



2021 School Prospectus

A letter from the Principal

Dear Parents,

Thank you for considering St Margaret Mary's Spotswood for your child's education.

We consider it a privilege to be entrusted with developing your child into a worldly citizen with an enduring sense of faith, optimism in the future and deep social responsibility. Our role is not to simply educate in words and numbers, but to help your child reach their full potential, setting them up for social, emotional and academic success in the modern world.

We have around 150 students in seven classrooms, from both Catholic and non-Catholic backgrounds. The relatively small number of students under our guidance allows for exceptionally personalised learning experiences for each and every child.

Our approach to learning is underpinned by the knowledge that a child's learning style and experiences do not fall neatly into age-grade expectations. We endeavour to teach the whole of child without pre-determined expectations, rather, delivering a developmental curriculum that responds to the needs of your individual child.

Under the guidance and leadership of our Parish Priest, Fr. Binh Le, our school aims to meet the academic, physical, social and spiritual needs of children growing up in today's world. Our parish community provides the opportunity for our whole school community to be involved and nurtured in friendship and faith.

We enjoy a strong school community who work together to support student learning experiences, our incredible teachers and the families that are part of our school. We enjoy deep and transparent relationships across the community, underpinned by our values of Respect, Integrity, Compassion and Excellence. The teaching community benefit from high levels of family support, with lots of opportunities for you to actively participate in your child's education. This encompassing sense of community benefits our students academically and emotionally, allowing them a deeply connected community experience throughout their formative years.

For a small school, we have an impressive alumni with a track record of success in sports, the arts, leadership, business and other fields.

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to learn about your child and your expectations for their primary education.

Andrea Richards Principal

St Margaret Mary's School Vision

St Margaret Mary's students are independent lifelong learners inspired by Gospel values and empowered with a sense of purpose and responsibility. They confidently engage with others and are equipped with skills to adapt to an ever-changing world.

Visit our website



ST. MARGARET MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Leadership Our school and teaching staff are diverse and highly skilled, with extensive experience in general and specialist education. We are exceptionally proud of the individual and open approach our staff have, working closely with students and their families to help fulfil their potential.



Andrea Richards Principal



Simone Laurie Deputy Principal. Learning & Teaching Leader



Kerry Brown **Religious Education** Leader



Simon Devlin Data Manager/ Digital Technologies Leader



Chloe Lawlor Student Wellbeing Leader



Kath Novak Literacy Leader



Andrea Moscato Learning Diversity Leader



Grant Tasca Mathematics Leader

Teachers



Margaret Whitford Literacy Leader



Kate Flynn



Kerry Brown



Chloe Lawlor



Simon Devlin



Aisling Cahir



Kath Novak



Emma McGuirk



Sam O'Dwyer



Myanna Goetze



Office Staff



Roisin Gleich Specialist



Kristine Messig Sports Teacher



Nadia Villar Becerra Spanish Teacher



Sarah Mogridge



Kath Novak

Intervention Support

Lisa Paton



Marie Paton







Our purpose is to encourage students to become independent life-long learners.

At St Margaret Mary's Spotswood we:

- Provide diverse and engaging learning experiences to meet the needs and learning styles of each student.
- Provide contemporary tools and resources that encourage students to be confident, independent and self motivated learners.
- Offer students regular opportunities to make choices and encourage them to reflect on their own interests and preferences.
- Support students to direct their own learning through faith life inquiry.
- Assist students and teachers to set goals and reflect on their learning.
- Encourage our students to develop the skills to contribute and connect with their wider community.
- Ensure ongoing professional development for staff.

Our values

The school values underpin the daily interactions of the whole school community – students, teaching and administration staff and parents. We strive to instil these values in all our students and exhibit them ourselves as the example the children follow.



Respect

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and the Prophet. (Matthew 7: 12)

Integrity

To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. (Proverbs 21:3)

Compassion

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesian 4:32)

Excellence

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. (Ecclesiastes 9:10)







Our Learning Approach

The learning and teaching at St Margaret Mary's aims to develop critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration skills.

We support students to see themselves as lifelong learners, to set goals for themselves and to celebrate their own achievements as well as those of their peers. This is achieved by providing a faith-centered, engaging and authentic curriculum in which learning tasks are purposeful, varied and delivered in a contemporary manner.

