

# St Mary's



## Parent Information Book 2024

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
The History of St Mary's, Clarkes Hill.....	5
Daily Timetable .....	6
Procedures and Response to Student Absences .....	7
Our School's Philosophical Statement .....	8
Our School Values .....	9
Our School Objectives .....	10
Curriculum Organisation .....	11
Our Democratic Principles .....	12
Pursuing Fullness of Life – Student Outcomes.....	13
Roles and Responsibilities .....	17
St Mary's Staff .....	19
2024 School Fees .....	20
St Mary's School Uniform .....	21
General Information.....	23

## Introduction

The school staff warmly welcomes your child to St Mary's School, Clarkes Hill.

From the beginning you should be aware of the school's desire for your child's school days to be happy and successful.

At St Mary's we aim to create an atmosphere in which both children and staff can grow and develop as a Christian community loved by God. We aim to extend this to a sense of belonging and welcome within the wider community of home, school and parish.

Our understanding of the real beauty and value of the individual leads us to aim constantly at emphasising those aspects of life and learning, which will enable each person to continue to grow as a unique being.

The following information is given to help you understand the general school routine, the ethos and the wider community to help you prepare your child for school.



## The History of St Mary's, Clarkes Hill

St Mary's Primary School in Clarkes Hill is a small rural school located approximately 16 kilometres North East of Ballarat. Clarkes Hill is a farming area with much of the surrounding land being used to grow crops such as potatoes.

St. Mary's is steeped in tradition, with many of our children part of families that had their grandparents attend the school. This community involvement continues today and success of the school and Catholic Education depends largely on the partnership between the community and the teaching staff. St. Mary's is part of the Parish of Bungaree.

Rev Dr O'Collins, Bishop of Ballarat, officially opened St Mary's Clarkes Hill on Sunday, 14th April 1946. The local Prendergast family donated the land to build the school on. Sr Chanal of the Presentation Order was in charge of 23 children. In 1957, the Presentation sisters withdrew from the Clarkes Hill School but after approaches made to the Sisters of Mercy in Ballarat East by local community members, Sr Agatha Madden was appointed as Principal of the school.

After the religious were no longer able to support the school directly, the first lay principal, Miss Patricia Leonard was appointed to Clarkes Hill in 1974. Since then, there has been a succession of lay principals who have been in charge of the school.

In 1981 the community concentrated their efforts to provide a tennis court adjacent to the school for school and community use. Once again this land was donated. In 2002, the school was able to secure funding for a major redevelopment of the school building where a new administration area was developed.

In 2009 and into 2010, the school had two new classrooms and kitchen facilities installed, as well as a major upgrade to the playground facilities. Since that time there have been building works completed to refurbish the older parts of the school, including the Office/Reception area, Principal's Office, staff and student toilets. The play areas have also been updated including the tennis courts and artificial grass area. The entrance and covered walkway area were refurbished to create a more connected and welcoming environment.

Traditionally our students came from the local district however over the past few years we have families travel from other areas of Ballarat to attend St. Mary's, in order to be part of a bespoke country school experience.

## Daily Timetable

8.30am	Supervision of students begins
8.50am-10.50am	Teaching Block 1
10.50am-11.20am	Outside Play
11.20am-11.30am	Eat First Lunch
11.30am-1.30pm	Teaching Block 2
1.30pm-1.40pm	Eat Second Lunch
1.40pm-2.20pm	Outside Play



2.20pm-3.20pm

Teaching Block 3

3.20pm

Hometime

The timetable complies with

per day.



## Procedures and Response to Student Absences

It is a requirement of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development that accurate records of student absences are kept by the school. We appreciate parent support in notifying the school of their child's absence.

Parents/guardians are requested to notify the School of the child's absence in one of three ways:

- (Preferred method) **PAM/SIMON** App prior to 9.00am to inform the School of their child/children's absence and the reason for the absence. This is preferred because it informs all staff, including the principal, simultaneously.
- Telephone the School Office prior to 9.00am to inform of their child/children's absence and the reason for the absence.
- Alternatively, parents may inform the class teacher/s of the absence.

