8	FEB 9 2:50pm School Assembly Year 6 Polos
3	FEB 12	FEB 13 Shrove (Pancake)  Tuesday (Students bring a plate and cutlery)	FEB 14 Ash Wednesday Foundation Rest Day <i>Newsletter Day</i>	FEB 15	FEB 16 7:00pm Foundation Families' Welcome Evening
4	FEB 19 3:00pm School Assembly (3/4 Garnet)	FEB 20	FEB 21 Foundation Rest Day District Basketball/Volleyball <i>(Participating Year 5/6 Students)</i> 3:30pm-5:50pm Parent & Teacher Conversations	FEB 22 3:30pm-5:50pm Parent & Teacher Conversations	FEB 23
5	FEB 26 PSG Meetings District Cricket <i>(Participating Year 5/6 Students)</i> 2025 Foundation Enrolments Open	FEB 27 9:15am 2025 School Tour	FEB 28 Foundation Rest Day PSG Meetings <i>Newsletter Day</i>	FEB 29	MAR 1 School Photo Day  (Summer Uniform)
6	MAR 4 F-4 Swimming 3:00pm School Assembly (5/6 Sapphire)	MAR 5 F-4 Swimming	MAR 6 F-4 Swimming 7:00pm School Advisory Council Meeting, Staffroom	MAR 7 F-4 Swimming	MAR 8 F-4 Swimming
7	MAR 11 SCHOOL CLOSED Labour Day Public Holiday	MAR 12	MAR 13 NAPLAN (Years 3&5) Assessment Period Opens <i>Newsletter Day</i> 7:00pm Parents & Friends' Meeting, School Staffroom	MAR 14	MAR 15 LUNCH ORDER DAY Routley's Bakery 
8	MAR 18 9:15am 2025 School Tour	MAR 19	MAR 20	MAR 21 5:00pm  Sacrament of Confirmation	MAR 22 NAPLAN (Years 3&5) Assessment Period Ends FRESH FRUIT FRIDAY 
9	MAR 25 PSG Meetings	MAR 26 CROSS COUNTRY F-2 (School Site) 3-6 (Eastern Gardens) Open Classrooms; 3:30pm—4:30 pm 	MAR 27 2025 Foundation Enrolments (Siblings) Close 12:30 pm School Assembly (1/2 Pearl) <i>Newsletter Day</i> End of Term 1: 1:00pm	MAR 28 STUDENT FREE DAY	MAR 29 SCHOOL CLOSED: Good Friday 

School Reminders



SPORT UNIFORM

For quite some time, all specialist classes (Physical Education, STEM, Visual Art and Music) have usually been held on a particular day for each year level, requiring students to wear their Sport Uniform on "Specialist Days". Whilst the majority of specialist classes will be held on the same day, some classes will participate in their Physical Education class on a different day to other specialist subjects.

Therefore, this year, students will only wear their **Sport Uniform on the day their class is timetabled for Physical Education and on other days as required by their classroom teacher:**

- Foundation - Thursdays
- Year 1/2: Tuesdays
- Year 3/4: Thursdays
- Year 5/6: Wednesdays & Fridays

**Changes will be communicated by classroom educators and also advised in the school newsletter*



CLASSES BEGIN AT 8:50AM AND END AT 3:15PM

School **gates close at 8:50am** each morning, when the first bell rings. Students arriving after 8:50am are required to be signed in by a parent/carer/guardian at the school's administration, please bring your mobile device. School **gates open at 3:10pm** each afternoon, with students being dismissed at 3:15pm.



STUDENT ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Families are required to inform the school of their **child's absence with a reason** via email to: **absence@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au** and their **child's classroom educator** prior to 8:50am on the day of absence. This also includes part day absences (e.g. to attend appointments or early pick ups).



EATING TIMES

Fruit Break - Thank you for ensuring that the small fresh fruit or vegetable snack packed is easy to eat whilst students are working and does not require peeling or cutting.

10:55am - 11:05am - Supervised Eating Time (Play Break #1).

1:35pm - 1:45pm - Supervised Eating Time (Play Break #2).



SCHOOL HATS

As part of the [school's Uniform Policy](#), school hats are to be worn from **1 September to 1 May, each year**.

Students who forget to bring their school hat to school will spend their break times in the undercover area - the atrium. Sunscreen is available for student use in each learning space also.



SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Thank you for remaining informed via the school's official communication platforms:

School Newsletter - Published fortnightly on Wednesdays (Term 1: Weeks 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9).

FaceBook & Instagram - A 'Weekly Overview' is published each Sunday.

Operoo - Permission e-forms and notices sent from school leadership and educators as required - Please ensure that primary and secondary contacts (phone numbers and email addresses) remain up-to-date.



SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

School Assemblies are scheduled throughout the term and are advertised in the school's termly calendar. On assembly days, the **Parish and Front Gates open at 2:55pm** for families to access the school's atrium.

Assemblies begin promptly at 3:00pm and conclude by 3:15pm.

School Reminders

Join the St. Mary's School Choir!

All students from Year 1 to 6 are welcome.



No cost, no auditions - free and fun!

**Tuesdays at
8:30am
from 13th of Feb**

Mackillop Room / After School Care space

Note: Foundation students will be invited to join later in the year.



Music Bus lessons at
St Mary's School

The Music Bus has opened their TERM 1, 2024 enrolments and are inviting new students to apply.