Walker Learning

Walker Learning is an Australian designed curriculum framework that creates real, relevant and meaningful learning experiences that increase engagement and understanding in young children.

Walker Learning underpins teaching in the early years with suitability for all children – regardless of skill or developmental level. The approach factors in unique learning needs of each child, developing learning experiences that best extend the individual. Implementing Walker Learning at St. Margaret Mary's means the sky really is the limit for our students.





Inquiry

Our term-based Inquiry units are centred on broad understandings that require higher-level thinking and inquiry skills. Students are encouraged to explore 'Big Questions' within the Essential Learning areas at St Margaret Mary's. This encourages children to:

- Deepen personal and worldly connections.
- Search for answers to questions, to reflect, critique and respond to their learning.
- Develop deep understandings of the ideas and concepts embedded within the curriculum.
- Go beyond the classroom walls with technology.
- Take action in their community, to share, bring their learning to life and make a difference in the world around them.





Visible Learning

Visible Learning encourages children to take ownership for their own learning and teachers to see learning through the eyes of their students. Visible Learning is the result of research undertaken by John Hattie to understand what provides the most success in learning.

Visible Learners are defined as as students who can:

- Articulate what they are learning.
- Explain the next steps in their learning.
- Set learning goals.
- See errors as opportunities for further learning.
- Identify what to do when they are stuck.
- Seek feedback.

iPads for learning

iPads are used as learning tools in all our classrooms. From Grade 3 onwards, we have a BYO iPad program so that all children have access to these valuable learning tools at their fingertips.

Children use iPads in classroom to support classroom activity and extend their learning using this everyday technology both at school and at home. Through their device, they can find answers to questions, research topics, find out about the world around them and design, create and explore solutions.





STEM

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – is critical for the world that our students live in today as well as the future world they will lead. In partnership with Scienceworks, we enhance our STEM curriculum to include learning with a real-world context.

STEM is interwoven into the learning experience for Preps through to Grade 6. This approach and Scienceworks partnership has seen our children power ahead of other schools in this area.



Literacy

Literacy plays a fundamental role in every child's learning. In the junior years, our Literacy program aims to develop the foundations of Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, ensuring that students are supported to develop basic skills on which to build upon in later years.

Our Literacy program follows a specific structure of Whole-Small-Whole which ensures that students receive explicit and targeted teaching.





Faith Life Inquiry

We work to inspire that our students be guided by Christ's teachings. Our aim is to enrich students' understanding of the Gospel and its relevance to their everyday lives. Our Faith Life approach aims to:

- Provide deep community experiences of prayer, liturgy, curriculum and faith experiences.
- Ignite students' passion and understanding of their faith.
- Inspire and encourage students to be disciples of Jesus, instilling in them a sense of responsibility and purpose.
- Prepare students for their Sacramental journey into the Catholic faith

Mathematics

Our Numeracy learning strategies enable students to actively engage in the learning process by encouraging knowledge building through authentic experiences.

This is achieved by providing mathematical investigations that allow children to hypothesize and discover for themselves. Students experience hands on tasks and work with materials that will support and deepen learning. Through our lessons children engage in purposeful mathematical investigations that are linked to the real world. We believe mathematical competence enhances students' understanding of the world and increases their ability to participate successfully in society.







Specialist subjects

St Margaret Mary's offers a comprehensive specialist curriculum which includes Physical Education, Spanish (LOTE), Drama, Music and Art.

Our specialist curriculum is based on broadening areas of interest, teaching new skills and building students' confidence to attempt new challenges. Specialist classes are held throughout the week to enhance children's education, with external experts frequently leading these lessons.

Intervention

Interventions are designed so that you and the school can track your child's progress. We value the individual learning journeys of each of our students and recognise that learning is a developmental process.

We welcome students of differing abilities at St Margaret Mary's and work to implement individual learning plans for students with learning difficulties as well as students who require extension. Our teachers work closely with our Learning Diversity Leader and parents to generate Personal Learning Plans that aim to prioritise and support the individual needs of each child.



Extra Curricular

Throughout the year students participate in a number of activities within the school as well as excursions that are designed to extend their learning.