If the absence extends beyond one day, parents/guardians are asked to contact the School each day the child is absent.

Office staff will contact parents/guardians by 9.30am each day to ascertain the whereabouts of any child who has not been advised absent by parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians are requested to inform the Principal in advance and in writing of any anticipated extended absences from school, e.g. for health, family or holiday reasons.

### **Early Departures**

When a student needs to leave the school during school hours, e.g. to keep a dental or doctor's appointment, parents are asked to sign the Early Departure Book in the School Office.

### **Late Arrivals**

When a student arrives after 8.50am they must collect a late pass from the school office and hand it to the classroom teacher.

All students arriving late or leaving early must inform the school office.

## Our School's Philosophical Statement

St Mary's School has a strong tradition of educating children from rural communities in the faith traditions of the Church and Catholic Education as a whole. As educators we believe that learning is a lifelong process in which we play an integral part in the primary sector.

We also believe that given a sound understanding of the main concepts of learning, our students will be able to make a positive contribution not only to the community they live in but also to society as a whole. We hope that through positive learning encounters our students will develop into well-rounded and informed adults who continue to see the integral link between education, faith, gospel values and life.

## Our School Vision

As a community, we are inspired by Christ, to pursue, provide and promote fullness of life for all.

## Our School Mission

### To live the Christian message of love by –

- building positive relationships
- ensuring a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that promotes high outcomes and celebrates achievements
- providing relevant and purposeful opportunities for growth
- working in collaborative partnerships to provide high quality, stimulating and evidence informed learning
- empowering all to be responsible citizens of our world through caring for our common home.

*Our BRICKS for living a Christian Life*  
**Be - Respectful, Inclusive, Courageous and Kind.**

*"A new command I give you: Love one another.  
As I have loved you, so you must love one another."  
John 13: 34*

## Our School Values

- Care and Compassion. Care for self and others.
- Doing Your Best. Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence.
- Integrity.

- Respect.
- Responsibility.
- A Fair Go.
- Freedom.
- Understanding, Tolerance, and Inclusion.





## Our School Objectives

St Mary's has a particularly strong emphasis on engaging students in a faith-based education where high standards are maximised in all areas of the curriculum. Our school provides an environment which encourages your child to be confident and excited about learning.

Our students are at the centre of all learning arrangements, and we recognise that students are individuals, each with diverse learning needs.

Our teachers design learning experiences that are responsive to the different ways in which students achieve their best and provide facilities that enable your child to use and develop skills in various technologies, as well as to learn in engaging and effective ways.

St Mary's provide deep learning and powerful teaching with teachers approaching learning to:

- aim to maximise growth and progress for all students
- enable students to develop deep understandings about the world and how to operate effectively in that world
- build capacity for lifelong learning
- use questions and issues as drivers for learning
- create flexible learning opportunities in response to the different ways in which students learn and achieve their best
- encourage children and young people to be empowered about their rights and participate in decisions affecting them
- encourage effective use of technologies to deepen and accelerate student learning, both inside and outside school
- encourage learners to think and work creatively, explore and experiment, plan and reflect, communicate and collaborate
- create learning opportunities in different environments within and beyond the classroom.



## Curriculum Organisation

SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM			
The Arts	✓	English	✓
Health and Physical Education	✓	LOTE (Auslan)	✓

Humanities	✓	Mathematics	✓
Religious Education	✓	Information & Communication Technology (ICT)	✓
Science	✓	Interpersonal Development	✓
Personal Learning	✓	Communication	✓
Design, Creativity & Technology	✓	Thinking Processes	✓

The class teachers will send home a classroom timetable and information at the beginning of the school year.



## Our Democratic Principles

St Mary's is committed to creating an environment which supports the development of Australian citizens who have an awareness of the values and systems which scaffold our democracy.

