



# ST MARGARET MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Newsletter 9, Term 2, Week 8 2026

## Special Announcements

Mon 15<sup>th</sup> June - 2 Yellow Assembly

Tue 16<sup>th</sup> June - Foundation Blue Class Mass

Thu 25<sup>th</sup> June - Parent Teacher Interviews

### Principal's Message

Dear Families,

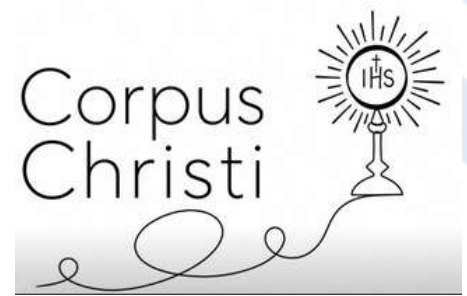
The past fortnight has been wonderful, with a particular highlight being, the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation with our Year 6 students. We were honoured to welcome Bishop Martin Ashe and Fr Samuel as our students received this important sacrament surrounded by their families and parish community. Thank you to our families for supporting their children's faith journey, to Ms Prskawetz for her thoughtful preparation of the candidates, and to Mr Mitchell for his ongoing leadership of faith formation across our school.



There has also been plenty happening beyond the classroom, with production auditions completed and lead roles announced, Yr 3 / 4 students enjoyed their excursion to the Immigration Museum, Juniors to Scienceworks and our student leaders represented SMM at Sacred Heart Mass today. All children loved the recent visit from local footballers, and staff embraced the opportunity to engage in professional learning during our recent Student-Free Day. Teachers spent the day strengthening their practice in literacy and numeracy and took on the role of learner themselves, mastering a simple song on the ukulele. Staff and students embracing "comfortable floundering" together is an essential feature of our thriving school.

## Principal's Message

Last weekend, Catholics throughout Melbourne and around the world celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi - the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. The feast reminds us that we are nourished not only by what we learn, but by how we care for and support one another. Compassion, service and gratitude are values we strive to live each day at St Margaret Mary's, and Corpus Christi reminds us of the importance of coming together as one community, centred on faith, belonging and a shared commitment to one another.



In that same spirit, thank you to St Margaret Mary's FSG who are already planning exciting events for next term, including a Tony's Pie Drive, student disco, production fundraisers and family social opportunities. I invite all families to support the FSG any way you can. Stay tuned for more information to come.

The next fortnight will bring Semester One to a close with opportunities for both reflection and celebration. Families are warmly invited to book a Parent-Teacher Interview to discuss their child's learning, celebrate growth and achievements, and share any insights that may assist us in supporting their child throughout the remainder of the year.

This weekend, we warmly invite families to join members of our sister parish school and parish community as we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart and mark 125 years since the opening of Sacred Heart School. It is a wonderful opportunity to give thanks for those who have come before us and helped build the strong Catholic communities that continue to serve families.

A blue poster for the Sacred Heart 125 Year Anniversary. The text reads: 'YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO SACRED HEART 125 YEAR ANNIVERSARY Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 10am'. Below this, it says: 'Come and celebrate 125 years of education at Sacred Heart Primary School, Newport. Join us on Sunday 14th June for our 10am Parish Mass, followed by open classrooms featuring historical displays, Devonshire tea and entertainment as we celebrate our rich history and community together.' There is a QR code for RSVP. To the right is a circular artwork of children holding hands with '125 YEARS' in the center. At the bottom are logos for Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools and Sacred Heart Newport.

YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED TO

**SACRED HEART  
125 YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY**

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 10am**

Come and celebrate 125 years of education at Sacred Heart Primary School, Newport. Join us on Sunday 14th June for our 10am Parish Mass, followed by open classrooms featuring historical displays, Devonshire tea and entertainment as we celebrate our rich history and community together.

RSVP:

Artwork created by Rosie, Prep

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

SACRED HEART NEWPORT

## Principal's Message

Enrolment interest in St Margaret Mary's remains strong and we continue to receive enquiries from families seeking to join our community. Please see the *Community Spotlight* from the Fraser's Bradmill Bulletin. The hyperlink in the article sends new families to our new Website.

