
Tuesday 17 May, 2022

ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Staying Connected No. 9 2022

Hello Everyone,

I trust everyone is doing their best to keep well. Unfortunately, we have had high numbers of staff and children with COVID. This term already has seen 9 staff out with COVID and 48 children out with COVID; not to mention family members who have probably had COVID too. I report these numbers simply to say, that COVID is still very real and we need to work together to keep each other safe.

Please, as far as practical, maintain some physical distancing. In other words, don't gather in large groups. If you choose to wear a mask, more credit to you. Most importantly if your child or you are sick, for that matter, please stay home. We do not want sick kids at school. I appreciate winter is coming on and there are all sorts of coughs and colds, but the reality is, these sniffles, aches and pains could very easily be COVID or even the flu, which appears to be prevalent in the wider community. I've heard all the arguments about not getting that sick from COVID, but some people do get very sick; and that is not what I want for any of us.

The other issue, is that it is nigh impossible to secure the services of replacement teachers if a teacher is sick. We have a number of very loyal and very much appreciated regular replacement teachers, however sometimes they are not available either. In that case, we have no other choice than to split grades. It is not ideal, but it is what it is!

St. Mary MacKillop Primary School is committed to child safety. We believe all students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.

Please, let's work together to keep everyone safe from illness.

Please see below for some new guidelines regarding the use of RATS.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

Friday week ago, we held our first school closure, where we examined three spheres of Catholic schooling, within the context of our school. Those spheres being, Student Well-Being, Leadership and Management and School Community. It was a very valuable process.

NEXT TUESDAY 24 MAY the school is closed again to all students as all staff examine the remaining spheres of Catholic schooling, being; The Religious Dimension and Learning and Teaching.

I apologise for another school closure so close to the last school closure, but these days are set by MACS staff who work with us in analysing data. In short, this whole process is about school improvement. We want SMMPS to be the best school it can be for your children and each other.

I do sincerely appreciate your support.

You may recall completing yearly surveys. These surveys, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic School Improvement Surveys (MACSIS), provide perception data from staff, parents and children in Years 4-6 on how they see their school, based on a number of descriptors. **I am very proud to report that our overall positivity score was higher than the MACS average score for other schools in all surveys.** I am proud to lead such a wonderfully positive school.

PREP 2023 Meetings

We are currently meeting with prospective families for Prep 2023. Numbers are looking strong for our planned 3 streams, i.e. 3 x Prep classes.

If you have not already let Kellie know you have a child to enrol in Prep 2023, please do so immediately. We want to look after existing families first.

As we move into the week, we look to St. Mary MacKillop for support and encouragement when she wrote,

"May God bless and keep you all." 16.05.1873

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God does truly bless us and is good to us.

Go well,



Anthony McCluskey

Principal

RATs

RATs will continue to be distributed to you as they have been throughout this school year for the remainder of this term.

However, from Monday 23 May 2022, it is not required that your child completes a RAT twice a week as previously advised.

RATs will continue to be required by students who are household contacts to attend school (five negative tests over a seven-day period) or who have symptoms.

The ongoing supply of RATs to families in our school will ensure that parents and carers have tests should they need them if their child is a household contact or has symptoms.

Families must continue to notify the Department of Health and the school if their child returns a positive RAT result. Additionally, you should inform us if any of your children are household contacts.

Thank you to all families who have gotten their child vaccinated. Vaccination continues to remain the best way to protect students and staff in our school.

Getting vaccinated is easy and bookings can be done via the Department of Health's website <https://portal.cvms.vic.gov.au>. If you have any questions about the vaccines, I encourage you to speak to your GP or a health practitioner.

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PROTECT

Everyone has the right to be safe and be protected from abuse.

No one should behave in a way that makes you feel unsafe or afraid, including anyone in your family, anyone at school or anywhere else in the community.

Tell a teacher or any adult at your school if you feel unsafe.



It's everyone's responsibility.

Adults at school must listen and respond to concerns about child abuse.

If you suspect abuse of any child or young person, you have a responsibility to report it, even if you are not sure.

Further information & resources

www.education.vic.gov.au/protect



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Upcoming Events-Term 2

Tuesday 10 to Friday 20 May

Year 3 and Year 5 Naplan

Monday 16 May

2023 Enrolment Interviews commence-for new families

Tuesday 24 May

School closure-see information

Saturday 28 May

Year 3 First Communion

12.00pm and 2.00pm

Friday 24 June

Last Day of Term 2-children finish at 1.00pm