A variety of lunch time clubs operate through the week in which children can choose to participate. These clubs change termly according to the interests of students. Examples are: Dance Club, Lego club, 3D printer club, Board games.

We also run a School sports program. Our Sport program also includes our annual school sports day, divisional and regional sports carnivals, inter-school competitions and other scheduled activities.









School Community

The school has a strong and vibrant community, with many opportunities to get involved. We enjoy active parent participation and encourage you to consider how you can support your child's educational experiences and enhance the school community.

The Fundraising and Social Group (FSG) and the Advisory Board work with the Leadership Team to help plan and execute activities that are aligned with the goals of the school and contribute to our overall success.

Fundraising and Social Group

The Fundraising and Social Group (FSG) supports the school through fundraising and social events that build our community, creating opportunities for families to connect while raising funds for the school. The current focus is to raise funds for a new outdoor playground area.

FSG members volunteer their time and expertise to deliver events and activities such as The St Margaret Mary's Trivia night, AFL Footy Tipping Competition, Easter raffle, School discos, Mother's and Father's Day celebrations, Mum's Night Out, Family movie nights and much more.

School Advisory Board

The St Margaret Mary's School Advisory Board acts as an advisory body on matters concerning the development of the school and the education and welfare of the students. Members offer their expertise to help plan and deliver on projects that support the ongoing achievement of our goals.

Meetings are held twice per term to review activities and allow the school to gain parental input into matters that impact the school and children.

Parent Helpers

We are privileged to have the help of parents and families who support our school. Parent helpers can commit regular hours each week or help out for a specific event or purpose where their skills can be applied. If you do wish to help out, there is no minimum commitment.

Parent helpers, Grandparent and parishioners are welcome to assist in classrooms, on excursions, sporting events, assist in our library or help maintain the school buildings and grounds at scheduled working bees.

All helpers are required to have a current volunteers Working With Children Check to be able to help in the school or attend excursions.



Transitioning your child to school

Starting school can be a huge step for some children and others seem to just take it in their stride. It is also an adjustment for most families as they adapt to the new routine of having school aged children. There are a number of activities that we put into place to make this transition as seamless as possible.

School Transition & Orientation

A school transition and orientation program is conducted in Term 4 for Prep children and their parents (younger siblings are most welcome). These transition sessions provide an opportunity for your child to get comfortable in their new school environment, meet their classroom teacher and start to build connections with their new classmates.

Transition is also an opportunity for you as parents, to get to know other parents and find out more about what to expect in your first year of being a school parent. Once your enrolment has been accepted, specific transition details will be communicated with you.

Buddies

The first weeks of Prep can be daunting through the eyes of a five year old. Attending school is a big adjustment for most children. To help with this transition, every Prep child is partnered with a 'buddy' from Grade 5 who helps them settle into their new school life. Buddies help your child to feel comfortable in their new environment from day one. A range of activities are scheduled in the first weeks of Prep and throughout the year. The Buddy system's goal is to develop relationships between younger and older children, enhancing the sense of a friendly and supportive school community.



Parent Support

We also know that the transition to school can be a big change for parents so we allocate each Prep class a 'parent buddy'. The parent buddy is an experienced parent who volunteers their time to answer questions, provide information and act as a support for Prep parents. At the beginning of your child's prep year, you will also receive an extensive Prep Handbook that provides you with all the information you need to have a successful first year at St. Margaret Mary's.

Buddy Bench

Even with preparation, Prep children can sometimes feel a little lost in the first weeks of school. We have created a painted 'buddy bench' in the school yard where children from any class can sit if they are feeling alone or left out.

All students are encouraged to keep an eye on the buddy bench and if they notice another child sitting there, invite them into whatever activity they are doing or just talk with them. The teacher on duty also monitors the buddy bench so they can actively facilitate inclusion for any child feeling alone.



School uniform

Our school uniform provides students a sense of identity and belonging as well as instilling a sense of pride in their school. We have a summer, winter and sports uniform that all children are expected to wear as directed.