We also look forward to sharing further news regarding our building project as updates become available from MACS. Due to lack of progress out of my control, we have had to cap our enrolments to one Foundation class for 2027 at this stage. Stay tuned.

The winter holidays will begin at 1:00pm on Friday 26 June. OSHClub will provide its final afternoon of care at St Margaret Mary's on this day.

Looking ahead to Term 3, I am delighted to share that **Indira will be returning to St Margaret Mary's as the MACSEYE Manager for our Before and After School Care program.** We are excited to welcome Indira back to our community.

Stay warm, stay well, take care.

Colleen

### Community Spotlight - St Margaret Mary's Primary School

At St Margaret Mary's Primary School, every child is empowered to learn, grow and thrive in a nurturing and inclusive environment. Dedicated to supporting each student's unique journey, the school cultivates curiosity, confidence and a strong sense of belonging. Families are warmly welcomed into a connected community where every child is known, supported and inspired to reach their potential.



[Find out more](#)



## TERM 2, 2026 DATES

<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>



## TERM 3, 2026 DATES

<b>Mon 13<sup>th</sup> Jul</b>	<b>Student Free Day - No School</b>
<b>Tue 14<sup>th</sup> Jul</b>	Term 3 begins for students
<b>Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Jul</b>	Assembly - 5/6 Red
<b>Tue 28<sup>th</sup> Jul</b>	Book Fair
<b>Tue 28<sup>th</sup> Jul</b>	Grandparents Day Mass
<b>Tue 4<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	AUSLAN Incursion
<b>Wed 5<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	First Eucharist Evening - 6:30pm
<b>Thu 6<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	Mary Mackillop Mass
<b>Fri 7<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	School Disco (FSG)
<b>Mon 10<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	Assembly - 3/4 Orange
<b>Tue 11<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	Feast of St Mary of the Cross
<b>Tue 18<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	Whole School Book Week Incursion
<b>Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug</b>	First Eucharist
<b>Mon 24<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	Assembly - 5 Lime
<b>Wed 26<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	Foundation 2027 Drop In
<b>Thu 27<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	School Production
<b>24<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	BOOK WEEK
<b>Thu 3<sup>rd</sup> Sep</b>	Foundation 2027 Drop In
<b>Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Sep</b>	Father's Day Breakfast
<b>Mon 7<sup>th</sup> Sep</b>	Assembly - Foundation Blue
<b>Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Sep</b>	<b>Last Day of Term</b>

**Please Note:** These are the known dates so far.

# Week 8 Awards

FB	<b>Nate W</b> - For consistently displaying Excellence by putting in your best effort, staying focused on your learning, and always striving to achieve your personal best. Well done Nate!
1G	<b>Billy L</b> - For consistently displaying excellence, working hard to engage in all subject areas. Billy your growth this year continues to be a pleasure to see. Well done!
2Y	<b>Annabelle P</b> - For demonstrating excellence in both her academic learning and social emotional development. You have shown maturity and resilience when dealing with social issues and are always a friendly peer to all. Keep it up!  <b>Grace F</b> - For demonstrating excellence and resilience since returning from your holiday. You have got right back on task, asking for help when needed and pushing through challenges. Well done for being so dedicated to your learning!
3/4O	<b>Elena P</b> - For demonstrating excellence in Literacy by creating imaginative similes that add vivid detail and creativity to her writing. Well done, Elena!  <b>Soul</b> - For demonstrating excellence in Mathematics through his careful investigation and strong understanding of symmetry in shapes. Well done, Soul!
3/4P	<b>Triya</b> - Triya demonstrated excellent listening skills during our recent visit to the Immigration Museum, where she was a respectful and attentive listener throughout the excursion. Keep up the wonderful work!
5L	<b>Isaac</b> - For showing great persistence when faced with challenges and using them as opportunities to grow in your learning. It has been fantastic to see your positive attitude and determination. Keep up the great work!
5/6R	<b>Jackson S</b> - For demonstrating integrity through mature behaviour, positive choices and showing the confidence to do the right thing in challenging situations.
SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD	<b>Hudson W</b> - 3/4 Orange