Our school is committed to an education that references its programs and policies to a Christian worldview and is open to families of any faith who are agreeable for their children to have an education based on Christian beliefs, principles and standards.

We strive to ensure that our students develop;

- an understanding of, and commitment to, Australia's democratic system of government, law and civic life.
- the capacity to examine values and principles that underpin Australia's democracy and the ways in which these contribute to a fair and just society.
- the knowledge, skills and values to act as informed and responsible citizens.
- an appreciation of the local, state, national and global rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic life.
- an appreciation of the experiences and heritage of Australia's aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their influence on Australian civic identity and society.
- an appreciation of Australia as a multicultural society and a commitment to supporting intercultural understandings within the context of Australian democracy.
- an understanding of the ways in which governance structures from other countries are similar to, or differ from, democracy in Australia.

We are committed to ensuring that our school culture deepens an understanding of Australian values. Our work in teaching to the Australian Curriculum demonstrates the manner in which we develop this in our school and our Handbooks, our newsletters and our Prospectus all demonstrate our commitment to putting this statement into practice and to promoting those values in the community.

St Mary's Primary School actively promotes and teaches the following values for Australian schooling:

Care and compassion in caring for self and others

Doing your best in seeking to accomplish something worthy and admirable, persevering, and pursuing excellence.

Giving a fair go – pursuing and protecting the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society.

Finally, the school is open to the normal processes of accountability required by Governments and commits to ethical and transparent practices in respect of each of those requirements.



## Pursuing Fullness of Life – Student Outcomes

### **Rationale**

St Mary's School promotes students' personal, academic and spiritual development so that *they may have fullness of life*. St Mary's makes connections for and with the students through the curriculum, learning experiences, feedback and teaching approaches so that students can develop as active and socially just citizens who integrate faith and life. Integral to improving student outcomes is learning and teaching, curriculum, assessment and reporting.

### **Definitions**

**Learning and teaching:** All approaches and strategies for student learning development including how the content is delivered, the choice of student learning experiences and the ways in which schools and teachers are organised to reflect a learning and teaching approach. It also incorporates decisions on the need for, and use of, resources and facilities and partnerships with the wider school community. It includes curriculum, assessment and reporting of student outcomes.

**Curriculum:** The common set of knowledge and skills that are required by all students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship. As such, the curriculum is a part or subset of the school's teaching and learning program which is the school-based plan for delivering, expanding and extending this common set of knowledge and skills in ways that best utilise local resources, expertise and contexts (VCAA. February 2014, F-10 Curriculum Planning and Reporting Guidelines).

**Assessment:** The collection of information about student achievement, including authentic and valid feedback for ongoing improvement in teaching and student learning.

**Reporting:** All the procedures and processes for communicating to teachers, parents and students on student progress (strengths and challenges) and future learning directions. Reporting draws on the recording of data including teacher observation and student work samples.

### **Policy Statement**



St Mary's School implements this policy to ensure an inclusive and holistic Catholic education within a safe environment that promotes improved outcomes for all students. **(Please access the complete Fullness of Life Policy on our school website).**

## **Principles**

### **Quality relationships between teacher and students, and amongst students themselves.**

Positive relationships based on respect, care and genuine affection help build a supportive classroom community where individuals feel safe enough to respect the opinions and feelings of others, and to challenge themselves.

### **A classroom atmosphere that is characterised by interest, challenge and high expectations that are developmentally appropriate.**

Learning occurs when students respond to challenges to question existing ideas, to research, to go beyond their present understanding and to develop new skills in a classroom that is both supportive and productive. Teachers consistently challenge students through high expectations for learning as well as social behaviours.

### **Flexible teaching approaches designed to respond to individual differences in students' needs, abilities, interests and learning styles.**

Students develop at different rates, come from diverse social, cultural and domestic backgrounds, and have different abilities, personal traits and preferred learning styles. Student learning is at the centre of curriculum design, learning and teaching strategies, learning pathways and resource allocation including development of partnerships with external providers. A variety of approaches and intervention strategies maximise opportunities to capitalise on this rich diversity. These include intervention strategies, students working effectively in teams and using technologies to link learning to the wider global community. High quality teaching and learning experiences support students to be able to lead happy and rewarding lives.

