

# ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

152 Odessa Avenue, Keilor Downs, Vic 3038

[www.mmkeilordowns.catholic.edu.au](http://www.mmkeilordowns.catholic.edu.au)

T: 03 9367 6199



## *Staying Connected No. 4, 28 March, 2025*

It certainly has been a big couple of weeks in the life of Catholic education.

Last week the Archdiocese of Melbourne celebrated **Catholic Education Week**, where we acknowledged everything good and unique about our schools.

A recent survey has highlighted the enduring benefits associated with Catholic schools in Australia.

### **Lifelong Advantages of Catholic Education**

A study conducted by the Centre for International Research on Education Systems (CIRES) at Victoria University, utilizing data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, revealed significant lifelong benefits for individuals who attended Catholic schools. Key findings include:

- **Higher Employment Rates and Wages:** Catholic school graduates are more likely to be employed and tend to earn higher wages compared to those who attended government schools, with wage differences ranging from 4% to 11%.
- **Enhanced Life Satisfaction and Health:** Attendees of Catholic schools generally report higher levels of life satisfaction and better personal health outcomes.

- **Community Contribution:** Graduates are more inclined to work in industries that contribute positively to the public good and are more likely to donate to charitable causes.

We would hope in some small way, St. Mary MacKillop Primary School play our part in working towards achieving these great results. I stand as a very proud Principal of our school. **We have great teachers, wonderful children and supportive families.** I am confident that our teachers provide engaging learning opportunities for our children and I trust that they support the children as they navigate the complexities of life's journey. They are children, between the ages of 5-12 years, but as young as they are, they are trying to navigate their way. It is not easy, but I am proud of the fact that they are able to do so, in a safe and caring environment.

### **Our Catholic school is a great Catholic school.**

On Monday **March 17** our Church celebrated the **Feast of St. Patrick**. St. Patrick holds a special place in the hearts of many Melbourne Catholics, especially given the city's strong Irish Catholic heritage. In the 19th century, a large influx of Irish immigrants helped shape the religious and cultural landscape of Melbourne. They brought with them a deep devotion to St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, which became embedded in the identity of local Catholic communities.

Today, St. Patrick remains a symbol of faith, resilience, and cultural pride. **St Patrick's Cathedral** in Melbourne is not only a spiritual centre but also a monument to the Irish Catholic legacy. It's often at the heart of major religious events, and St. Patrick's Day is still widely celebrated with Masses, festivals, and community gatherings, reinforcing both cultural ties and religious devotion.



*The icon of St Patrick, displayed in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne.*

Last Friday, our School Captains; Adrian Atkinson, Amelia Clements, Zulum Ikediashi, Mietta DeLuca, Brian de Vellis and Alyssa Georgiou, together with Seirra Borg, our Student Jubilee Ambassador, Natalie Mulford (Religious Education Leader) Anne-Marie Aprile (Year 6 teacher and Jubilee Ambassador) and myself attended the Catholic Education Week Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral with representatives from the 291 Catholic schools across the Melbourne Archdiocese. It was a tremendous celebration of our faith and for me a very moving Liturgy. Please see a full report from the children below.

At the conclusion of Mass, a new icon to St. Patrick was unveiled. If you would like to know more about the icon; please visit this site: <https://melbournecatholic.org/news/a-doorway-to-eternity-st-patricks-cathedral-gets-a-new-icon>

On Wednesday March 19, we celebrated the Feast of St. Joseph, honoring the foster father of Jesus and the protector of the Holy Family. St. Joseph is a model of humility, faith, and hard work, reminding us of the importance of trust in God's plan and selfless service to others.

For **St. Mary MacKillop**, Australia's first saint, devotion to St. Joseph was central to her faith and mission. She placed the Josephite Sisters under his patronage, drawing inspiration from his strength, humility, and unwavering dedication. Like St. Joseph, Mary MacKillop believed in trusting God completely and serving those in need with a generous heart.

As a school community, we are invited to reflect on St. Joseph's virtues—his quiet faith, hard work, and compassionate leadership. May his example inspire us to be people of integrity, care, and service in our daily lives and especially in the care of our children.

Let us always seek St. Joseph's guidance and, like St. Mary MacKillop, embrace his spirit of faith and dedication. **St. Joseph, pray for us!**

Next **Thursday 3 April**, many of our **Year 3** children will be receiving the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** for the first time at 12 pm in our Church of St. Mary MacKillop.

