

ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Staying Connected No. 11, 05 August, 2025

Dear Community,

Celebrating the Feast of St. Mary MacKillop – A Legacy of Faith and Service

8 August – A Day of Deep Significance for Our School Community

Each year on August 8, we pause to celebrate the Feast Day of **St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop**, Australia's first saint and the patron of our school. It is a special time to reflect on her life, her values, and the profound impact she continues to have on Catholic education and the wider community.

Mary MacKillop's story is one of deep faith, courage, and compassion. Born in 1842, Mary faced many challenges throughout her life, yet remained steadfast in her belief that God would provide. Her famous words, *"Never see a need without doing something about it,"* guide our school values and call us to live lives of action, justice, and love.

Together with Fr Julian Tenison Woods, Mary founded the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart in 1866, with a mission to educate poor and rural children. Her work laid the foundation for a network of Catholic schools across Australia, especially in communities where education was otherwise out of reach.

At **St. Mary MacKillop Primary School**, we are proud to carry forward her legacy. Her life reminds us of the power of perseverance, humility, and trust in God's plan. Her example calls us to treat every person with dignity, to serve with joy, and to see Christ in the face of others.

On her Feast Day, we will gather in prayer, celebration, and community spirit. It is a time for our students to deepen their connection to our school's namesake and to be inspired by the life of this remarkable woman.

As we honour Mary MacKillop, may we be reminded that holiness is not about grand gestures, but about small acts of love carried out with great faith.

St Mary MacKillop – Pray for us.



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.

On **Friday**, our school community will joyfully celebrate the **Feast Day of St. Mary MacKillop** with a series of activities that honour her life and legacy.

We warmly invite all families to join us for **Mass at 9:30am**, where the children will gather with the parish for the morning celebration of the Eucharist.

Following Mass, students will take part in a range of classroom-based activities that help them explore the life of St. Mary MacKillop and the time in which she lived and served.

At First Break there will be some **old school games and a photo booth** under the dome. At Second Break we will be holding our much-loved **Staff versus Students Netball Match**. If anything, it provides plenty of laughs and some fierce competition!

As part of the celebration, the children will enjoy a **Sausage Sizzle** and receive a small **bag of lollies**—a meaningful nod to Mary MacKillop herself. It is said that Mary would often carry sweets in her pockets to share with the children she taught, many of whom came from very poor families. For those children, a lolly from Mary would have been a rare and special treat.

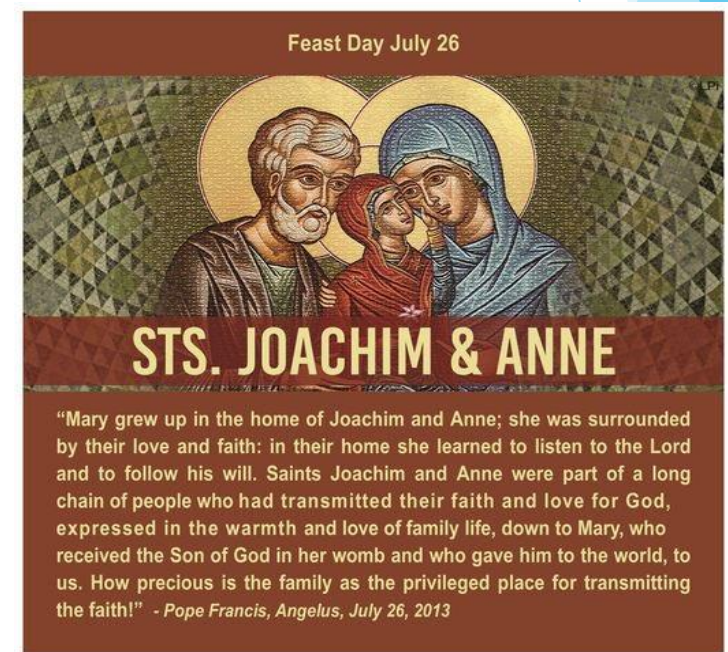
We look forward to a day of prayer, reflection, and joyful community as we honour the woman whose name and spirit continue to inspire everything, we do at St. Mary MacKillop Primary School.

GRANDPARENTS GATHERING

Last week, we were delighted to welcome a number of grandparents to our school for a beautiful reflection, followed by classroom visits with their grandchildren. This annual event is always a cherished occasion. As a grandfather myself, I know how heart-warming it is to witness our grandchildren in their learning environment—and I know just how much joy it brings to the children as well.

We intentionally align this special day with the **Feast of Saints Anne and Joachim**, the parents of Mary and the grandparents of Jesus, recognising and honouring the important role grandparents play in the lives of their families.