Summer uniform

Girls summer uniform: summer dress, white socks, black school shoes, tartan skort, white shirt Boys summer uniform: blue logoed shorts, blue striped short sleeve shirt, navy blue socks, black shoes Unisex summer sports uniform: blue logoed shorts, blue logoed short sleeve polo shirt, white socks, sneakers





Winter Uniform

Girls winter uniform: winter tunic, white collared shirt, blue necktie, cardigan/jumper/vest, navy blue tights, blue long socks, long navy girls pants, black school shoes.

Boys winter uniform: blue logoed long pants, blue striped long sleeve shirt, cardigan/jumper/vest, navy blue socks, black school shoes.

Unisex winter sports uniform: blue logoed tracksuit pants, blue logoed long sleeve polo shirt, blue logoed windbreaker, white socks, sneakers

Children also require a logoed school bag and their own lunchbox and drink bottle. The school will provide a logoed excursion bag and take home book bag as required.



2022 Important Information

Term Dates

Term	First day of term	Last day of term
Term 1	Mon 31 January	Fri 8 April
Term 2	Tuesday 26 April	Friday 24 June
Term 3	Mon 11 July	Fri 16 September
Term 4	Mon 3 October	Tues 20 December

School Day

School begins	Recess	Lunch	School finishes
8.45am	11 – 11.30am	1.30 – 2.15pm	3.15pm

Children arriving or leaving outside of these times must be signed in or out at the office via our electronic sign-out system. The only access to the school during school hours is through the main office entry.

Children commencing Prep attend on **Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays only** for the first four weeks. This allows them to adjust to their new schedule before settling in to full-time learning from the second month.

Library

The main aim of the library is to foster a love of reading and an appreciation of literature in all children. Time is allocated in each library lesson for children to browse and choose their own book and they are encouraged to change them as often as they like.





Reporting and Feedback

Two-way communication is essential at St. Margaret Mary's. Parents and teachers work in partnership to meet each child's developmental needs. Parents are encouraged to communicate directly with their child's teacher at any time. General reporting is undertaken at several different stages of the year:

Beginning of the Year

At the beginning of the year, we schedule a 'getting to know you' interview with you and your child. This is an opportunity for parents and students to share any information that they feel the teacher needs to know. We strongly encourage all parents and students to attend these sessions.

Term 2

At the end of Term 2, a written report is provided for your child, covering all aspects of their learning and development. This report will include a rating against key competencies in each curriculum area for your child and a descriptive comment related to your child's specific achievements.

Each of the subjects from the Victorian Curriculum will be assessed, along with assessment in Religious Education. This written report on your child's progress emphasises achievements and successes. Any specific issues will be raised with you individually.

At the end of Term 2, a 15-minute '3 way learning conversation' is scheduled to discuss your child's progress and address any questions you have following the mid-year report. During this conversation the students are present which allows them to present their own learning, strengths, improvement areas and goals. This is an opportunity for students to speak confidently about their learning in a supportive environment, allowing them to be part of the assessment process.

End of Year (Optional)

Final written reports are issued at the end of the year in the same format as mid-year report. Parents have the opportunity for an optional 10-minute interview with the classroom teacher, if they so desire.

Excursions And Outdoor Education (Camp)

Excursions and incursions are an integral part of the life of St Margaret Mary's School. We strive to provide a variety of active, enjoyable learning experiences outside of the school environment. There is often an opportunity for parents to participate in these excursions.

The school also undertakes an Outdoor Education program for Grades 3-6 that provides an opportunity for the children to develop independence and life skills.

Out of School Hours Care

Before and after-school care is delivered by Camp Australia in the school hall. The Camp Australia program includes play areas and the children also play outdoors in good weather. Prep children are collected from the classroom by the Camp Australia leader for the first three terms and in fourth term, independently make their way to the school hall.

For information on the Camp Australia program, please visit <u>www.campaustralia.com.au</u> or call the service leader on 0452 247 159.



we make Kids smile



Communication

There is a lot of information that the school is required to, or needs to, communicate with you to facilitate your child's education. There are four platforms that we use to do this:

Operoo

CareMonkey is used to track your consent and approvals for your child to participate in activities like excursions, sports days, etc.

Newsletter

The school newsletter is published on the website every fortnight with email notification being sent to all parents. The newsletter contains important information about up-coming events, activities and other important notifications. This publication is the primary source of communication for all important information so it is important that parents read it each fortnight.

