

ST. MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

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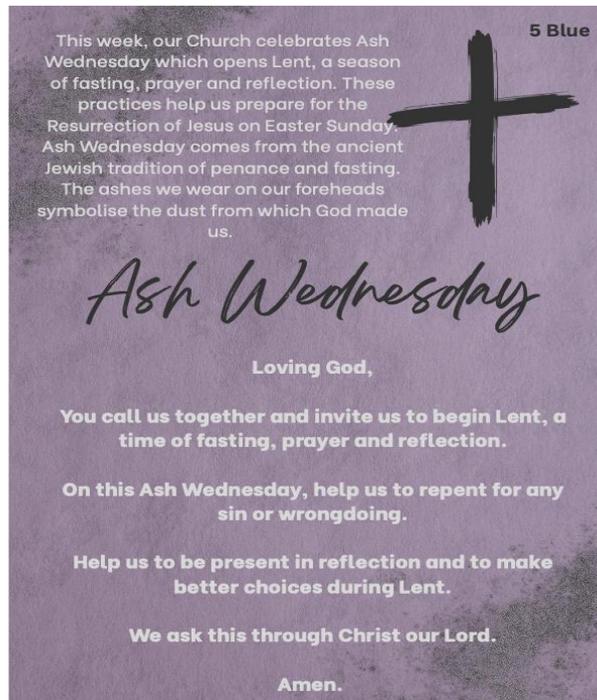


Staying Connected No. 3 19 February, 2026

Hi Everyone,

We are a proud Catholic school, in fact, ***“we live and celebrate our Catholic Faith.”*** (SMMPs Mission Statement).

A time of deep significance for those of us who are Catholic, is the Season Of Lent, which we are entering this Wednesday.



We talk of abstinence during the season of lent. Pope Leo XIV offers a profound invitation that challenges us all:

“I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence; that of refraining from words that offend or hurt our neighbour. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves.”

What a wonderful and practical way to start Lent. We can choose to be kind. Let’s make that our goal this Lent.

Have a wonderful week of kindness, everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony McCluskey".

Anthony McCluskey
Principal

Dear Parents and guardians, for safety reasons, the back-school gates will be locked at 4 PM each day. Any parents or guardians picking up children from ‘Out of Hours School Care’ must use the front gate after this time. This new policy ensures a secure and safe environment for all students, staff and parents. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Year 6 Prayer for Kind Words and Gentle Hearts

Each week, I work with the year 6 class as their Faith and Life Coach. This is a prayer we will pray together over Lent and on occasions throughout the year. It is a call to kindness and gentle hearts.

Loving God,

You gave us **Saint Mary MacKillop**,
who believed in kindness, courage,
and never giving up on others.

You gave us **Saint Francis**,
who showed us how to live simply
and speak with peace.

This year, as we celebrate the Jubilee of Saint Francis
and answer Pope Leo's call
to fast from unkind words,
help us to choose words that heal,
not words that hurt.

When we feel angry,
help us to pause.

When we feel left out,
help us to trust.

When we want to gossip or complain,
help us to remember
that our words can build up
or break down.

May our classroom be a place
where kindness grows.
May our playground be filled
with encouragement.
May our school shine
with the gentle strength
of Mary MacKillop
and the joyful peace of Francis.

Jesus, make our hearts patient,
our minds thoughtful,
and our words loving.

Amen.

Positive Behaviour for Learning at St Mary MacKillop

In 2026, our school will renew its focus on Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) — an evidence-based, whole-school framework that promotes a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment.

PBL supports students by explicitly teaching and reinforcing positive social, emotional, and behavioural skills, with clear and consistent expectations across the school.

Key Characteristics of PBL:

- **Defined Expectations:** We identify 3–4 clear, positively stated school-wide expectations.
- **Explicit Teaching:** Students are taught what these behaviours look like in different settings (e.g., classroom, playground).
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Staff acknowledge and reinforce students who demonstrate expected behaviours.
- **Consistent Responses:** Staff use fair, consistent, and logical responses to inappropriate behaviour.

What Are the Benefits of PBL?

- **Predictable learning environments** – Clear expectations that support consistent, sustainable practice.
- **Increased focus on learning** – More teaching time and fewer disruptions
- **Improved relationships** – Respectful, positive connections between students and staff
- **Reduced inappropriate behaviour** – A safer, more consistent school environment

Our Next Steps

During the initial phase, we will:

- Review and clarify our school values
- Seek input from staff, students, and families
- Develop a behaviour expectations matrix aligned with our shared values

Your voice is important, and we look forward to working together in this process.