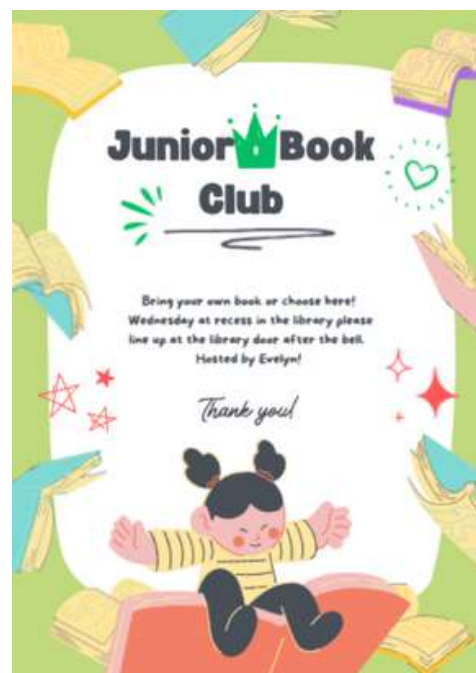


## Student Representative Council News

At St Margaret Mary's, we are proud of the important role our Student Representative Council (SRC) plays in promoting student voice, leadership and agency across our school. Through the SRC, students are encouraged to share ideas, identify opportunities for improvement and help shape initiatives that benefit our whole community.

Following feedback from our Junior SRC members, Evelyn has successfully launched a new Junior Book Club, creating an inclusive opportunity for students across the entire school to connect through a shared love of reading. The Book Club will meet every Wednesday at recess, and we look forward to seeing this exciting initiative grow.

We are also delighted to announce the first recipient of our Sportsmanship Award. Congratulations to Hudson in 3/4 Orange, who has consistently demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship and embodied our school values of Respect, Integrity, Compassion and Excellence both on and off the sporting field.



**CONGRATS! ST MARGARET MARY'S SCHOOL SPOTSWOOD HAS BEEN APPROVED FOR A LOCAL MATTERS JAR**

In further exciting news, St Margaret Mary's has been approved to participate in the Grill'd Local Matters Community Jar Program. We will be notified when our jar is available in-store, and funds raised through this initiative may be directed towards future SRC-led projects and opportunities that benefit our students and school community.

Thank you to our SRC members for their ongoing commitment to making a positive difference at St Margaret Mary's. Their ideas, leadership and enthusiasm continue to strengthen our school and ensure student voices are heard and valued.

Julia Foott  
*Learning Diversity Leader*



# Teaching & Learning Around the Rooms

## Teaching & Learning

### Learning Together at SMM

What your children are learning – and how you can support them at home

Dear SMM Families,

On Friday 5 June, our staff came together for a full Curriculum Day focused on strengthening two of the most important areas of your child's learning journey: Writing and Mathematics. It was a rich day of professional learning, and we are excited to share what is coming into our classrooms as a result.

This newsletter gives you a window into what we explored, what we are implementing, and most importantly – some simple, practical ways you can reinforce this learning at home.

#### Part One: Writing

#### Why Writing Matters

Writing is one of the single strongest predictors of long-term student success. It helps children communicate, analyse, record, persuade and connect with others. And here's something that might surprise you: getting better at writing also makes children better readers, and vice versa. The two skills strengthen each other continuously.

#### What We Explored: Writing Pedagogies

Our teachers spent time understanding three different approaches to teaching writing, and why no single approach is enough on its own:

##### The Three Approaches

- Product: building knowledge of language components step by step
- Process: focusing on authentic drafting, revising and publishing

##### Our SMM Approach

We draw on all three. Our teachers use explicit modelling, joint construction and guided practice to develop confident, capable writers across every year level.

- Genre: teaching how purpose shapes text structure and language

A key insight from research: process writing alone does not meet the needs of all learners. Explicit teaching of how language works is essential, especially for students who need extra support.

### Writing Fluency: A New School-Wide Focus

One of our most significant new initiatives is a dedicated Writing Fluency program, starting in Term 3. Think of writing fluency as the bridge that helps children move from struggling with the mechanics of writing to enjoying expressing their ideas.

#### What is Writing Fluency?

Writing fluency is about developing speed, accuracy and automaticity in writing, so that children spend less mental energy on the physical act of writing and more energy on generating great ideas.