Seesaw

Seesaw is our classroom to parent communication app. It is used in classrooms to enable your child to share their learning experiences, by the teacher to share activities your child is participating in, as well as for reminders of upcoming events or changes to planned activities.

School website

The school website is used to keep parents up to date with upcoming events, school policies and other information that you might find useful. The school newsletter can be found on the website.

In addition to these platforms, there is a parents Facebook page that all parents are welcome to join. While not managed by the school, it is a valuable way to connect with other parents and find out information about events.

The school also has official Facebook and Instagram accounts that are primarily used to promote the school to prospective parents by highlighting the activities, learning experiences and events that take place at the school. Parents are encouraged to follow these pages and help promote the school.





Fees

School fees are charged once per year, to be paid in full by the end of Term 3. Fees consist of **one** fee per family, a curriculum fee per child and a sports levy for students in grades 3 - 6.

All enquiries regarding school fees should be directed to the office.

Per family fee	Curriculum levy	Sports levy
\$2,120	\$370 per child	Middles (Year 3-4) \$60 Seniors (Year 5-6) \$170

Curriculum Levy

The Curriculum Levy composite fee of \$360 is charged for each child. This fee includes books, stationery, library, incursions and some excursions. (Levy to be paid as soon as possible after invoicing)

Sports Levy

The Sports Levy is charged for students in Grades 3 to 6. The levy is a scaled levy and determined by the amount of sporting activities that the children will take part in during the year.

Fee Summary

Year level	Total fees for year for one child in 2021
Prep – Year 2	\$2,490
Year 3 – 4	\$2,550
Year 5 – 6	\$2,660

The Enrolment Application Fee will be deducted from your account in the year of enrolment.

For example:

One Child

If you have a prep student you would pay: one family fee + curriculum levy \$2,120 + \$370 = \$2,438

Two Children

If you have a prep and a Year 3/4 child you would pay : one family fee + 2 curriculum levies + sports levy for your 3/4 child = \$2,120 + \$740 + \$60 = \$2,920



What to expect in the first year

We know that being a first-time school parent can be a bit overwhelming. Along with the new routine for your prep child, there are lots of activities and events throughout the year to keep up with. While our calendar of events changes each year, here is an example of what you can expect in the first year.

Activity	Term
Prep teacher interview	Pre-term
Welcome BBQ	Early term 1
Family mass	Early term 1
Easter raffle and hat parade	Late term 1
Mums night out	Late term 1
Mother's Day breakfast	Early term 2
Prep excursion	Mid term 2
Family mass	Mid term 2
Reports issued	End term 2
Learning conversations with the prep teacher	End of Term 2
School sports carnival	Early term 3
Grandparents day	Mid term 3
Book week	Mid term 3
Family mass	Mid term 3
Major fundraising event	Early term 4
Dads night out	Early term 4
Christmas mass	Late term 4
Family mass	Mid term 4
Reports issued	End term 4



How to enrol

For most parents, selecting a school for their child is a big process. We conduct one-on-one tours and group information nights to ensure you can satisfy all your questions and concerns before enrolling your child. If you would like to book a tour or find out about the group information nights, please contact us.

We accept enrolments in the year prior to your child attending school. There is no need to put your name on a waiting list. To enrol your child at our school, please:

- complete the enrolment form on the website and upload all required documents
- pay the holding deposit of \$100, which is refunded off the first year's fees if you accept a position

Once the enrolment period closes at the end of April, we review all enrolments and send out offers to the students that are accepted. This offer includes further information on how to accept your child's place and what you can expect to happen next.

Once you accept a place for your child, we will schedule an acceptance interview. These interviews are a chance for us to meet you and your child and go through the details you provided during enrolment. This meeting is also an opportunity for you to discuss any concerns or particular information about your child that you think is important for us to know.

Enrolment dates

Enrolments for the 2022 school year close on 31st May 2021. If you would like to enrol your child for the 2021 or the 2022 school year, please get in touch with us.

