



# ST MARGARET MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Newsletter 5, Term 1, Week 10 2026

## Special Announcements

Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Apr - Term 2 Begins / Easter Sunday Liturgy 2:45pm

Mon 20<sup>th</sup> - Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> - 5/6 Camp

Mon 27<sup>th</sup> April - Student Free Day (No School)

### Principal's Message

As we come to the end of Term 1 there has been a great deal to celebrate across our school. Our Year 5 and 6 students recently took part in the Aspire Higher leadership incursion. It was wonderful to see them so engaged, uplifted and challenged. Throughout the day they developed new leadership skills reflected on their strengths and considered the impact they can have on others. Opportunities like this continue to build confidence and a strong sense of responsibility in our senior students.



We had an evacuation drill this week and all of the children handled it calmly. Many thanks to the teachers for their considered preparation of the children using social stories.



At the end of last week Paul and I had the privilege of attending a leadership conference alongside several highly regarded leaders in education and beyond. There were many takeaways that I would love to share. One such message that stayed with me came from Gilbert Enoka former mental skills coach of the All Blacks.

He spoke about the importance of alignment between what we say and what we do capturing it simply through three ideas

- sorry needs change
- love needs action
- gratitude needs to be shown

These ideas resonate strongly in a school setting, within families and as we navigate the many encounters we have with others.



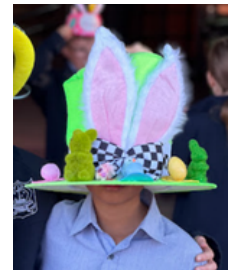
## Principal's Message

As we enter the season of Easter we are reminded of the heart of our faith. Easter is a time of hope, renewal and deep love. It reminds us of God's great love for us, the power of forgiveness and the promise fulfilled through the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday.



As we enter the season of Easter we are reminded of the heart of our faith. Easter is a time of hope, renewal and deep love. It reminds us of God's great love for us, the power of forgiveness and the promise fulfilled through the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Over the past week our students brought this message to life through their class led para liturgies. Each class carefully planned, rehearsed and led a whole school prayer experience sharing the story of Jesus journey to the cross and the joy of the Resurrection. It was moving to see the reverence, understanding and pride with which our children shared their learning.

The Easter bonnet parade, the easter raffle and a surprise visit the Easter Bunny have been a wonderful way to end our first term of 2026. Together as a community we enjoyed celebrating our faith, our traditions, our creativity and connections as a Catholic School community.



### **Looking ahead to Term 2 a few important reminders.**

Our Year 5 and 6 students will head off to Phillip Island camp on the very first day back. This is always a highlight and a wonderful opportunity to build independence, strengthen friendships and challenge themselves in new ways.

***On Monday 27 April there will be a student free day.*** Camp Australia will be available to provide all day care for families who require it.

On this day staff will be engaged in professional learning in Religious Education and faith development led by Denis Arnell. Our focus will be on strong women of faith. Women who demonstrated grit, courage, compassion and deep trust in God.

A central theme will be motherhood in its many forms nurturing, sacrificial, resilient and life giving. At the Ian Potter Museum we will engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks that honour the strength of First Nations women including themes of motherhood, care for community and connection to Country.

These learnings will directly inform our teaching. They deepen our understanding of the identities, histories and strengths our students bring and support us to teach with greater awareness, respect and authenticity.

## Principal's Message

We will also reflect on Mary the mother of Jesus, her openness to God's call and the strength she showed through both joy and suffer



Our visit to the Mary Glowrey Museum will introduce us to Mary Glowrey, a remarkable Australian woman who pursued education at a time when this was uncommon. She became a doctor before becoming a nun who went on to serve those most in need with compassion and skill.

Throughout the day we will continue to make connections to our school charism through St Margaret Mary and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop drawing inspiration for how we live out faith in action in our own community.



We have also begun meeting with our Foundation 2027 families, and we have already received a considerable number of enrolment applications.

If you have a younger child or know of families considering St Margaret Mary's, please ensure applications are submitted or contact the office via our school website for further information.

Thank you for your continued support throughout what has been a positive and productive term.

Wishing all the children a rejuvenating end of term holiday and to all families - a safe, restful and blessed Easter.

Take care,  
Colleen

# Easter Bonnet Parade





# TERM 2, 2026 DATES

<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Apr</b>	Term 2 begins Easter Sunday Liturgy 2:45pm
<b>Mon 20<sup>th</sup> - Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Apr</b>	Grade 5/6 Camp - Phillip Island
<b>Fri 24<sup>th</sup> Apr</b>	ANZAC Commemoration
<b>Mon 27<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Student Free Day - No School</b>
<b>Tue 28<sup>th</sup> Apr</b>	Class Mass - 3/4 Orange
<b>Thu 30<sup>th</sup> Apr</b>	School Photo Day
<b>Mon 4<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Assembly - Foundation Blue
<b>Wed 6<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Mother's Day Stall
<b>Fri 8<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Mother's Day Breakfast - 8:00am
<b>Tue 12<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Class Mass - 3/4 Purple
<b>Thu 14<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Confirmation Parent Evening
<b>Mon 18<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Assembly - 1 Green
<b>Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> May</b>	Winter Sports Gala Day
<b>Tue 26<sup>th</sup> May</b>	Class Mass - 1 Green
<b>Wed 27<sup>th</sup> May</b>	National Simultaneous Storytime - 12:00pm
<b>Mon 1<sup>st</sup> Jun</b>	Assembly - 3/4 Purple
<b>Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> Jun</b>	Confirmation Evening - 5:30pm
<b>Fri 5<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	<b>Student Free Day - No School</b>
<b>Mon 8<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	<b>King's Birthday Public Holiday - No School</b>
<b>Fri 12<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	Feast of the Sacred Heart
<b>Mon 15<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	Assembly - 2 Yellow
<b>Tue 16<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	Class Mass - Foundation Blue
<b>Thu 25<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	Parent Teacher Interviews
<b>Fri 26<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	<b>Last Day of Term - 1pm finish</b>

# Week 10 Awards

FB	<b>Matilda R</b> - For displaying excellence by trying her best and not giving up when faced with challenges. Wonderful efforts, Tilly!
1G	<b>Niamh S</b> - For working hard each day to demonstrate excellence across all learning areas. Niamh we are so proud of your efforts this term!
2Y	<b>Frankie N</b> - For demonstrating respect for the world around her and showing excellence in advocating for her learning by asking for help and trying her best in every lesson. Well done!
3/4O	<b>Ben R</b> - For demonstrating excellence and resilience by consistently striving to do his best in all learning tasks while managing a broken finger.
3/4P	<b>Elsie C</b> - Congratulations to Elsie for demonstrating our school value of Integrity. She shows honesty, responsibility and always strives to do her best.
5L	<b>Aston W</b> - For eagerly engaging in class conversations and sharing your ideas with clarity and confidence. Your willingness to contribute inspires others to participate as well.
5/6R	<b>Ariella X</b> - For consistently demonstrating compassion by supporting classmates and offering help whenever someone needs a hand.



# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

## INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

**Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's financial circumstances and their outcomes.**

## CAMPS, SPORTS and EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school excursions, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or support an out of home care student you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid directly to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is \$400 for all school students.

## HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from the website below.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments:** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances:** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about CSEF visit:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>



## **Mrs McCambridge catches up with some of our Basketball Grand Final Winners**

On Monday, I had the chance to chat with a few of our students recently after their fantastic success in basketball. Highlights of the conversation were hearing Darcy proudly share about their team and their gold medal win, and the group introducing themselves as Darcy, Hudson and Raphael, clearly proud of their efforts together.

We spoke about their final game, and they shared that they felt both nervous and excited. Hudson explained that when he feels this way, he reminds himself that he has played before and felt nervous before, which helps him work through it.

The students spoke about how they have improved through training and the support of a good coach. Raphael shared that he enjoys shooting goals and practising, and Hudson added that both games and training are fun to be part of. It was a joy to hear their reflections. Their teamwork, persistence and positive mindset were evident throughout our conversation.



## Uniform Update

### Uniform Update from Michaela & Mrs McCambridge

Following consultation late last year, I would like to acknowledge and thank Michaela, on behalf of our school community, for reaching out to begin a conversation around a more comfortable and inclusive winter uniform option.

From that initial conversation, we worked collaboratively with Noone to explore suitable designs and materials. As a result of this process, two new optional items will be introduced, while the remainder of the uniform will continue as is.

The first addition is a tunic dress option. This garment is fully lined and designed without a defined waist, allowing it to sit comfortably over the shirt and cravat while maintaining a neat and structured appearance. The existing tunic will remain available, with the new option providing greater flexibility for students and families.



The second addition is a pull-on ponte pant in school navy for girls. This offers a practical and comfortable alternative, particularly during the winter months.

Samples of both items have been provided by Noone and have been reviewed and supported as part of this process.

Thank you again to Michaela for her initiative. This is a simple example of how student voice, combined with thoughtful engagement in our processes, can lead to a positive and considered outcome.

## **Student Representative Council**

We have had a great term as an SRC meeting weekly with Mrs Foott to think about ways we can contribute to our school and wider community. As an SRC, we agreed that we should all have a voice so we have come up with two ideas on how we can make our school a better place. It's also an opportunity for other students to have fun if they don't like to play games that involve sports or running around. Some of the SRC members have buddies that are also in the SRC, so this gives them more time to spend together and connect. The SRC was made to give all students a voice and have a say about our school.

## **Board Game Club**

The SRCs this year have decided to have a board game club at lunch time. It will take place in one of the undercover areas outside. If families have any pre-loved board games at home that they no longer need, we would love these to be donated to the school for our club.

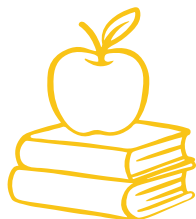
## **Sportsmanship Award**

We have also decided on a new assembly award called The Sportsmanship Award. It is very special because it will only be presented twice a term. The purpose of this award is to look beyond athletic abilities and be awarded to students who show good teamwork, respect, sportsmanship, persistence and someone who embodies our school values. We will be running a competition across the school for students to come up with a design for this award.



Another initiative we came up with together was for St Joseph's Corner. We had our free dress day a few weeks ago to raise money for St Joseph's Corner and in addition to this, the SRC members came up with the idea to write cards for the staff at this organisation and the people they help. This was to thank the staff at St Joseph's Corner for the work they do. They were excited to receive these cards and look forward to displaying them at their office.

Georgia & Jackson  
*School Captains / SRC*



# Teaching & Learning Around the Rooms

## Teaching & Learning

### Teaching and Learning – End of Term 1

As we reach the end of Term 1, I would like to sincerely thank our staff, students and families for the positive and settled way the year has begun at St Margaret Mary's.

It has been wonderful to see our students so engaged in their learning and growing in confidence as classroom routines and expectations have been established across the school. A strong focus this term has been on creating calm, consistent and supportive learning environments where every child feels safe, known and ready to learn.

Across the term, students have been involved in rich and engaging learning experiences in many areas of the curriculum. In Geography and History, classes explored topics such as My History, continents and countries, the geography of Australia, world rivers, using maps, world lakes and world deserts, as well as historical studies including Ancient Egypt, Ancient India, Ancient Rome, Dynasties of China, the Aztec, Maya and Inca civilisations, and Ancient Greece. In STEM, students investigated important scientific concepts including materials, pushes and pulls, making sounds, heat energy, forces, light and circuits, while also applying their thinking through Design and Technologies tasks such as building shelters, creating movement, designing instruments, making sustainable products, constructing boats, exploring solar energy and preparing healthy food choices. In Health and Physical Education, students built their skills in athletics, including running technique, high jump, shot put and relay changeovers, as well as hockey. Students also participated in specialist learning in Visual Arts, Performing Arts/Music and Auslan, which continue to provide valuable opportunities for creativity, communication and expression. In literacy and numeracy, we remain focused on strong foundations, consistency across classrooms and targeted support to help all students grow. Teachers have continued to use assessment information to identify where students are in their learning and to plan responsive next steps. Alongside this, staff have continued to use clear, evidence-informed teaching practices to ensure learning is purposeful, support is provided where needed, and students are appropriately challenged in their learning.

We are proud of the strong start our students have made and grateful for the ongoing partnership we share with families in supporting each child to flourish. As we enter the Easter season, I wish all of our families a happy, holy and safe Easter. May the holiday break provide an opportunity for rest, renewal and time with loved ones.

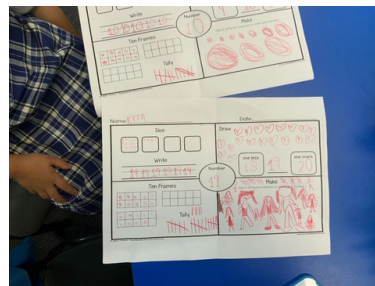
Paul Smith  
*Deputy Principal*

## Foundation

### Foundation Blue

#### Mastering Our Numbers!

In Maths, Prep Blue have been busy building their number knowledge. We have been learning to read, write, and count numbers, while also practising correct number formation. Students have enjoyed counting forwards and backwards from different starting numbers and exploring collections of objects to decide which group is greater or smaller. We have also been recognising numbers in a variety of forms, including numerals, pictures and collections.