In practice, this means short, focused practice sessions built around sentence-level skills: constructing clear sentences, expanding ideas, and linking thoughts together with precision.

#### What Will It Look Like in the Classroom?

Four days a week, your child will take part in a short, punchy 5–6 minute writing session structured as:

Phase	Time	What Happens
I Do	1 minute	Teacher models one clear example while thinking aloud
We Do	2 minutes	Class practices together with whiteboards or verbal responses
You Do	3–5 minutes	Students independently complete quick items at pace – building processing speed

### Sentence Techniques Your Child Will Learn

Writing fluency sessions focus on practical sentence-level tools. Here are some you may see your child using:

- Because / But / So – expanding ideas by giving reasons, contrasts, and consequences
- Sentence Kernel Expansion – adding who, where, when, why and how to a base sentence
- Sentence Combining – linking ideas smoothly together
- Fluency Sprints – timed bursts of independent writing to build confidence and speed

#### Supporting Writing at Home

You don't need to be an English teacher to help! Try these easy ideas:

- Play the 'Because' game at dinner: "I'm hungry because..." or "I like Fridays because..."
- Ask your child to tell you one thing they learned today and then say, "Now write it down in one sentence."
- Encourage a daily journal or diary – even just 2-3 sentences builds the habit.
- Celebrate their writing – ask them to read it aloud to you.

The goal is to make writing feel normal, low-stakes and frequent. Little and often is the key.

## Part Two: Mathematics

### Assessment, Data and Your Child's Learning

Our afternoon session focused on something that is fundamental to great teaching: using assessment information wisely to understand exactly where each child is and what they need next.

We explored the work of Dylan Wiliam, a world-leading researcher, whose central message is that formative assessment – the ongoing, day-to-day checking of understanding – is one of the most powerful tools a teacher has. It's not just about

## Learning & Teaching

tests; it's about teachers and students continuously checking in, adjusting, and moving forward together.

### How We Assess at SMM

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Our teachers draw on several tools to build a detailed picture of each student's mathematical development:

- Learning Framework in Number (LFIN) — a structured, research-based diagnostic tool that maps precisely where a child is in number development
- Essential Assessment — curriculum-aligned assessments across strands of mathematics
- PAT (Progressive Achievement Tests) — nationally benchmarked assessments
- Ochre Education resources — curriculum-connected unit assessments
- Teacher observation and professional judgement

Together, these sources give our teachers a rich, multi-layered understanding of each child — not just a single score.

### Our 2026 Number Blast Goal

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#### School-Wide Mathematics Goal

"To improve student achievement in mathematics, with a focus on building strong number foundations at each year level."

Every class has a specific, year-level goal linked to this whole-school priority. Teachers reviewed Semester 1 data together and are now planning targeted teaching cycles for Term 3.

### Number Blast: Daily Practice in Action

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You may hear your child mention 'Number Blast' — this is our structured daily numeracy warm-up. It is purposefully designed to build number fluency, the mathematical equivalent of reading fluency: the ability to work with numbers quickly, accurately and flexibly.

## Learning & Teaching

Rather than one-size-fits-all activities, Number Blast is personalised based on assessment data. Your child's teacher knows exactly which skills they are consolidating and plans accordingly.

### Term 3: What to Expect

Based on the data reviewed during our Curriculum Day, teachers are now planning targeted three-week teaching cycles for the beginning of Term 3. You will see your child's personalised learning goals shared through Seesaw in Term 3 – look out for these!

#### Supporting Maths at Home

- Practise counting forwards and backwards with your child – at any level this builds number fluency.
- Play card games or board games that involve numbers, strategy or chance.
- Ask questions like: "If we need 12 plates and we have 8, how many more do we need?"
- Times tables: little and often is best. Five minutes in the car is worth more than a forty-minute cram session.
- When your child gets something wrong, celebrate the struggle – mistakes are where learning happens.

## Looking Ahead

### Term 2 (Remaining)

- Week 9: Writing Fluency pre-test across all year levels
- Teachers completing Writing Fluency planners
- Mathematics goals updated in Seesaw

### Term 3 (Coming Soon)

- Writing Fluency program launches Week 1
- 4 x 5-minute fluency sessions per week in all classes
- Mid-term Writing Fluency check-in (Week 5)
- Continued Number Blast with personalised goals

### A Note from Our Deputy Principal

## ***Learning & Teaching***

Our Curriculum Day reflected the very best of our SMM community – staff who are deeply invested in knowing their students well and teaching them with precision, care and creativity.