Celebrating Our Faith

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS



THE 2026 CHOIR LEAD OUR HYMNS



FR VINH EXPLAINED HOW WE CAN GROW CLOSER TO GOD DURING LENT



MS SACHETTA AND THE YEAR 4 CHILDREN LEAD THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL



OUR YEAR 6 STUDENTS PROCLAIMED THE WORD OF GOD



FR VINH BLESSED THE ASHES THAT WE WOULD RECEIVE



MAX, MARTA, CHANEL AND JO BROUGHT OUR OFFERING TO THE ALTAR



OUR 2026 FAITH AND MISSION LEADERS DELIVERED THE BLESSED ASHES TO THE YEAR 1 AND PREP CLASSES

THE YEAR 1'S LOVE NRL!

On Friday the Year 1's were lucky enough to participate in a Rugby League session with the NRL! We started the session breaking off into our teams then we put on our tag belts. We played games like tail tag and even had a go at running down the field to make a try. We had wonderful coaches come to teach us our new skills and the teachers were cheering us on.

It was great to see all the year 1's giving rugby a go. The coaches were impressed with the level of energy and enthusiasm that the students brought to their special PE session and were very proud of the efforts of all students. As always, the Year 1's accepted the learning challenges they encountered with a growth mindset and showed great team work skills. Well done Year 1's!

- ★ My favourite game was the Tiger Game because we get to take people's tags! - Ivy
- ★ I learnt how to make a fence with my team by standing like an aeroplane - Luke
- ★ I was running really fast and I kept my tags from being stolen! I was proud of myself when I made a try - Roko
- ★ I was good at stealing the tags. My favourite bit was stealing the tag! - Bella



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.

SMMPS Literacy LINK

Welcome to the SMMPS Literacy Link where we will share some advice on how you can support your child's Literacy and share some of their learning throughout the year.

Literacy begins at home and grows stronger through the partnership between families and school. It is at the heart of everything we do as a school community. Every bedtime story, dinner table conversation, library visit, and note tucked into a backpack helps build the skills and confidence children need to thrive. When we work together, students, families, and staff create a culture where words have power, stories build empathy, and learning extends beyond the classroom walls. Together, we are growing confident readers, thoughtful writers, and lifelong learners.

This Edition – Home Reading Tips

Why do we need to do reading at home?

Children need a lot of practice to develop their reading skills to the point of fluency. Ten to fifteen minutes daily reading at home with a supportive adult can make all the difference. This will enable children to apply their letter – sound knowledge to reading simple text. Reading at home should be a successful and positive experience for your child.

How can I support my child when reading at home?

When your child gets stuck on a word, encourage them to have a go at sounding out the word. If necessary, demonstrate what this looks like first. Remember to praise with abundance when your child is successful at working out a word or when your child goes back to have another go. Never tell your child to 'guess' a word or use the picture to help them. Always keep the focus on letters and sounds. Learning to read initially requires a lot of effort for many children and at this early stage much patience is required. It is important to build up confidence and allow them to enjoy success as they work out words with your help.

If your child stumbles over a tricky word that can't be sounded out, simply give them the word and ask them to repeat it.



PRINCIPAL AWARD



2026 TERM DATES

TERM 1: Friday 30 January - Thursday 02 April (Good Friday 03 April)

TERM 2: Monday 20 April - Friday 26 June

TERM 3: Monday 13 July - Friday 18 September

TERM 4: Monday 05 October - Tuesday 15 December
(Year 6 finish Friday 11 Dec)



Keilor Downs Conference
St Mary of the Assumption Parish
Odessa Avenue
KEILOR DOWNS 3038

12 February 2026

Mr Anthony McCluskey
Principal
Mary Mackillop Catholic PS
152 Odessa Avenue
Keilor Downs 3038

Dear Mr McCluskey

St Vincent de Paul 2025 Christmas Appeal

On behalf of the Keilor Downs Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society, please accept our sincere thanks and blessings for the incredible efforts of your students and teachers during our 2025 Christmas Appeal.