#### Understanding Our Emotions

In SEL, students have been learning about different emotions and how we can recognise them through facial expressions and body language. We explored the colours and sounds that might represent different emotions and shared personal experiences of times when we have felt them. Students have also begun learning about the Zones of Regulation, helping them understand which emotions belong in each zone and how our feelings can change throughout the day.

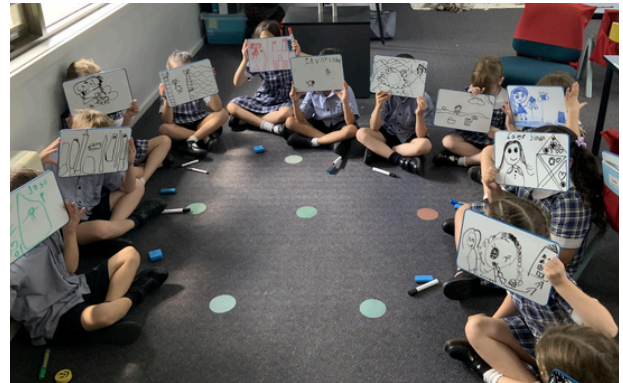
## 1 Green Authors In The Making

Our English unit this past fortnight has featured many opportunities for 1 Green to demonstrate their creativity. After explicit instruction on the components of a quality story, the students adapted an element to make it more interesting. Instead of Farmer John in Farmer John's Tractor, there were farmer monkeys, farmer chickens and even farmer pufferfish. The story's setting was quickly swapped from a farm to the beach, a castle and Mt Everest.

## Journey Towards The Cross

As we prepare for the Easter season, we have begun exploring Jesus' journey towards the cross. This has promoted quality conversations around Lent, looking out for others and reflecting on our own choices that impact our lives.

We have had a wonderful first term in 1 Green. Miss Horwood and Miss Ciara continue to be proud of the growth in confidence and curiosity we see in our students daily.

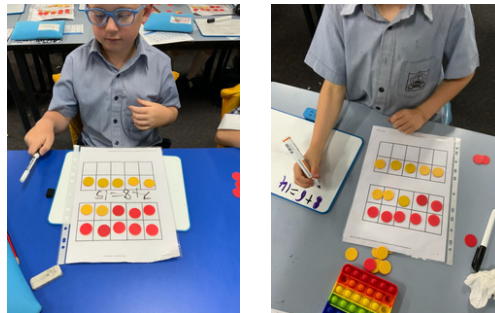


### 2 Yellow

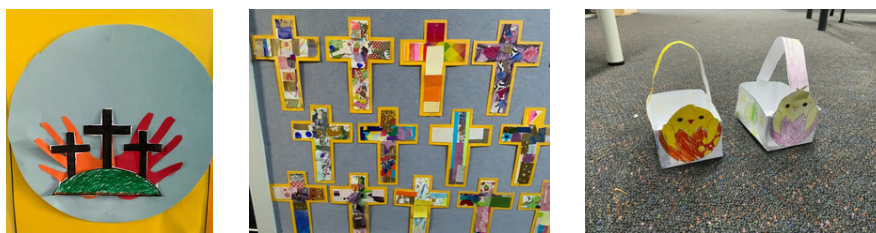
Our book for English this fortnight was called "The Boy Who Tried to Shrink His Name". His name was Zimdalamashkermishkada! He learnt an important lesson about his name being special and that it is important to give others the chance to see it correctly and embrace the person behind the name. We had some fun learning some of the meanings behind our names too and did an art task.



In Maths, we have been putting our addition and subtraction skills to use by determining the answers to equations in various ways, including tens frames, counters, MAB blocks, numberlines, number bonds etc.



In Religion, we have been exploring the key events of Holy Week and why they are important. We have completed a number of craft activities such as collage crosses, hand/cross images and Easter baskets.



It has been a busy start to the year for 2 Yellow, from learning about spelling and sentence types to place value, time and addition and subtraction. From exploring our own backyard (Australia) and travelling to Ancient India. From learning about prayer and the significance of Holy Week to learning how to recognise our emotions and what we can do to regulate ourselves back into the green zone independently. We have discovered a wealth of knowledge this term and we are only a quarter of the way through the year. We can't wait to see what Term 2 brings!

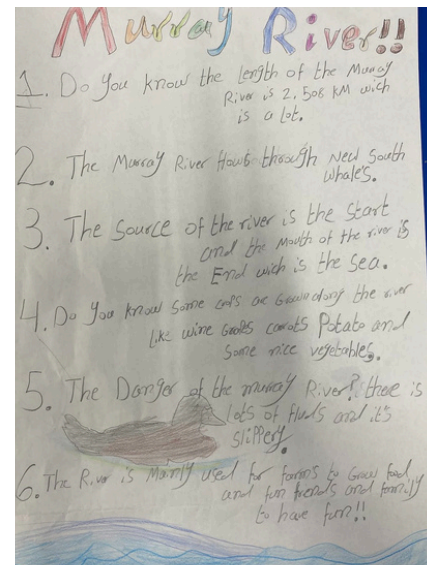
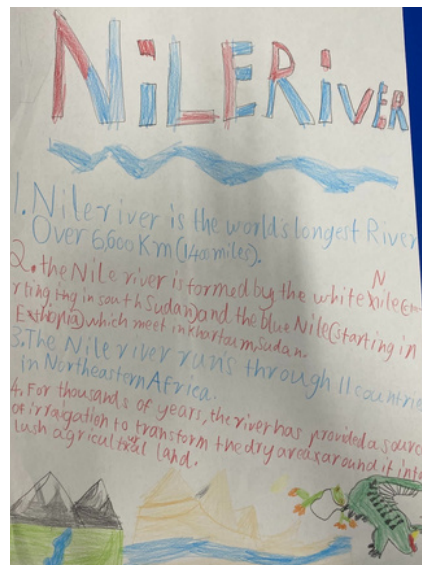
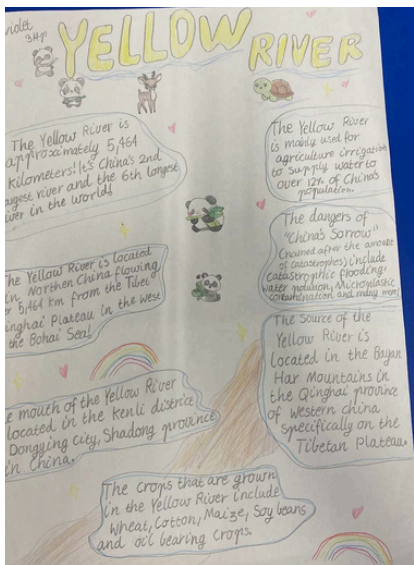
### 3/4 Purple

3/4 have recently completed our class novel Kensuke's Kingdom, with students engaging in thoughtful discussions and reflections on the text's themes and characters.