Everything we do in Teaching and Learning is shaped by our MACS vision: that every child, made in the image and likeness of God, deserves an education that draws out their unique gifts. Explicit, evidence-based teaching is how we honour that vision – not by treating all children the same, but by knowing each child well enough to meet them exactly where they are.

As always, if you have questions about your child's learning, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's classroom teacher or to the school office.

Warm regards,

Paul Smith

**Deputy Principal – Teaching, Learning & Inclusive Education**

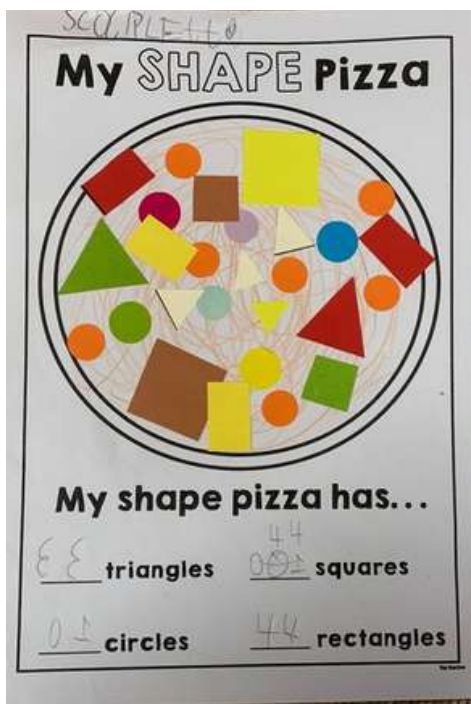
St Margaret Mary's Primary School

## Foundation

In Maths, we have been learning all about 2D shapes, including circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, hexagons, pentagons and ovals. Students explored the features of these shapes by creating them using playdough and pipe cleaners, as well as participating in shape hunts around the classroom and playground. We sorted shapes into categories such as colour and size, and some students even began identifying shapes by their properties, including the number of sides, corners and curved edges. It has been fantastic to see students applying their understanding of shapes to the world around them and recognising shapes in everyday objects.



To conclude our 2D shapes unit, students will be bringing Maths to life by creating their very own 2D shape pizzas. Before making their real pizzas, students will design a paper craft version to plan their creations. They will use shape cutters to cut circles and squares from ham and cheese slices, while pineapple rings will be transformed into triangles. This fun, hands-on activity will provide students with an opportunity to apply their knowledge of shapes in a real-world context while celebrating all they have learned throughout the unit.



## Year 1

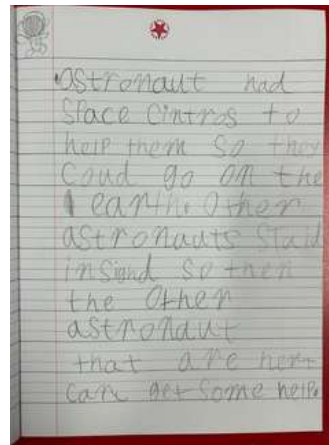
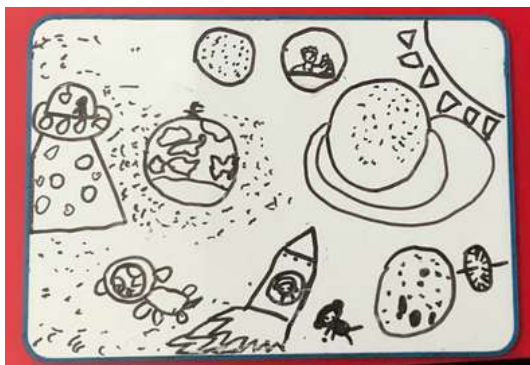
### 1 Green

In Literacy, the students have explored *I want my hat back*, a comedic text that builds the foundational concepts of persuasive writing. The students have learnt to write commands and differentiate these from exclamations. They worked collaboratively to develop our context wall for the book, sharing an item they want back.