The contribution made by the staff and students of Mary Mackillop Catholic Primary School was truly an impressive achievement. I am pleased to report that **50 families** with children benefitted from this generosity, receiving much-needed relief from hardship and the opportunity to experience the joy and cheer of the Christmas season.

Warm gestures of support like yours to the work we do, never fail to bring a sense of hope, comfort, and dignity to all of us.

God bless.

Yours sincerely

Armando Bianco
President



EXPERIENCE CRC NORTH KEILOR

GRADE 5 IMMERSION PROGRAM

CRCNK are running a Grade 5 Immersion Program throughout Terms 2 & 3. Students engage directly with our inspiring staff and our Year 10 student leaders for an exciting & fun hands-on Immersion program.

From interactive projects to collaborative activities, this unique experience provides Grade 5 students with an opportunity to explore high school subjects in a safe and supportive environment and gain invaluable insight into what student life is like at CRCNK.

- Sessions run from 3:45pm - 5pm
- Students are required to attend in their school uniform
- A parent/carer is required to attend for the duration of each session and are invited to attend presentations by members of our Leadership Team.

Each program will run on a Thursday after school for 3 consecutive weeks. The dates for the Term 2 programs are as follows -

Term 2: 14th May, 21st May, 28th May 2026.

Dates for Term 3 will be released closer to the time.

Students will be required to attend all 3 sessions in one program. Places are limited so register online via our College website using the link below.

SCAN ME



www.crcnk.vic.edu.au

1C Santa Monica Drive
NORTH KEILOR VIC 3038
9361 5900

PARENT INFORMATION
SESSION



YOUR WORDS MATTER

Empower yourself to protect
your teen from Alcohol and
other drug harms

- Decode the teen brain and today's world
- Build open, non-judgmental conversations that keep teens safe and connected
- Support risk minimisation and informed, healthy choices



Sharon Torpey
The Drug Education Project



Empower



Inform



Support

THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 2026
6:00PM - 7:15PM
RSVP VIA THE QR



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Ready to kick off the year with purpose? Term 1 at Vio Football School is officially OPEN for registration!

At VFS, we don't just coach—we develop. Join a community that values technical excellence and personal growth.

Secure your spot for Term 1 now: www.viosfootballschool.com

TERM 1

SATURDAYS, MONDAYS

FOOTBALL PROGRAMS

BASICS → **ADVANCED**

- **AGES: 5-12 YEARS OLD**
- **ALL ABILITIES**



**VIO FOOTBALL
SCHOOL**

**10% OFF REGISTRATIONS
FOR MARY MACKILLOP PRIMARY
STUDENTS**

TAYLORS LAKES SC

<https://www.viosfootballschool.com/register/>

0407 858 669



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER 2026

TERM 1

Tuesday 24 February

2027 Prep Information and Tour @ 9.30am

Wednesday 4 March

2027 Prep Information and Tour @ 9.30am

Friday 6 March

School Closure for MACS Review 2026-just added to the calendar

Monday 9 March

Labour Day Public Holiday

Tuesday 10 March

Reconciliation Family Faith Evening @ 7pm-MPR

Thursday 12 March

2027 Prep Information and Tour @ 9.30am

Wednesday 11 March to Monday 23 March

Naplan for Years 3 and 5

Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 March

School Photos

Thursday 26 March

Year 3 First Reconciliation @ 12pm

Thursday 2 April

End of Term 1: Students finish @ 1pm

TERM 2

Monday 20 April

School Closure for MACS Review 2026

Friday 1 May

2027 Prep Enrolments Due

Wednesday 6 May

Wonder of Life Ed-Year 5 @ 6.30pm-more details to come

Thursday 7 May

Wonder of Life Ed-Year 6 @ 6.30pm-more details to come

Monday 11 May

2027 Prep New Family Interviews commence

Monday 18 May

2027 Prep Letter of offer issued

Wednesday 20 May

Holy Communion Family Faith Evening @ 7pm-MPR

Friday 29 May

2027 Prep Letter of Acceptance due

Saturday 30 May

Sacraments of the Holy Communion @ 10.30am and 12.30pm

Monday 8 June

King's Birthday Public Holiday

Wednesday 10 June

Confirmation Family Faith Evening @ 7pm-MPR

Monday 15 June

2027 Prep Existing Family Interviews commence

Saturday 20 June

Sacrament of Confirmation @ 10am and 12pm

Friday 26 June

End of Term 2 Students finish @ 1pm