Below are the estimate dates for each step of the enrolment process:

Detail	Timing
One-on-one school tours	January – May, contact the school to book
Enrolment information night	16th March
Enrolments open	17th March
Enrolments closed	31 May
Confirmation of enrolments	mid June
Acceptance interviews	July – August
School transition program	October – November



Frequently asked questions

Does my child need to be Catholic to attend?

No, your child does not need to be Catholic to attend the school. We accept children from an array of faiths however, baptised Catholics are given preference in the enrolment process.

When do I need to enrol my child?

We accept enrolments from 1 January the year prior to your child starting school. You are not required to put your child's name on a waiting list.

What are the fees?

An outline of current fees and levies can be found in the prospectus. Fees are inclusive of all equipment and excursions (excluding BYO devices) and are due by the end of Term 3 each year.

Can I enrol my child if I am experiencing financial difficulties?

Yes, of course you can. We will always do everything possible to make sure that no child misses out on a quality education.

What are your class sizes?

Our class sizes are small which ensures all students receive individualised attention and dedicated focus from the teaching staff. Most classes have 20 – 23 students.

What is the Walker Learning Approach?

Walker Learning is a holistic approach to teaching the 'whole child'. The Walker approach develops children who can think for themselves and for others, can create and imagine and who are strong in their literacy and numeracy. Children engaged in investigations grow to navigate the challenges of the world with intrinsic motivation, strength of character, an assured sense of self and innate resilience. **Walker Learning is a pedagogy** – it is a teaching and learning approach that personalises learning and is developmentally and culturally appropriate for all students.

Does the school have before and after school care?

Yes, Camp Australia provide before and after school care on site from 7am - 8:30am and 3:15pm - 6:30pm. Due to low demand, Camp Australia do not offer a holiday program at the school, however holiday care is offered at surrounding schools which many of our children attend.

What does the uniform look like?

The uniform is in the school colours of navy, gold and white and includes both summer and winter options as well as a sports uniform for all year levels. For more information on the uniform, please see images on the website or the uniform information on page 13.



Do you have lunch orders?

Yes, we have lunch orders on Mondays and Fridays every week of term. Lunch orders can be selected and paid for via the Qkr app up to 8am on the day required and KingWill Catering delivers orders just before eating time.

Are the children taught another language other than English?

Yes, children in all year levels participate in weekly Spanish lessons.

What specialist subjects do the children learn?

Children learn a range of specialist subjects including Physical Education, Art, LOTE (Spanish), The Arts – Visual Arts, Music and Drama

Can the children learn a musical instrument through the school?

Private 'Key to Key' keyboard lessons, a piano music program, is offered during school hours for those who wish to participate. Lessons are one-on-one with an experienced teacher, at an additional cost for each child.

The children also have the opportunity to learn the recorder during Music specialist lessons.

In what years do the children make their Sacraments?

The Sacraments are parish based and school supported. Children will make their sacraments as follows: Reconciliation - Grade 3; Eucharist - Grade 4; Confirmation – Grade 6

What technology is used at the school?

Technology is an important part of learning in the 21st century and is interwoven as a teaching tool at St Margaret Mary's. We have a BYO device program for Grades 3 - 6, where children bring their personal iPad to school with them each day. Grades 3 - 6 also have 1:1 access to Chromebooks.

Children in Prep – Grade 2 have 2:1 access to school iPads and use these in their investigations and learning.

What secondary schools do our students attend?

St Margaret Mary's students attend many different secondary schools after graduating from our school. These schools include Emmanuel College - St Paul's Campus, (boys only), Mount St Joseph's Girls College (girls only), The Academy (girls only) and Christian Brothers College (boys only until 2021 when the school will become co-educational).

Enrolments for Year 7 into Catholic Secondary schools need to be completed by the middle of your child's Grade 5 year. Please contact your preferred school for further information about their program.

How do I contact the school if I have a question or query?

Simply call us on 9391 3118 to chat to the Principal or Office staff. You can also contact us via email at <u>office@smmspotswood.catholic.edu.au</u>



Thank you for considering St Margaret Mary's Spotswood for your child's education. If you have any questions about our school, your child's enrolment, or would like to book a personal tour with the principal, please get in touch.

We look forward to welcoming your family to the school.

Contact

181 Hudson Road Spotswood Victoria 3015 03 9391 3118