In Mathematics, the class has spent the past two weeks developing their understanding of time, building confidence in reading clocks and solving time-based problems.

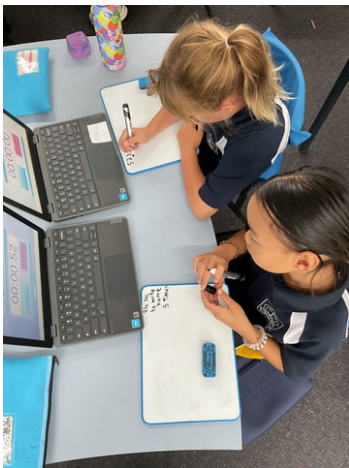
In Geography, students successfully completed their unit on world rivers, including a research project on one of four rivers from different continents, where they explored each river's features and importance.

A special congratulations to our Year 3 cohort for their fantastic work in creating the Last Supper liturgy. I would also like to thank all parents for their ongoing support throughout the term. We look forward to an exciting Term 2, including an upcoming excursion to the Immigration Museum in June, with more details to come early next term.



3/4 Orange

Over the past fortnight, 3/4 Orange have continued to work hard and achieve great things across all learning areas. In Literacy, we finished reading Kensuke's Kingdom and, after a term of practising each component of persuasive writing individually, students were able to bring their skills together to create a well-structured persuasive text. In Numeracy, we completed our unit on time, focusing this fortnight on calculating the duration of events and practising how to use a stopwatch accurately. In Geography, students wrapped up their learning about rivers and did a marvelous job completing their river projects, developing research, typing, and computer skills along the way. We are also very proud of all students for their respectful participation in the performance of The Last Supper. Wishing all our families a happy, safe, and restful holiday break!



**midday and midnight**  
Calculate the elapsed time using the counting on strategy and an empty number line.

The school concert started at 9 am and finished at 6 pm. How long did the concert last for?  
 $9\text{ am} \quad 12\text{ pm} \quad 1\text{ hr}$   
 $12\text{ pm} \quad 1\text{ hr} \quad 9\text{ hr}$

My flight left Sydney at 5 am and arrived at 7 pm. How long was the flight?  
 $5\text{ am} \quad 12\text{ pm} \quad 7\text{ pm}$   
 $12\text{ pm} \quad 7\text{ hr}$   
 $7\text{ pm} \quad 12\text{ hr}$

Nicholas started reading at 10 am and finished at 3 pm. How long did he read for?  
 $10\text{ am} \quad 12\text{ pm} \quad 3\text{ pm}$   
 $12\text{ pm} \quad 3\text{ hr}$   
 $3\text{ pm} \quad 2\text{ hr}$

Rebecca slept from 8 pm to 6 am. How long was she asleep for?  
 $8\text{ pm} \quad 12\text{ am} \quad 6\text{ am}$   
 $12\text{ am} \quad 4\text{ hr}$   
 $6\text{ am} \quad 10\text{ hr}$



The Nile River

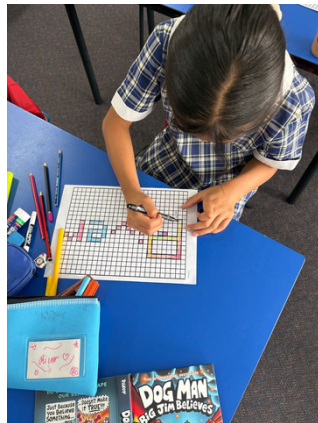
- The Nile River is 6,853 Km long.
- The Nile River is located in Northeastern Africa.
- The Nile River is 30 million years old.
- The dangers of the Nile River include crocodiles, health risks and strong currents.
- The crops grown are wheat and barley.
- The Nile River source is in lake victoria in (Uganda/Tanzania).
- The Nile River is primarily used for watering plants.



## 5 Lime

### Literacy

In Literacy, we have been busy editing the fables we created earlier this term. We have been focusing on including important literary devices such as personification, similes, two-pair adjectives, and speech dialogue to make our stories more engaging and entertaining for our Prep buddies. This week, we are working hard to put the finishing touches on our stories and add illustrations, ready to share them with our buddies at the end of the week. We are so excited to showcase all of our creativity and effort!



### Maths

In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of perimeter and area while also using our prior knowledge of important number facts, including multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction. It has been fantastic to see students applying these skills to solve a range of mathematical challenges.

### Working with our Buddies

We have spent some wonderful afternoons over the past few weeks working with our buddies in preparation for our Easter celebrations. Last Thursday, we teamed up with the Preps to help them create their very own Easter bunny baskets. It was a fun and rewarding experience, and everyone enjoyed working together as we prepared for the upcoming celebration.



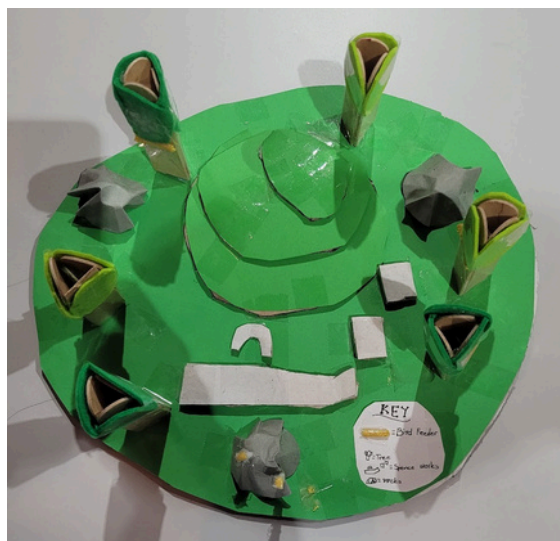
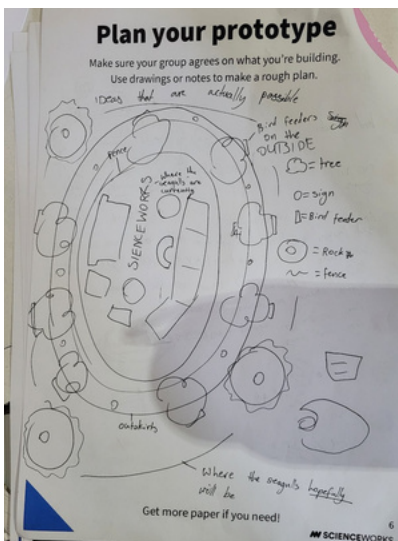
**Scienceworks Design Sprint - Grade 6**

On Wednesday 18 March, our Grade 6 students participated in a Design Sprint at Scienceworks. They began the day learning from ornithologist Karen Rowe, who shared her expertise about seagulls and their behaviour.