### **The encouragement of students to engage in independent planning, higher order thinking and purposeful learning.**

The more students take responsibility for their own learning, the more effective and meaningful this learning is likely to become. Inquiry-based learning that leads to rich dialogue and deep thinking is embedded into learning. Teachers take on different roles in the learning process such as moderator, instructor, collaborator and coach.

### **The active engagement of students in learning experiences that are purposeful and relevant.**

Students are motivated and helped by having clear learning goals, assessment criteria and tools, regular feedback against milestones and standards and by participating in tasks that are relevant and make sense to them. Students have opportunities to provide input into goals and assessment tasks and reflection on their learning, setting and reviewing personal learning goals.

### **Students are encouraged to try new approaches and to solve problems in different ways.**

Students progress as learners by developing a range of thinking and learning styles which enable them to experience, apply and integrate different ways of knowing. This builds their capacity to challenge themselves in their learning growth and

confidence as successful learners.

### **Genuine interest in and enthusiasm for the learning focus on the part of the teacher.**

Students often take their cues from their teachers who in a number of ways, both overt and covert, define the significance of a subject or learning focus. Teachers demonstrate they are knowledgeable on the learning focus as well as collaborating with students to learn new knowledge, skills and capabilities.

### **Students are assisted to make connections between prior and new experiences and knowledge, and between different areas of knowledge.**

Students develop intellectually by reconstructing mental frameworks to accommodate new experiences and concepts. Teachers implement strategies to gain insights into student prior knowledge and skills in order to maximize learning growth. Students need to see their development of knowledge, skills and capabilities as an integrated whole.



### **Inclusion**

Inclusion is about every student having their educational needs met (within reasonable adjustments) in order to ensure the active participation and progress of all students in their learning without experiencing discrimination.

- Successful inclusive provision at St Mary's School is seen as the responsibility of the whole school community, permeating all aspects of school life and applicable to all students.
- Staff will actively support all students to reach their potential regardless of academic ability or demographic background.
- In accordance with the *Disability Standards of Education 2005*, all students at St Mary's School will be given full access to Victorian Curriculum F–10 and Awakenings (CEOB).
- St Mary's School implements strategies to prevent discrimination and harassment of all students including those with a disability. These include:
  - anti-bullying and harassment policy

- strategies to enhance student voice
- curriculum focuses on social and emotional learning that develops knowledge and awareness of the importance of the dignity of each person, empathy, social justice, resilience and reconciliation.
- curriculum design draws on resources such as Awakenings (CEOB) and Respectful Relationships F-10 (DET/CECV)
- restorative justice processes
- child safe practices.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### **Teachers:**

- provide a challenging and stimulating curriculum with high expectation of success in learning for all students
- ensure curriculum planning is documented, comprehensive, identifies strengths and challenges of learners and gives recognition and value to all learning styles. It incorporates a variety of modes of assessment tools with criteria and rubrics that have clear links to the learning goals and curriculum standards
- are clear in their understandings of curriculum standards and where each student is in their learning journey
- ensure that learning is sequential, progressive and continuous and learning strategies are evidenced-based and engages students in learning
- are good role models, well prepared and organised and up to date with evidence-based strategies
- engage in dialogue with students that develops different levels of thinking
- encourage students to take risks with their learning
- use resources effectively, including other adults and technology, to support student learning
- provide clarity to students on learning purpose and assessment for specific learning sequences and units of work. This is accessible to students who can refer as required.
- provide students with regular opportunities to reflect on assessment of their learning and support students in understanding and transferring their knowledge
- provide clear information to students and parent on student progress
- establish partnerships and links with the local community to enhance student learning
- have a positive attitude to change and the development of their own expertise and assisting colleagues in their growth
- are active in improving their professional knowledge and practice including the use of technology in learning and evidenced-based strategies that engage students and improve outcomes.
- collaborate in designated teams and evaluate strategies that engage students in learning
- have up-to-date assessment records including observations and student work samples where student progress in all areas of the curriculum is tracked.