### 1 Green and 2 Yellow Excursion

On Wednesday, the Year 1 and 2 students ventured to Scienceworks to engage in an afternoon of Earth and Space exploration. Year 1 spent the morning learning about how astronauts train, gravity and the expeditions humans have taken into outer space. They collated these ideas into detailed drawings, before transferring this across to a writing task to improve their writing fluency.



During the excursion, the students first enjoyed partaking in the hands-on activities Scienceworks has to offer, including learning about climate change, how the body moves, rocketships and much more. The classes were then lucky enough to view Scienceworks new Space show before giving feedback afterwards. The students relaxed back into their chairs, before learning about constellations, the planets, stars and how the objects in the universe rotate at different speeds from the planetarium above.



It has been another busy and exciting fortnight in 2 Yellow! In Literacy, we have been reading and learning about Looking After Country With Fire. We explored persuasive vocabulary and practised using powerful words to convince others of our ideas. We learnt that cool burning is an important land management practice used by First Nations Peoples.

### Why is cool burning important?

Cool burning is important for many reasons. It helps prevent dangerous bushfires by reducing the amount of dry grass and leaves on the ground. Cool burns are carefully planned and use low temperatures, making them safer for animals and plants. They also help native plants grow and keep Country healthy. We should continue using cool burning because it protects people, wildlife and the environment.

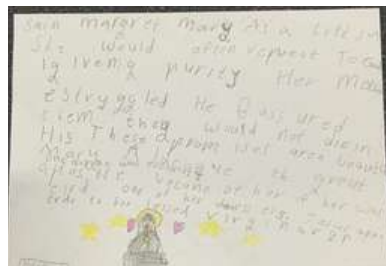
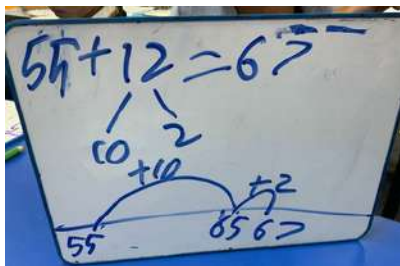
In Numeracy, we have been practising regrouping and solving two-digit by two-digit addition and subtraction problems using empty number lines. We have been building our confidence in choosing efficient strategies to solve number problems.

In Core Knowledge, we learnt how to say hello in Japanese and discovered what our names look like when written in Katakana. We also explored some familiar characters from Japanese culture, including Pokémon.

In SEL, we discussed how our words can have a lasting impact on others and explored the power of friendship and kindness. We scrunched up our heart and even after an apology, there is no ironing those painful wrinkles out. We learnt the importance of complimenting people for who they are and the things they can do, rather than focusing on their appearance.

In Religion, we used the iPads to research a Saint of our choice. We gathered interesting facts and created informative posters to share our learning.

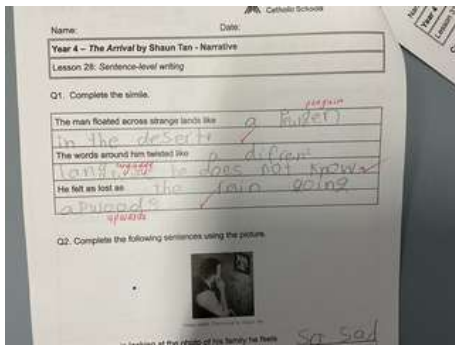
One of the highlights of the fortnight was our excursion to Scienceworks with the Year 1 students. We enjoyed exploring the interactive exhibits and were lucky enough to watch a brand-new live planetarium show all about the planets in our solar system. It was a fantastic day of discovery and learning!



## Years 3 and 4

### 3/4 Orange

It has been another busy and exciting fortnight in 3/4 Orange, with plenty of learning and memorable experiences! In Mathematics, we completed our unit on shape, exploring the properties of polygons and investigating symmetry in a variety of shapes. In Literacy, we began studying *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, using our analytical skills to interpret the rich illustrations, engage in thoughtful class discussions, and explore the use of similes to enhance our understanding and writing.