Students then conducted field observations around Scienceworks, which is home to a colony of hundreds of seagulls that use the buildings as a breeding ground. They observed gull behaviour and discussed which interactions were positive or negative for both humans and the birds.

Using these observations, students worked in teams to brainstorm and design prototypes to help humans and seagulls live more harmoniously. Creative solutions included adapting the environment to be more seagull-friendly, designing a robot seagull to deter food stealing, and even inventing a translator to help humans and seagulls communicate.

It was a fantastic day of hands-on STEM learning and problem solving.



**GULL BEHAVIOUR**

Look for and imagine interactions between gulls and humans (or human-made things)

Some interactions are positive to one species and negative to another. Some are good for everyone!

	Positive for Humans	Negative for Humans
Positive for Gulls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gulls are fun to watch</li> <li>Seagulls eating all the insects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poop on everything</li> <li>loud squawking</li> <li>stealing food</li> <li>very territorial</li> </ul>
Negative for Gulls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>building new stuff</li> <li>humans destroy natural environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gulls get stuck inside</li> <li>being into windows</li> <li>nests may get stuck in gutters/roofs</li> </ul>

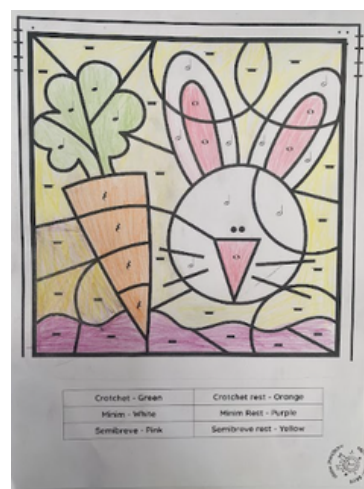
## Specialists

### Music

This week, our Prep students proudly performed *Hosanna* at their liturgy—well done, Preps! They have also been learning the song and actions to *Peter Rabbit*, building excitement as Easter approaches.

Our junior students have been learning a song called *Mrs Bunny* while exploring changes in tempo, noticing how the music gets faster and faster.

In Grade 5/6, students have learned three chords on the ukulele and have been practising how to smoothly switch between them while playing songs. Next term, they will have the opportunity to join Mrs Wilson's Ukulele Club at lunchtime to continue developing their skills.



## Specialists

### AUSLAN

In Auslan this week, our Foundation students have been learning the signs for a range of animal names through activities and songs. They particularly enjoyed practising familiar songs such as Old MacDonald Had a Farm, using Auslan signs to match the animals in the song. We also discovered that many Auslan signs look like the animal they represent, which helps make them easier to remember.

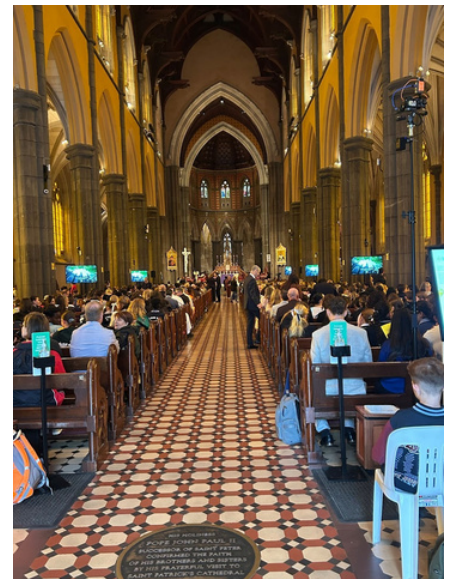
Our Grade 1 students have been exploring food signs and had fun creating their own "vegetable soup." Each student chose and signed their favourite vegetable, contributing to a shared class experience while building confidence and expanding their Auslan vocabulary.



## St Patrick's Day Mass

On Friday the 20th of March, Jackson and I had the privilege of going to St Patrick's Cathedral in the City for the St Patrick's Day Beginning of Year Mass. We held our school flag to represent St Margaret Mary's as we walked into the Cathedral with hundreds of other schools from across Melbourne. We sat and watched the whole mass with the other schools. We got the Eucharist and finished the rest of the Mass.

We thought that the message of the Mass was to have faith in God just as St Patrick did when he was sent to Ireland as a slave. His faith in God allowed him to survive and to teach and serve others. The Cathedral was full of people which Google told us was at least 2,400 people. It was amazing to be there.



Georgia & Jackson  
*School Captains*

## Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) News

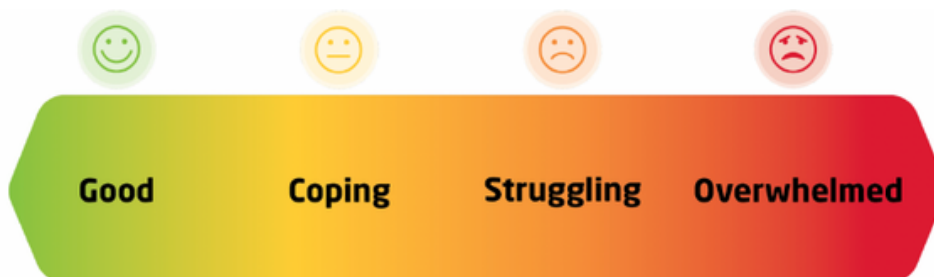
### The Children's Wellbeing Continuum: Routines, Rhythms and Rituals

Source: Murdoch Children's Research Institute

**The Continuum** acknowledges that **routines, rhythms and rituals** support mental health. Increased feelings of safety come from predictability, helping us to feel in control and calming our nervous system. Routines build independence as learning and repeating the steps of new tasks or processes gradually enables us to perform actions on our own, leading to feelings of confidence, success and mastery.