**Students:**

- attend school regularly and punctually
- are organised and bring back to school, as required, resources such as “take home” books and completed home tasks
- ensure that home tasks are effectively completed and represent their own efforts. If they are not able to complete the tasks, they should communicate to their parents to provide a note (or write the note and have parents sign) in their diary explaining the reasons.
- contribute to a safe learning environment
- engage in effective social skills including effective listening and responding
- ensure they do not interfere with others in their learning or safety
- take increased responsibility for their own learning and actions
- set and review personal learning goals
- participate and contribute effectively in opportunities to collaborate on learning tasks as well as times for independent learning
- use technology effectively and appropriately
- reflect on feedback on assessment tasks and ask for any clarifications or assistance
- provide feedback on learning to teachers and peers
- provide their parents any teacher-parent communication
- participate in three-way conversations with teachers and parents to review their learning progress.

**Parents:**

- ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, well-rested and in good health
- engage in opportunities to learn about student learning
- respect that the learning environment at all times needs to be safe, supportive and fosters different pathways and progress to learning and achievement
- work in a partnership of respect and trust with the school in supporting their child's progress
- regularly check parent communication apps Simon, PAM and Seesaw
- ensure early contact with school to discuss matters that affects their child's happiness, progress and behaviour
- provide information on their child that may impact on their educational progress and wellbeing including relevant reports from external educational/health providers
- provide support for the student behaviour strategies and for the teacher's role in investigating and implementing actions and consequences
- participate in discussions concerning their child's progress and achievement
- support their child's learning at home such as hearing their child's reading, ensuring the completed tasks represent the student's efforts and allowing them sufficient time and an appropriate environment to complete home tasks
- allow their child to become increasingly independent and responsible for their own learning and actions as they progress throughout the school.

## St Mary's Staff

Father Sajan Mathew

Parish Priest

Ms Clare Scanlon

Principal, Teacher

Mrs Louise Haintz

Teacher, Learning Diversity Leader

Mrs Jenny Curran

Teacher, Learning & Teaching Leader

Mrs Sue Prendergast

Teacher, Religious Education Leader

Mrs Kelly McGannon

Education Support Officer

Ms Tina Handley

Pastoral Care

Mrs Majella Muller

Finance Administration

Mrs Claire Hay

Administration/Risk Compliance Officer



## 2024 School Fees

School Fees/Family Fee	\$1,500.00 per family
Student Fee	\$280.00 per student
Excursion/Swimming Levy	\$220.00 per student
Fundraising Levy	\$ 70.00 per family
Capital Levy	\$100.00 per family
TOTAL	\$2,170.00

This equates to 20 fortnightly payments of \$108.50. Camp fees are additional to these fees for Years 3-6 students and will vary from year to year. Parents will be given prior notice of camp costs; these charges will need to be paid before camp commences.

This will increase yearly by approximately 5% to 10%.



# St Mary's School Uniform

## **Rationale:**

A uniform dress code reinforces in students a pride in their own appearance, instils recognition of themselves as an integral part of the school community, and assists in developing pride in representing their school. Issues of equality, health and safety, and expense are also factors that contribute to the establishment of the Dress Code.

## **Aims:**

- To develop a sense of pride in, and identification with, our school.
- To develop and enhance the positive image of the school in the community.
- To promote equality amongst all students.
- To provide durable clothing that is cost effective and practical for our school environment.