Please see photos below.



Rear Carpark Safety Measures

You may have noticed the concrete blocks recently placed at the top of the rear carpark. These have been installed as a **precautionary safety measure**.

At the end of the school day, many children wait under the veranda on the turf area. I have observed cars entering the carpark at speed, and I have often been concerned about the potential danger if a driver were to lose control or fail to brake properly. Children waiting—often playing or rolling on the turf—could be at serious risk.

While the blocks may appear unsightly, **their purpose is to ensure the safety of your children**, and that will always be our top priority.

Important Health Message – Influenza B Outbreak

You may have seen the recent email from Erin Abson, our school nurse, regarding the spread of **Influenza B**.

I cannot stress this enough: **If your child is unwell, please keep them at home until they have fully recovered**. I understand the challenge of juggling sick children with work commitments—I've had to do it myself! However, our priority must be the health and safety of all children and staff.

We are currently experiencing a **significant outbreak**, with an average of **93 students absent each day**—that's nearly **one fifth of our student population**. On one day last week, we had **139 children away**, along with a number of staff who are also unwell.

We need your help to minimise the spread and protect our school community.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes to everyone,



Anthony McCluskey
Principal

PRINCIPAL AWARD'S



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2025 is a milestone year for CBCA as they celebrate **80 years of Children's Book Week!** This year's celebration will run from Saturday 16 to Saturday 23 August and the theme is **'Book an Adventure.'** For 8 decades, CBCA has been dedicated to inspiring young minds to journey through the countless worlds that books offer. During this time schools and public libraries spend one glorious week celebrating books and Australian children's authors and illustrators.

At SMMPS we are planning to celebrate Book Week by having some Australian authors visiting, giving talks to the classes, exploring and studying the various Shortlisted books and of course holding our annual book parade. **There is no pressure for families to purchase costumes.** (Time to get creative!!!!) We will be celebrating this special day on **Monday 25th August 2025.** The parade will begin at 9.10am- 10.00am in the hall. **Parents are welcome to attend.**

*Our aim at SMMPS is to grow a love of reading in all children. We want them to see **reading as a pleasure** and a skill that helps them unlock many aspects of life. We see the growth of book love as a responsibility of the whole school community. Beyond the classroom children need to experience the closeness of sharing reading with their family and discussing their enjoyment, wonderings, and opinions with others. During this reading journey, a way of moving forward could be for parents to discuss with their children memories of their own favourite books, characters and authors.*

Look forward to seeing you on Monday 25th August, dressed up as your favourite book character.

Jenny Melki
Literacy Leader

Grandparents Afternoon





Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Catholic
Regional College
North Keilor

Reminder for Grade 5 families

**Catholic Regional College North Keilor is the school for your child?
Please be reminded that enrolments for Year 7 2027 are due soon.
Applications for enrolment close on August 15th 2025.**

Apply at: crcnk.com.au/enrolments/year-7-2027

She Who Belongs She Who Thrives



Now accepting enrolments Year 7 2027
Applications close 15 August 2025



Book a College Tour today:
14-22 Vida St, Aberfeldie, VIC, 3040
(03) 9331 9300
registrar@avemaria.vic.edu.au



She Who Explores TERM 3 SESSIONS



Come and see what it's like to be an Ave girl through our after school program, **She Who Explores**.

Designed specifically for Year 4 and 5 students, this is a fantastic opportunity for our future students to explore the curriculum and co-curriculum at Ave Maria College.

We hope that you will join us for our final sessions for 2025.



Thursday, 24 July 4:00pm-5:00pm STEM or Netball
Wednesday, 6 August 4:00pm - 5:00pm STEM (repeat)
Thursday, 7 August 4:00pm - 5:00pm Netball (repeat)



For more information, please email Assistant Principal (Community and Partnerships), Mrs Natalie Meddis, AssistantPrincipalCommunity@avemaria.vic.edu.au or register via the QR.



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.
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- 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 3: 21 July-19 September 2025
Term 4: 6 October-16 December 2025
(Year 6 finish Friday 12 December)

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.

Upcoming Events 2025

Term 3: 22 July-19 September 2025

Tuesday 05 August

100 days of Prep

Friday 08 August

Mary MacKillop Feast Day-See Anthony's message

Friday 15 August

Feast of the Assumption

Monday 18 August

School Closure Day-All Staff First Aid Training

Monday 25 August

Book Parade-See information

Monday 25 August to Friday 29 August

Book Fair

Friday 19 September

Last Day of Term 3

Students finish @ 1pm