The SMM school day is full of routines to create the conditions above. As the holidays arrive and Daylight Savings ends, consider how your child's routines, rhythms and rituals may be affected. Maintaining a healthy balance during the school holidays helps wellbeing and facilitates readiness to learn in Term 2. Monitoring screen time, getting the age-recommended sleep and enjoying physical activity are all proactive ways to protect mental health. More information is in the links below.

- [Screen time | How much is too much? | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [New research shows digital technology is linked to reduced well-being in young kids. So what can parents do? Deakin University Research News](#)
- [Royal Children's Hospital: Kids Health Info: Sleep and Sleep Problems](#)
- [Sleep problems in autistic children and teenagers](#)



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## **Term 2 Return to School Strategies and Self-Regulation**

The ability to manage your own behaviour and reactions is called self-regulation. Self-regulation helps us learn, keep safe and socialise successfully. This [Self-regulation](#) article from the Australian parenting website Raising Children Network provides further explanation and provides practical strategies for parents. Self-regulation is also necessary to cope with changes in routine and returning after a holiday break. Here are ways to help your child regulate and support a smooth transition to Term 2.

### Cognitive-Resume normal routines

- A few days before school starts, ensure age-appropriate bedtime routines and ready-for-school wake times are happening
- Co-create checklists/schedules, e.g. school bags items, getting ready routines
- Encourage goal setting, e.g. I will follow the school rules, I'll carry my school bag, I'll ask for help, I'll include others or ask someone to play
- Model problem-solving, e.g. I left my coat at home, so what could I do?

### Behavioural

- Reinforce clear rules before school starts, e.g. screen time, bedtime
- Praise independent efforts and age-appropriate responsibility, e.g. getting ready
- Prepare the night before to facilitate a calm morning and first day back

### Emotional

- Acknowledge feelings
- Name and label specific feelings to develop emotional vocabulary and literacy
- Model and teach coping strategies, e.g. belly breathing, counting, self-talk
- Arrange a play date to reconnect with peers and help ease any social anxiety
- Build gratitude practice about school, e.g. I'm grateful for school because...
- Reflect on their past successes to confirm their capability.

### With Gratitude to Our Senior Student Leaders

Our Grade 6 Wellbeing Captains, Patrick, Maddi and Alex and many other senior students have played an important role regarding the "quiet activity" play area. This area expands play opportunities for SMM students from Prep to Year 6, and students have enjoyed games of chess, UNO, giant Connect 4, giant Jenga, building blocks and playing with puppets. The senior students have independently and consistently wheeled out and packed up the activity trolleys. Thanks for your help and support!

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**A message from our Year 6 Wellbeing Captains**

Dear parents and carers,

We have a lovely quiet area set up next to our church for the children to relax and decompress. To make this space even more enjoyable in Term 2, students are welcome to bring a colouring book from home to use in the quiet area. They can bring it to and from the classroom for a more enjoyable time. If your child would like to ‘chat and colour’, please provide a colouring book, labelled with their name, and give it to their teacher. Pencils will be provided.

**Thanks for working in partnership with us to support your child’s mental health and wellbeing at SMM!**

35 years! kids help line

did you know...

**Kids Helpline**  
**is Australia's only**

- ✓ free
- ✓ confidential
- ✓ professional
- ✓ 24/7
- ✓ phone and online counselling service
- ✓ for 5- to 25-year-olds

We're here anytime, any reason.

kidshelpline.com.au 1800 55 1800

Kath Novak  
*MHiPS*

### Mathematics Update: Building Thinkers, Not Just Calculators

It has been an action-packed Term 1 in the world of Mathematics! Walking through our classrooms this term, the energy has been fantastic.

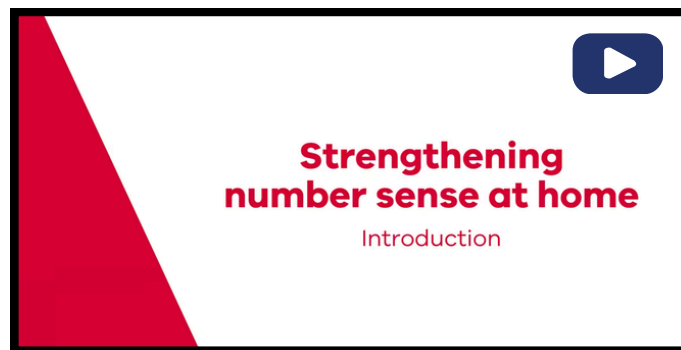
We believe that if a child can see it and touch it, they can understand it. This term, students across all year levels have been using concrete materials—from MAB blocks and tens frames to geometric solids and clocks.

#### Coming in Term 2: Maths at Home Video Series

We know that the way maths is taught today can look quite different from how many of us learned it at school. To support our partnership with families, we are excited to announce a series of short videos launching in Term 2 that have been produced by the Victorian Department of Education and are endorsed by MACS.

These videos will demonstrate the specific strategies we use in the classroom and provide simple tips for supporting your child's numeracy at home.

The first video below will give you an example of what to expect.



Keep your eyes out for these videos in the newsletter next term. Have a great Easter break and don't forget to keep counting!

Anne Ablinger  
*Mathematics Learning Enhancement Leader*

## Child Safety Protocols

Each Newsletter, we will be including a page to inform our community on the eleven Child Safety Standards. The purpose of this page is to outline the protocols and also importantly to communicate how these standards are being enacted at our School.

Standard 1 - Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

Standard 2 - Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice

How we enact Child Safety Standards 1 & 5 at St. Margaret Mary's

At St Margaret Mary's, creating a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for every child is at the heart of who we are.

We know that children thrive when they feel safe, understood and valued. That is why we work closely with families to support each child's needs, strengths and background. Our learning programs, wellbeing practices and daily routines are designed to ensure every child can participate, feel confident and experience success.

You can find all of our child safety, wellbeing, behaviour and complaints policies on our website. We also regularly share reminders through our newsletter and school communication platforms so families know where to go and who to speak to if they have questions or concerns.

In our school you will see this commitment in action through:

- strong relationships between staff, students and families
- personalised support, including individual learning plans where needed
- inclusive classroom practices supported by our Learning Enhancement team
- learning experiences such as Indigenous studies and Auslan
- a community that welcomes families of all backgrounds and beliefs

We are proud of the way our community looks out for one another. Together, we create a school where every child feels safe, included and able to flourish.