In Core Knowledge, we started learning about cultural celebrations across Australia and the diverse communities that make up our nation. A highlight of the fortnight was our excursion to the Immigration Museum, where students learned about the experiences of migrants coming to Australia from different countries. We also walked across Sandridge Bridge, discussing the significance of the steel sculptures and the stories they represent. At the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), students explored Australian artworks and viewed the inspiring Top Arts exhibition, showcasing work created by Victorian VCE students. It was a fantastic opportunity to connect our classroom learning with real-world experiences.

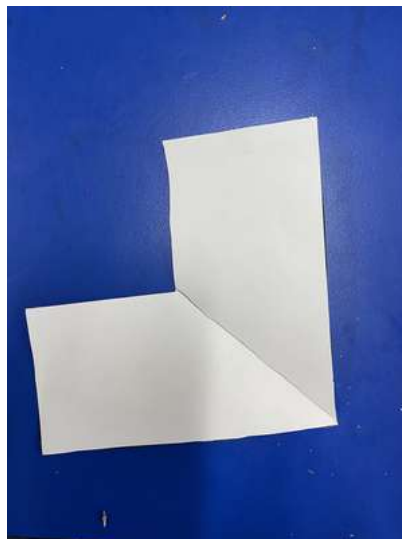
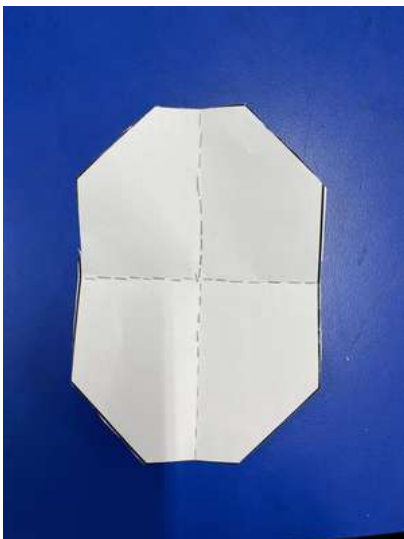


**3/4 Purple**

3/4 Purple recently enjoyed a fantastic excursion to the Immigration Museum and the National Gallery of Victoria at Federation Square. Students represented our school wonderfully and were highly engaged as they explored Australia’s rich immigration story and the many journeys that have shaped our nation. At the gallery, students deepened their understanding of Australian and Indigenous art, examining how artists use different techniques and perspectives to share stories and express ideas.

Back in the classroom, students have been enjoying our Mathematics unit on 2D shapes, where they have been investigating shape properties and creating lines of symmetry.

In Literacy, the class is thoroughly enjoying *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, a powerful wordless text that uses imaginative fantasy imagery to tell a moving story about immigration, belonging and new beginnings.



choice.

Q2. Using the picture, make judgments about who this person might be based on the picture. Complete the information in the table.

Looks like <small>(physical features, clothing, age)</small>	Feels like <small>(emotion, personality, beliefs)</small>	Acts like <small>(goals, hobbies)</small>
A 30-35 year old woman. She wears a hat. She might be a mother.	She seems angry. I believe she is stressed and worried. I think she believes it won't end well.	I believe she is a poor lady and a mother.

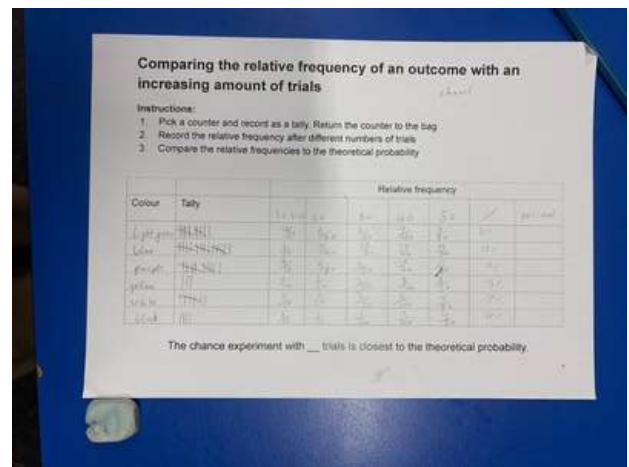
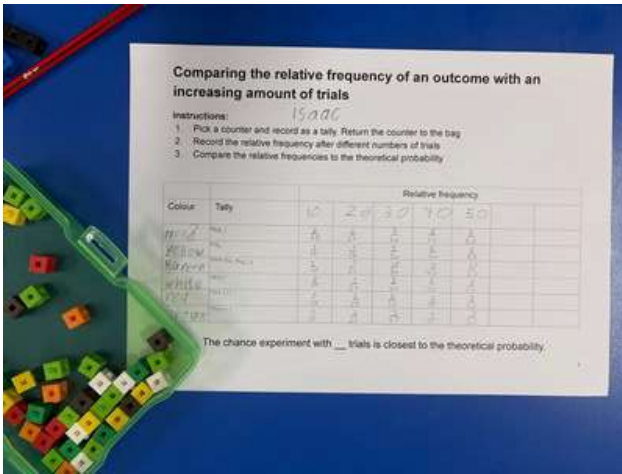
Q3. Fill in the blanks to add further detail and depth to your character.