## **Implementation:**

- The Dress Code applies during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when students are on school excursions.
- Summer and winter uniforms, as well as sports uniforms, will be prescribed and are required to be worn.
- The times in which summer and winter uniform may be worn are as follows:  
Terms 1 and 4 – summer uniform  
Terms 2 and 3 – winter uniform  
However, during the first week of Term 2 either summer or winter uniform will be permitted and during the last week of Term 3 and the first week of Term 4 either summer or winter uniform will be permitted.
- The only items of jewellery permitted are a watch and up to two simple stud earrings or sleepers worn in the ears. Ear spacers are not allowed. Jewellery which is unacceptable will be confiscated and only returned to a parent/guardian.
- Extreme hair colours and/or extreme hairstyles are not permitted.
- No nail polish can be worn at school.
- The uniform shop operator, *Beleza School Uniforms Ballarat*, provides a service to buy quality new uniforms to school families.
- The Principal and staff are to be responsible for implementation of the Dress Code in a manner consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

## **UNIFORM:**

**Summer Boys:** Grey shorts, grey socks and black shoes, gold short sleeved polo shirt with school logo, St Mary's Clarkes Hill woollen jumper with school logo, bottle green school hat (wide brim) with school logo



**Summer Girls:** St Mary's Clarkes Hill checked dress, St Mary's Clarkes Hill woollen jumper with school logo, bottle green school hat (wide brim) with school logo

**Winter Boys:** St Mary's Clarkes Hill woollen jumper with school logo, melange grey pants, long sleeve gold shirt polo with school logo, grey socks and black shoes, coat is optional.

**Winter Girls:** St Mary's Clarkes Hill checked tunic, long sleeve gold polo shirt with school logo, St Mary's Clarkes Hill woollen jumper with school logo black tights and black shoes, coat is optional, melange grey pants optional.

Black shoes are the required footwear for all students.

### **SPORT UNIFORM:**

**Boys:** St Mary's Clarkes Hill gold polo shirt with school logo, bottle green rugby shorts, white socks, bottle green track pants, bottle green tracksuit jumper with school logo and sneakers.

**Girls:** St Mary's Clarkes Hill gold polo shirt with school logo, bottle green skirts/culottes/netball skirt/briefs, white socks, bottle green track pants, bottle green tracksuit jumper with school logo and sneakers. Grade 6 students have a bottle green polo shirt with the school logo.

In colder weather due to the vast difference between temperatures inside the classroom and outside, it is highly recommended that children have a coat to wear.



## General Information

### **Accident/Illness**

Your child's enrolment form has the necessary information for emergency contact. If there is any change to this relevant information, please notify the school and update details via PAM. If your child has a long-term medical condition, e.g. asthma, anaphylaxis, hearing loss, etc, please notify the school and update your child's records in the medical section of SIMON app. The school does require Medical Plans from your child's doctor/specialist in some cases.

### **Child Safety Policies**

All information regarding the Child Safe Policies can be accessed via the website, <https://www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au/child-safety>

### **Complaints and Grievances**

If you have a complaint the St Mary's Primary School Complaints Handling Policy can be accessed on the school website or you may wish to contact the school. <https://smpsclarkeshill.schoolzineplus.com/st-mary-s-primary-school-complaints-handling-policy-2022>

### **Discipline**

Teachers cannot take for granted that the pupils will be able, without direction, to attain self-control. Children like to know where they stand and what to expect. It is the teacher's duty therefore, to direct and stimulate proper behaviour according to the best methods. Control exercised by the teachers will direct towards fostering self-discipline, a sense of responsibility for others and honesty in thought and action. In the use of corrective measures teachers will endeavour to be firm, just, consistent and impartial. When necessary, parents will be informed of any unacceptable behaviour. The school has a behaviour matrix that sets out expected behaviours and the use of minors and majors when dealing with unacceptable behaviours.

### **Enrolment**

Foundation children are admitted to school if their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday is before 14<sup>th</sup> April of their first school year. Immunization status must be made known at this time. Copies of your child's Birth Certificate, Immunisation History Statement and Baptism Certificate (if applicable) must be submitted at time of enrolment.

### **Homework**

Foundation - Year 2: small amount of reading each night.  
Years 3 – 6: up to 30 minutes of homework in a variety of areas.