MACS  
**CARE**

Parent/Carer Newsletter



3

Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools

Working  
together for  
Child Safety

## Child Safe Standard 3

**‘Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.’**

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to uphold and actively promote the wellbeing and safety of every student entrusted in our care. Our commitment to the protection of students is enabled in nurturing, respectful and safe communities where the uniqueness and sacred dignity of every young person are celebrated, and they can flourish in their learning and development.

This newsletter series provides an overview of what the Child Safe Standards are, how they are designed to help keep children and young people safe and what school governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are doing to prioritise and achieve this.

### Overview of Child Safe Standard 3:

To be aligned, schools much support the following:

- Children are informed about all their rights, including safety, information and participation
- The importance of friendship is recognized and support from peers is encouraged
- Where relevant to setting or context, young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs in an age-appropriate way
- Staff are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns
- Organisations have strategies to develop a culture that facilitates participation and are responsive to input from children and young people.

### The Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards are a set of guidelines that help organisations create safe environments for children and young people.

They make sure that children are protected from harm, listened to, and respected. These standards require organisations to have strong leadership, clear policies, and a culture that puts children first.

As a parent or carer, you can expect organisations to involve families, empower children, train staff properly, and respond to concerns quickly and respectfully.

This standard focuses on empowering children and young people by ensuring they are informed, respected, and actively involved in decisions that affect them. This participation helps build a school culture that is safe for them and values their voice.

Working together for Child Safety



## What does this look like in a school environment?

- **Creating Opportunities for Student Voice:** We create formal structures such as student councils and leadership programs, but we also include fewer formal opportunities so all students, especially the most vulnerable, can have their voice heard.
- **Acting on Student Feedback:** We listen deeply to what students are telling us and we respond to concerns, suggestions and ideas. This includes making sure students are aware when we have acted on their feedback.
- **Building Staff Capacity:** Our staff receive professional learning, so they understand the importance and benefits of listening to and responding to, student voice. This also includes training for staff regarding how to incorporate student voice, agency and empowerment in their daily interactions and decision making.

## How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

- **Listen and talk often:** Encourage your child to share their thoughts and feelings. Let them know it's always ok to speak up.
- **Talk about rights and safety:** Help your child understand that everyone deserves to feel safe and respected.
- **Be a role model:** Show kindness, respect, and inclusion in everyday life, children learn from what they see.
- **Stay connected with the school:** Take part in conversations or surveys about student wellbeing and safety.
- **Support student voice:** Encourage your child to get involved in school activities where their ideas can make a difference.

## Want to know more?

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how we're supporting child safety, please get in touch.

More information on the Child Safe Standards can be found via the [Commission for Children and Young People \(CCYP\) website](#).



Working together for Child Safety



Reviewed: January 2026

### How much screen time is okay for our kids?

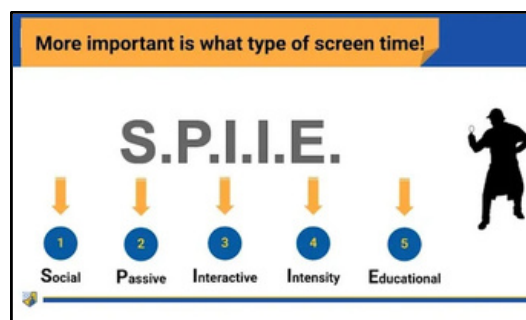
Shifting our thinking from how much screen time to also include what kind of screen time. I often get asked by parents, "how much screen time is ok for my kids?". Well, here's the thing, when we use the term 'screen time', it can refer to such a myriad of different ways in which we engage with screens. It is time we reconsidered the generic use of the term 'screen time', and here's why.

Consider how different the following activities are, that are all loosely categorised as screen time:

- Building an imaginative city in Minecraft collaboratively with their sibling
- Watching "epic fail" videos
- Playing an intense, multiplayer, first person shooter game
- Watching a Disney film
- Learning a language using an app like Duolingo

As you can see, it is clear that not all screen time is created equal! We need to start reshaping our understanding of screen time to be much more than just a number of hours per day/week but instead focus more on the type of screen time.

Click on the video on the right below to watch a video where I explain a simple way that you, together with your children, can use the **SPIIE** challenge to start reflecting on the different types of screen time. From this reflection comes balance, and after all, balance is the key!



Marty McGauran  
Inform & Empower



# Please join us for our Easter Sunday Paraliturgy

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April

2:45pm

School Hall



Hosted by 1/2s

*Upcoming celebration and fundraisers  
so that you can plan ahead!*

# MOTHER'S DAY STALL & BREAKFAST

Mother's Day Stall:  
Wednesday 6th May

Held throughout the school day.  
Items available, ranging from \$3 to \$10.

Mother's Day Breakfast:  
Friday 8th May, 8am

Tea, coffee and simple breakfast provided.

Photo booth entertainment.

More details to follow.



TERM 2, 2026 - REGISTER NOW @  
[CHESSFORSCHOOLS.COM.AU](http://CHESSFORSCHOOLS.COM.AU)

## SPECIALISED CHESS COACHING

Since 2002, we have been providing our popular Chess For Schools program in schools throughout Melbourne and Greater Geelong



'I am thrilled with the tremendous success of the chess program run by Chess for Schools. The students' adoration for the program is evident as they eagerly anticipate lunchtime on Tuesdays, bursting with excitement. The instructors' dedication, patience and attentiveness foster an engaging and nurturing learning environment, igniting the children's passion for chess as their skills flourish!'

*Jessica Ward, Teacher - Loreto Toorak.*

### HOW CAN CHESS BENEFIT YOUR CHILD?

- Educational:** Improved IQ, critical thinking, concentration, analytical skills, memory.  
**Social:** Develop new friendships, social interaction skills, sportsmanship.  
**Emotional:** Confidence, self-esteem, resilience through winning and losing games.

### CLASS STRUCTURE:

Different lessons are taught each week from a structured syllabus ranging from tactics, strategies, master openings, traps & special moves. After the lesson children are paired up in a fun tournament play off. Prizes are awarded to the top 3 players at end of term.

BOOK HERE  [CHESSFORSCHOOLS.COM.AU](http://CHESSFORSCHOOLS.COM.AU)


### CLASS DETAILS - ST MARGARET MARYS PRIMARY

DAY	TIME	LOCATION	DATES	COST
Mondays	1.30pm - 2.15pm	Multi-purpose Room	27 April to 15 June	\$145 per child per term


"Alex loves chess club and gets very upset if he misses a session. His chess has definitely improved and his teacher, Anita feels that it helps with his math in class in terms of concept and thinking. Keep up the great work!"