On **Tuesday 18 March** Tuesday evening, Natalie Mulford (Religious Education Leader) facilitated a **Reconciliation Family Formation** session. This gathering is a vital part of our shared mission with the Church, as we continue to make Christ known to others. Through this session, we aim to support families in deepening their understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Reconciliation is often one of the least practiced sacraments, yet it offers profound healing and peace. By guiding our children and families in recognizing its significance, we help them embrace the grace and renewal that this sacrament provides. It is a great opportunity to journey together in faith.

It is important to reflect on the significance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a vital aspect of our spiritual journey as Catholics. This sacrament, also known as Confession or Penance, offers us a profound opportunity to experience God's mercy, restore our relationship with Him, and renew our hearts in His grace.

Reconciliation allows us to acknowledge our sins, seek forgiveness, and receive spiritual healing through the priest, who acts as Christ's representative. By sincerely confessing our wrongdoings, expressing true contrition, and committing to amend our lives, we open ourselves to God's boundless love and the joy of renewal.

This sacrament is not just about seeking pardon but also about embracing God's call to conversion. It reminds us that through God's mercy, we can always return to Him. Furthermore, Reconciliation fosters peace within our hearts and strengthens our relationships with others, reinforcing the values of compassion, humility, and love.

As a school rooted in Catholic values; may we always strive to live in His light and extend His mercy to those around us.

Have a happy last week of term everybody.



**Anthony McCluskey**  
**Principal**

# United in Prayer



## *Lifting Up Pope Francis*

Pope Francis challenges us to live with real hope – not just in words, but in action. He speaks out for justice, cares for the poor, and reminds us that faith is about loving, serving, and making the world a better place.

As we pray for his health, and wellbeing, we ask ourselves:

*How can we bring hope into our own lives, our schools,  
and the wider world?*



[www.hopehq.com.au](http://www.hopehq.com.au)

hopeHQ is a ministry of  
Liturgy Ritual Prayer

Live Your Best Life in Love...

## **A Marriage Encounter weekend is for you...**

Every married couple deserves this very special weekend. Time-out to nurture your most precious relationship away from daily distractions. The two of you will come away from your weekend feeling more deeply connected and with tools to help keep the passion alive. No group sharing required. The weekend is based around Catholic values. Couples of all faiths are welcome.

**Please check our website for more details and to book your special weekend: Our next weekend is: 25-27 April 2025 at St Paul's Retreat Centre, Wantirna South.**

Starts Friday evening at 7pm and finishes Sunday afternoon around 4:30pm

Information/Bookings: Phone **Mercy & James 0409 183 676** or

Email: [vicbookings@wwme.org.au](mailto:vicbookings@wwme.org.au) Website: [wwme.org.au](http://wwme.org.au)

## PLAYGROUND USE BEFORE SCHOOL – REMINDER

Please note that all of the Junior and Senior Adventure Playgrounds are **not to be used before school**.



This is the Junior Adventure playground.  
It is only for use by students from Prep to Year 2.



The climbing frames can be used by all students.

This is the Senior Adventure Playground.  
It is only for students in Years 3 – 6.



Parents are required to actively watch their children when using the equipment after school.

## PRINCIPALS AWARDS 2025





support each other



play fair



take care of God's creation

MARYMAC  
*KIDS*  
SHINING THE LIGHT OF JESUS

smiley and happy



love each other



play nicely



look after each other



play kindly



know how to be good friends



enjoy playtime



play safely

Celebrating the tradition of

# Shrove Tuesday

at SMMPS





# Mass of St. Patrick for Schools



On Friday the 21st of March, representatives from our school attended the Catholic Education Week celebrations, beginning with Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral. Our school was represented by the Captains, Vice Captains, the Staff and Student Jubilee Ambassadors, and Mrs Mulford and Mr McCluskey.

As we arrived, we saw lots of other Catholic schools holding up their banners and taking photos. We did the same!

Mass began with a procession of banners, representing Catholic schools that had big celebrations or anniversaries this year. The banner bearers were led by the sound of bagpipes playing in honour of St Patrick. It was a beautiful Mass, and the choir and cantors leading us in praise and worship were remarkable and sensational.