Classes offered are:

- Keyboard (Prep-y6)
- Ukulele (Prep-y6)
- Drums (y1-y6)
- Guitar (Y2-y6)
- Singing (Prep -y6)

Lessons are:

- 30 minute duration - once per week
- held in the hi tech music classroom on wheels on our site
- cost \$20 per week (\$22 drums) payable by the term on commencement.

If you wish to take part please complete this expression of interest form. <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/ee4627a5204c46158e1ab17e7c8069c6>

School Timetable

8:30am - 8:50am	Gates Open	
8:50am - 8:55am	Homeroom	Attendance Roll: 8:50am
8:55am - 9:55am	Learning Session #1	
9:55am - 10:55am	Learning Session #2	
10:55am - 11:05am	Supervised Eating Time	
11:05am - 11:35am	PLAY BREAK	
11:35am - 12:35pm	Learning Session #3	
12:35pm - 1:35pm	Learning Session #4	
1:35pm - 1:45pm	Supervised Eating Time	Attendance Roll: 1:35pm
1:45pm - 2:15pm	PLAY BREAK	
2:15pm - 3:15pm	Learning Session #5	
3:15pm - 3:30pm	Gates Open	

School Reminders

Drive Thru Procedures



REMINDERS

Drive towards the McKillop Street exit

- On entry, drive towards the McKillop Street exit to avoid congestion
- Always drive between the yellow lines

Adults are to remain in their vehicle at all times

- Please farewell or greet your child in your car
- Students need to manage their school bag and belongings independently.

Students exit the vehicle along the footpath area

- Students walk into the school grounds by walking along the footpath - not the drive thru area

The Drive Thru gate closes at 8.50am & 3.30pm

- **MORNING DROP OFF:** Between 8.30am and 8.50am only
- **AFTERNOON PICK UP:** Between 3.15pm and 3.30pm only

IMPORTANT NOTICE

For children who require assistance with their school bag or need an extra hug or kiss, please use an alternative drop off / pick up arrangement:

- **FRONT GATE:** Park your vehicle in the Haymarket Car Park. This will allow you to leave your vehicle and assist your children with their school bag. Please remind your child about road safety when walking across the unmanned crossing.
- **PARISH GATE:** Park your vehicle in Yarra Street. This gate is also a good option for families who walk to school. Please note, the Parish Car Park is for school staff only.

Families are reminded to take care and obey parking signs when picking up and dropping off children around schools.

Community News



TERM 1, 2024 - REGISTER NOW @
[CHESSFORSCHOOLS.COM.AU](https://chessforschools.com.au)

SPECIALISED CHESS COACHING

Since 2002, we have been providing our popular Chess For Schools program in schools throughout Melbourne and Greater Geelong.



'Children love attending Phil's chess classes as he actively fosters their sense of wellbeing and motivation to learn more'.

*Rob Horwood Principal,
Stella Maris Primary, Beaumaris.*

HOW CAN CHESS BENEFIT YOUR CHILD?

Educational: Improved IQ, critical thinking, concentration, analytical skills, memory.

Social: Develop new friendships, social interaction skills, sportsmanship.

Emotional: Confidence, self esteem, resilience through winning/losing games.

CLASS STRUCTURE:

Different lessons are taught each week from a structured syllabus ranging from tactics, strategies, master openings, traps & special moves. After the lesson children are paired up in a fun tournament playoff. Prizes are awarded to the top 3 players at end of term.

BOOK HERE  **[CHESSFORSCHOOLS.COM.AU](https://chessforschools.com.au)**

CLASS DETAILS - ST MARY'S PRIMARY GEELONG

DAY	TIME	LOCATION	DATES	COST
Fridays	1.35pm - 2:15 pm	Year 1/2 Space	9 Feb to 22 Mar	\$138 per child/per term

"Alex loves chess club and gets very upset if he misses a session. His chess has definitely improved and his teacher, Anita feels that it helps with his math in class in terms of concepts and thinking. Keep up the great work!" **Katrina Lambert: Hampton Primary School**

Community News

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN OUR FOOTY COME & TRY
ANTHONY COSTA OVAL
THURS 1ST FEB 4.30PM-5.30PM

WE NEED GIRLS FOR OUR U12S TEAM!
OPEN TO ANY GIRLS BORN IN 2012 & 2013
 Any existing junior girls welcome along!

ALSO MEET GEELONG AFLW PLAYER CHLOE SCHEER

MORE INFORMATION : AMANDA 0425 718 094

St. Mary's TENNIS CLUB
 Thomson Reserve, East Geelong
 Taking Enrolments Now
 Tennis Hotshots
 After school Hours and Weekend Mornings
 Cardio Tennis

Free Open Day 4th February Children's Clinic 1:00 to 2:30
Adults Cardio Tennis 3:00 to 4:00

Contact
 Mark 0416 288 956

2024 Staff Email List

Follow the [link](#)

Family Handbook

Scan the QR Code or follow the [link](#)



Facebook:
[@St.Mary'sPrimaryGeelong](#)

Instagram:
[stmarys_ps_geelong](#)

Twitter:
[@StMarysPS3220](#)

School Website:
www.smgeelong.catholic.edu.au

Parent Portal password - **mary175**



St Mary's School, Geelong
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T: 5229 9453

Newsletter # 1
Term 1—Week 1