*Katherine Lambert: Hampton Primary School*

## Community News



**ST ALOYSIUS**  
NORTH MELBOURNE 1887




*A Journey of Excellence*

Year 7 2028 and 2029 Now Enrolling

**BOOK YOUR TOUR TODAY**

Year 7 2028 Applications Closing  
14th August 2026



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enquiry@aloyus.vic.edu.au  
www.aloyus.vic.edu.au

*Be Curious.  
Become Brilliant.*



**book a tour today**

Places available for  
**2027 and beyond.**




### Upcoming Tour Dates

- 19 March
- 31 March
- 23 April
- 14 May
- 28 May
- 11 June
- 23 June
- 16 July

[www.stmaryscollege.vic.edu.au](http://www.stmaryscollege.vic.edu.au)




**MOUNT ST. JOSEPH**  
GIRLS' COLLEGE  
Virtue Courage

**Open Mornings** 9:15 - 10:30am  
(All Dates)

**Thursday: 5 March, 30 April,  
18 June, 18 July, 13 August**

Visit us and experience the College on a typical school day.

Step into our classrooms to see learning in action and enjoy a tour with our student ambassadors.

You'll have the opportunity to ask questions and gain authentic insight into our programs and life at Mount St. Joseph Girls' College.



*Register to Attend*

**Educating today, shaping tomorrow.**

133 Maidstone St, Altona VIC 3018  
(03) 8398 2000  
[www.msj.vic.edu.au](http://www.msj.vic.edu.au)




**MOUNT ST. JOSEPH**  
GIRLS' COLLEGE  
Virtue Courage

**Open Day**

**Sunday, 17 May 2026**  
**10am - 2pm**

Come and discover our welcoming learning and faith community.

Meet our Principal, connect with our passionate staff and students, and experience our dynamic curriculum first-hand.

Enjoy a guided tour of our innovative facilities, led by our wonderful student ambassadors.



*Register to Attend*

**Educating today, shaping tomorrow.**

133 Maidstone St, Altona VIC 3018  
(03) 8398 2000  
[www.msj.vic.edu.au](http://www.msj.vic.edu.au)



## ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH AN ADDICTION OR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE FOR YOU OR A LOVED ONE?

### Joseph's Corner is a Charity Offering Affordable Counselling...

Our therapists offer a calm, compassionate, and non-judgmental space for anyone struggling with mental health issues, or their own or a loved one's addiction.

*If you're unsure where to start, we're happy to begin with a no-pressure phone call...*

---

**3 Birmingham Street Yarraville, or via Phone or Online**  
**Phone Us: (03) 9315 2680**  
**Email Us: [contact@josephscorner.org.au](mailto:contact@josephscorner.org.au)**

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**"We're here to offer a warm, non-judgmental space where you can talk openly and be truly heard."**

**"Our focus is on your needs, working at your pace, and finding a hopeful way forward... Together"**



**MEDICARE  
NDIS-FUNDED &  
AFFORDABLE  
COUNSELLING**

# LEARN TO SWIM WITH THE SURVIVAL SPECIALISTS AT

## Altona

Swimming lessons are a necessity, not a luxury



**PAUL SADLER SWIMLAND**  
THE SURVIVAL SPECIALISTS • SINCE 1972

## What makes Paul Sadler Swimland different to other swim schools?

We've been teaching children and adults to swim and survive in deep water since 1972!

- At Paul Sadler Swimland Altona, we specialise in:
- Teaching essential water safety and survival skills
  - A gentle, child-focused approach to learning
  - Salt-water pools that are kind to skin and eyes
  - Lessons for babies 4 months (4 & 5 month olds swim free) all the way to Adults (Women's only classes available)



Paul Sadler Swimland Altona  
Westgate Leisure Complex,  
61-69 Dohertys Rd, Altona North  
03 8595 3159  
altona@paulsadlerswimland.com

**PAUL SADLER SWIMLAND**  
THE SURVIVAL SPECIALISTS • SINCE 1972



## worldwide marriage encounter

Live Your Best Life in Love...

A Marriage Encounter weekend is for you...

Time-out to nurture your most precious relationship away from life's distractions. The two of you will come away from your weekend feeling more deeply connected and with tools to help keep your renewed intimacy alive.

No group sharing is required.

The weekend is based around Catholic values. Couples of all faiths are very welcome.

Please check our website for details and to book your special weekend:

We have 2 further weekends on offer this year

October 3-5 at Tooleybuc Sporting Club / Tooleybuc Motor Inn - a great weekend getaway

October 10-12 at St Paul's Retreat Centre, Wantirna South

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

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

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



NAB AFL Superkick is for kids aged 7-12. The main goals are having fun, making mates and growing footy confidence. Mud is just a bonus.

**SPOTSWOOD**  
STARTS FRIDAY 5.30PM

DONALD MCLEAN RESERVE  
CONTACT [auskick@spotswoodfc.com.au](mailto:auskick@spotswoodfc.com.au)



FIND YOUR CLUB



The grass stains you get playing as a kid stay with you your whole life. So for fun, friendship, and getting your hands dirty, it's gotta be NAB AFL Auskick.

**PLAY.AFL/AUSKICK**

**SPOTSWOOD**  
STARTS FRIDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 5.30PM

SPOTSWOOD AUSKICK CENTRE  
CONTACT [AUSKICK@SPOTSWOODFC.COM.AU](mailto:AUSKICK@SPOTSWOODFC.COM.AU)



FIND YOUR CLUB



**SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS**

Sharpen your footy skills at one of our School Holiday Programs Suitable for kids aged 4-12.

**MISSION WHITTEN OVAL, FOOTSCRAY**  
FRIDAY, 10 & 17 APRIL



SCAN TO BOOK



**JOIN US FOR MCFC COLOUR RUN**

Sun 19<sup>th</sup> April - 10am - 1.30pm

ENTRY FROM \$15. ALL FUNDS RAISED GO TO MCFC.

Melbourne City Football Club  
Edwards Reserve  
South Kingsville



Get ready to run, get messy and have fun



At St Margaret Mary's, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of our children as a central and fundamental responsibility of all staff of our school.



As a Catholic Community we respect the Yalukit Willam and Boonwurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation, traditional custodians of the land upon which our school resides, and commit ourselves to reconciliation and justice for all in our community and nation.

*St Margaret Mary's students are independent life-long 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.*

**Follow our social media accounts for the latest news and learning from around the school:**



@stmargaretmarysspotswood



St Margaret Mary's Primary School - Spotswood



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



**ST. MARGARET MARY'S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
SPOTSWOOD**