During the Archbishop's homily, we learned about St. Patrick's life. St. Patrick was originally from Britain but was enslaved by pirates. He eventually became a priest because his terrible experiences didn't turn him away from God; they brought him closer to God! He taught people in Ireland about God and became a famous Saint. The Archbishop urged us to come to know that God wanted to find each of us, just like He did St. Patrick. He prayed that we would know Jesus' love, experience his mercy, and hear Jesus calling quietly to us in our hearts. He asked that God would give each of us the courage of St. Patrick.

During the Mass, Archbishop Comensoli blessed and unveiled a new icon of St Patrick, the first to ever be placed in St Patrick's Cathedral. In the icon, St. Patrick is dressed as a bishop. Ireland is represented with a shamrock and the prominent colour green. The most special aspect of the icon is that St. Patrick is holding his bishop's staff and our very own St. Patrick's Cathedral in his hands.

Our school Jubilee Ambassadors, Mrs Aprille and Sierra Borg were also commissioned for the year of Jubilee, with a special blessing.

After the Mass, we headed to the Concert in the Park at Treasury Gardens. It was a lot of fun and included a lot of dancing. We set up our picnic blankets, ate our lunch, and played the games set up by MACS. It was a great day filled with celebration, joy and Christ.

Written by Year 6 School Leaders and Jubilee Ambassador





# YEAR ONE

# MULTICULTURAL DAY



On Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> of March the Year 1s celebrated the conclusion of their Inquiry unit by having a Multicultural Day in honour of Harmony Week.



The Year 1s dressed up in traditional clothes or colours that represent their cultural flag. They enjoyed a picnic surrounded by many foods from various cultures and spoke about the similarities and differences in foods they eat at home.



The students had an amazing day and it was beautiful to see the diverse cultures that live within our school community.



# COLOUR RUN

SMMPS COLOUR RUN 2025

WOW!! What a great experience the colour run was at our school! So awesome to have so many parents, staff, students and families come along and join in the fun! What a great way to celebrate coming to the end of Term One! And raise some money for our school!

It was also fantastic to bring together our school community to make a mess and have a good time!

A HUGE thank-you goes out to:

- SMMPS Staff for their support and involvement
- Parent Group for all their hard work and support
- Sports Captains for their support and participation
- Maintenance team (Josh & Col) for their help
- Our ENORMOUS team of Parent Helpers!! (more than 80 parents!)
- Mr McCluskey for letting us mess up the yard!
- And all members of the community for helping make the day special for the kids!

We hope your kids had as much fun as we did, and we look forward to holding this event ANNUALLY here at SMMPS!

Now we need everyone to keep gathering donations and collecting their sponsorship money. Please ensure you return your money to your child's classroom teacher in a sealed envelope with your child's name and class on the front.

All money raised will go towards the upgrade and redevelopment of our school oval, and of course HEAPS of prizes on offer for those who raise the most money!

GREAT JOB MARY MAC COMMUNITY!



## REMINDERS

- The basketball court is used as a carpark in the morning and afternoon. The safety of our children is of utmost importance and therefore I ask that you take extra care when driving in the carpark areas. The speed limit is **5km per hour** and there is to be no double parking at all. Please only park in the designated parking spots and do not park on the **artificial turf or in pedestrian walk ways**. Thank you for taking the safety of our children seriously.



- From time to time our children forget to bring their lunch to school or a lunch order is ordered for the wrong day and we ask parents to bring in the missing lunch. In order to continue with our healthy eating expectations we ask that parents **do not bring in take away food** such as McDonalds, KFC etc. If you do need to purchase lunch for your child we ask that you purchase things such as sushi, sandwiches or wraps.
- The School opens at 8.30am and children can enter the classroom at 8.50am. **Please do not drop children off prior to 8.30am.** If you need to bring your child to school before 8.30am please book them into the before school hours program.
- St Mary MacKillop is a 'Smoke Free Zone' and smoking on the school grounds is not permitted. According to the law, 'The Tobacco Act 1987 bans smoking or vaping on school premises or within 4 metres of any pedestrian access point to school premises.'  
**Please do not smoke or vape on the school grounds.**

- If your child needs to bring a mobile phone to school it must be handed into the teacher in the morning where it will be stored in a secured location and returned to them in the afternoon. Please refer to the Mobile phone policy on the school website.
- As there is no supervision on the playground area and the oval are in the morning, these areas are out of bounds and children are not to play on the playground or the oval before school.
- The front drive through area between the Church and the School operates as a drive through zone only before school.
- Due to a few near misses, those who wish to park and bring their child into class must **use the back car park area.** There is now no parental parking in bays outside the front of the Church.