The purpose of homework is:

- to reinforce skills learned in the classroom
- to develop independent study skills
- to involve parents actively in the education of their children
- to inform parents of what children are learning in school.

### **Excursions**

Parents are notified of excursions via newsletter and PAM/SIMON. For the school to assume responsibility for each child on the excursion, written permission is required before the child will be allowed to partake in the excursion.

### **Formal Written Reports**

These will be accessible on our Parent Access Module (PAM) at the end of Terms 2 and 4. Parents will also be given a printed copy.

### **Foundation Timetable**

Foundation children attend school for four days a week for the first weeks of the school year, up to the March Labour Day long weekend. A day off on Wednesdays allows for a rest and a gradual settling in period.

## **Infectious Diseases**

With infectious childhood diseases it is necessary to keep the child home from school. Please contact the school or your family doctor for further information regarding the particular illness.

## **Library**

The school has an operational library. Children may borrow two books on Library Day and keep them until the following week. Children are expected to carry books in a bag brought for this purpose.

## **Lost Property**

It is expected that all children's clothing and belongings be clearly marked with the child's name. Any property collected will be kept in the lost property box in the learning space. Parents are welcome to check this box at any time.

## **Lunches**

Children are expected to bring a lunch from home suited to their eating/nutrition needs. A healthy first lunch and a healthy second lunch is encouraged. Advice will be given regarding Hot Lunch Day in Terms 2 and 3. Children may bring a lunch which will be heated in the school pie warmer. Please make sure it is not frozen and also clearly named.

## **Newsletter**

A newsletter is sent home fortnightly via the SIMON App and is available on the school website each fortnight on a Wednesday. A hard copy will also be sent home.

## **Parent Access Module**

The Parent Access Module is commonly known as PAM. After you have enrolled at St Mary's, you will be given a login and a temporary password. Through the module you will be able to access your child's school reports, make parent teacher interview appointments when scheduled and you will also use PAM to input your child's medical information.

## **Parent/Teacher Interviews**

If you have any concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher as they are available daily before school and after school for a quick chat. A more in-depth discussion may require an appointment.

Three Way Interviews - you will receive notification through the SIMON App when Parent-Teacher-Child conversations are scheduled. Parents are asked to book a time for a discussion about your child's progress.

### **School Masses and Liturgies**

These are held during the year on occasions such as beginning and end of year, Mother's Day, Father's Day, St Mary's Feast Day, Easter, etc. These are advised on the newsletter and everyone is always welcome.

### **School Rules**

These are positive in their approach rather than an emphasis on the negative. Awareness of and concern for others is of utmost importance at all times. Acceptable standards of public behaviour are set and maintained. These standards should help develop the child's respect of himself/herself and for his/her fellow students and should enable the education program to be carried out in an orderly and pleasant atmosphere.

### **Term Dates**

At present the school year is divided into four terms of 10 weeks (approx.) with breaks at Easter, July, September and Christmas/Summer.

Term 1:	29th January to 28th March
Term 2:	15th April to 28th June
Term 3:	15th July to 20th September
Term 4:	7th October to 20th December

### **School Fees**

The School Advisory Council sets the school fees with direction from the Diocesan Education Board, and are payable in a lump sum or instalments. If there is any difficulty meeting these, please notify the Principal and arrangements will be made in confidence. Those eligible for Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund and/or Travel Allowance can make arrangements to have these credited to their account if preferred.

### **Student Levy and Swimming and Excursion Levy**

The student levy and swimming/excursion levy is charged per student at the beginning of the school year. The student levy supplements the government grant and is budgeted into subject areas for the children.

### **Volunteer and Parent Help Induction**

The school encourages participation as volunteers in a range of activities to support school and classroom activities, by providing an induction course, access to current Working with Children Checks and relevant information concerning Child Safety Standards.



The school will recruit and support other volunteer initiatives, which involve families and community groups in school life. For example, excursion helpers, catering, fundraising, family fun nights, Parish groups, gardening and basic maintenance.