### 2025 Term Dates

**Term 1: 31 January-04 April 2025**  
**(Good Friday 18 April-Easter Monday 21 April)**  
**Term 2: 22 April-04 July 2025**  
**Term 3: 21 July-19 September 2025**  
**Term 4: 6 October-16 December 2025**  
**(Year 6 finish Friday 12 December)**

## SMMPs Fundraising in 2025

The SMMPs Parent Group and Staff Fundraising team have HUGE plans for our school in 2025! Our Parent Group meets regularly together, along with staff representatives to plan and organise events for our kids and our school community. We do so under three key themes:

- Fundraising (raising money for school improvements)
- Community (building strong relationships within our school community)
- Fun (providing extra curricular fun activities for our kids and the community)

This year we are hoping to raise as much money as possible to improve our school grounds. In particular we are working towards redeveloping our school oval. We are currently considering a few different options for redesign and redevelopment, this may include a brand new astro turf soccer pitch, with new goals, T-Ball Diamonds and other markings for games and sports.

We would also like to continue upgrading our school hall, with improvements to the floor, walls and general facility upgrades all being considered.

It is through our major events that we raise money to put towards these types of school improvements. We ask that families please support our cause, donate and or get involved where possible so that our kids can have access to the best possible facilities and resources available and we can enjoy being part of such a great school community.

Over the next few weeks we are running:

### SMMPs Easter Raffle (Raffle tickets coming home today)

- Please donate Easter Chocolates or Goodies to your child's class hamper
- Buy / Sell Raffle tickets to increase your chances of winning
- Come along to support our Easter Parade and be part of the Prize Draw

Stay tuned for more fantastic events and opportunities for families to really get involved in our school and help make SMMPs even better than it already is!

THANK YOU for your generosity and support!

If you would like to join the SMMPs Parent Group or attend a meeting please email Sonali Tinaro at [sonalimtinaro@gmail.com](mailto:sonalimtinaro@gmail.com). Meetings are generally held at 2.30pm on Fridays.



postal address PO BOX 2192 Taylors Lakes 3038  
college address: 380 Sydenham Road, Sydenham 3037  
telephone: 9361 0000 [www.crcs.vic.edu.au](http://www.crcs.vic.edu.au)  
abn: 22 394 397 639

Faith Seeking Understanding

Catholic Regional College Sydenham @sydenhamcrrc /crrcsydenham /crrcsydenham /CRRCSydenham

26 March 2025

Dear Families,

Catholic Regional College Sydenham will host the Passion Play on Palm Sunday and Good Friday at the College. This is the first time the Play is being presented in the West of Melbourne after twenty-five successful years in Doncaster and Templestowe. The reason for the move is to give our communities here the opportunity to experience a live production of the Ministry of Christ.

In consultation with clergy, including the Archbishop, priests, schools in many parishes, and Rectors at Corpus Christi College Seminary, all were in agreement with this move.

Mr Gino Gammaldi is the manager of the Passion Play and has reached out to the College requesting support.

**The Passion Play is still looking for volunteer actors for the Passion Play. The Passion Play is seeking parents, students, staff, Parishioners and members of the broader community.**

This will be a fulfilling and enriching experience for fostering creativity, teamwork, and a greater appreciation for the performing arts as well as a very enriching spiritual opportunity that can enrich Faith.

To truly bring this production to life, the Passion Play is seeking enthusiastic participants from our schools and Parishes who are willing to volunteer as actors. No previous experience is necessary, as the goal is to provide a religious and educational opportunity for all involved. The Passion Play especially require people to play the part of Roman soldiers (male & female).

If you are willing to become involved please contact Mr Gino Gammaldi directly on 0422 662 451 or at: [gino.gammaldi@yahoo.com](mailto:gino.gammaldi@yahoo.com)

Thank you,

Yours sincerely,

Brendan J Watson  
Principal





# MARIAN COLLEGE



## DISCOVERY DAY 2025

To book get in touch with our Transition and Community Participation Leader  
Shelley Smith at [ssmith@mariansw.vic.edu.au](mailto:ssmith@mariansw.vic.edu.au)  
or contact on 9363 1711



Step into a world of discovery, and embark on an adventure at Marian College's Discovery Day!

Join us for a day filled with exciting experiences that will ignite your passion for all things that our girls secondary college has to offer. Don't miss out on this opportunity to engage, create, and explore!



A Kildare Education Ministries Catholic School for Girls in the Brigidine Tradition  
196 Glengala Road, Sunshine West VIC 3020  
0393631711  
[mariansw.catholic.edu.au](http://mariansw.catholic.edu.au)

**STRONG FUTURES**  
*gentle hearts*



Taylors Lakes  
SECONDARY COLLEGE

*'every child,  
every classroom,  
every opportunity'*



LEARN



ACHIEVE



EXCEL



EXPERIENCE



## COLLEGE TOURS 2025

ONSITE TOURS: February 26th, March 5th, 12th, 14th, 19th, 21st & 26th; April 2nd, 23rd & 30th; May 7th, 14th & 21st 9:30am - 11:00am

REGISTER AT THE COLLEGE ON 9390 3130 FOR DETAILS

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## Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund APPLICATION Form

School Name

School REF ID

### Parent/legal guardian details

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

First name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/suburb \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number \_\_\_\_\_

Centrelink pensioner concession **OR** Health care card number (CRN)

-    -    -  **OR**

Foster parent\* **OR**  Veterans affairs pensioner (Gold Card)\*\*

\*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

\*\*Applicants must provide a copy of the Veteran Affairs Gold card.

### Student details

Child's surname	Child's first name	Student ID	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Year level

I authorise the Victorian Department of Education (DE) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry about my Centrelink customer details and concession card status to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to provide the results of any enquiry to DE regarding temporary care orders.

I understand that:

- DFFH or Centrelink will use information I have provided to DE to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DE personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.
- This consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.
- I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DFFH and provide it to my child's school so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.
- If I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DE.
- Information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to DFFH and/or State Schools Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You can request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child's school.

Signature of applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## Camps, Sports and Excursions fund eligibility

Below are the criteria used to determine a student's eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

### Criteria 1 – Eligibility

To be eligible\* for the fund, a mature minor of sixteen years of age or over, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one; or
  - on the first day of Term two.
- Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder; or
  - Be a temporary foster parent; and
  - Submit an application to the school by the due date.

\* A special consideration eligibility category also exists. For more information, see: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Eligibility | education.vic.gov.au](#)

Mature minors or parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above.

### Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria

School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and seventeen years of age inclusive.

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and eighteen years inclusive.

CSEF is not payable to students' attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooling, or TAFE.

### Eligibility Date

For concession card holders, CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink (see [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Policy | education.vic.gov.au](#)).

## Payment amounts

### CSEF payment amount

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

The CSEF is paid directly the school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child. Please refer to the policy for the current rates.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth. For more information, see: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Payment amounts | education.vic.gov.au](#)

Foundation and Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents, so please register your interest at the school.

## How to complete the application form

**NOTE: ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN**

- Complete the PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN DETAILS section.  
Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.  
If you are claiming as a Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.
- Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.
- Sign and date the form and return it to the school office as soon as possible.

CSEF payments cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

Queries relating to CSEF eligibility and payments should be directed to the school.



## Upcoming Events 2025

**Term 1: 31 January-04 April**

**Tuesday 01 April and Wednesday 02 April**

School Photos

**Thursday 03 April**

Year 3 Reconciliation @ 12pm in the Church

**Friday 04 April**

Last day of Term 1-All Students finish @ 1pm

(Good Friday 18 April-Easter Monday 21 April)

**Term 2: 22 April-04 July 2025**

**Tuesday 22 April**

First day of term 2

**Thursday 24 April**

Easter Celebration/Parade @ 9.00am

**Friday 25 April**

Anzac Day Public Holiday

## Upcoming Events 2025 Continued....

**Friday 02 May**

2026 Enrolments Due

**Monday 05 May to Friday 16 May**

2026 Prep Enrolment Interviews-New Families

**Wednesday 14 May**

School Closure Day-details soon

**Wednesday 21 May**

2026 Prep Offers Issued

**Saturday 21 May**

Year 3 First Holy Communion

10.30am and 12.30pm

**Friday 06 June**

2026 Enrolment Offers Due

**More dates to come.....**