She is a poor lady and a mother.

5 Lime

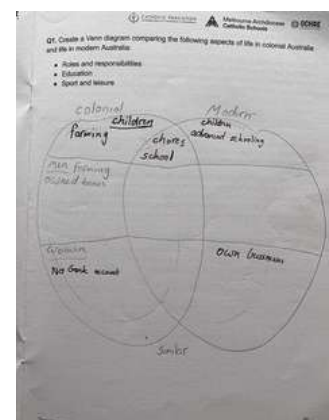
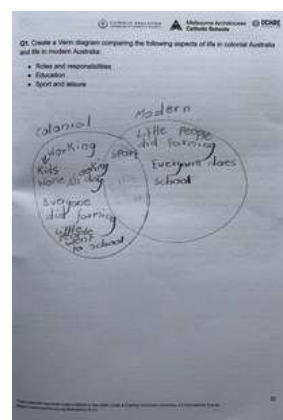
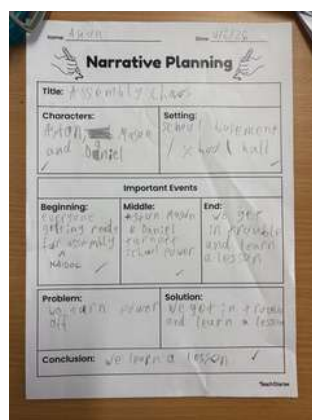
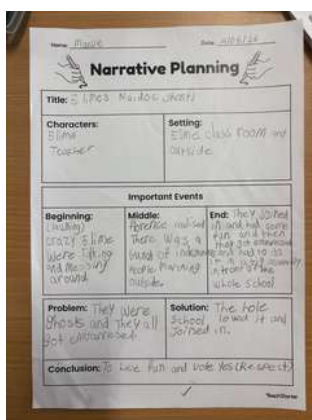
This fortnight in 5 Lime, students have been busy learning across a variety of areas and continuing to build their skills and understanding.

In Mathematics, we have begun exploring probability, learning about theoretical probability and relative frequency. Students have been conducting trials, collecting data, and comparing the relative frequency of outcomes to their theoretical probability, helping them understand how probability works in real-world situations.



In Core Knowledge, we have been comparing the roles and responsibilities of people living in penal colonies and free settler colonies. Students have made connections between these historical societies and the roles and responsibilities we see in our communities today.

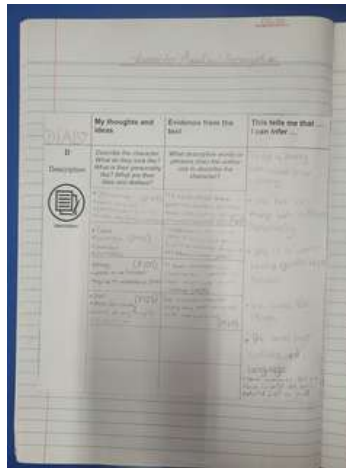
During Literacy, we immersed ourselves in NAIDOC Week learning. Students used their creativity to plan and write a short story inspired by the prompt 'Last year during NAIDOC week'. They demonstrated their growing ability to plan, structure, and craft engaging narratives while sharing unique and imaginative ideas.



### 5/6 Red

It has been a very busy fortnight for Grade 5/6 Red! Last week, eight of our Grade 6 students participated in the Sacrament of Confirmation, showing a wonderful commitment to their faith. We are very proud of the dedication and maturity they demonstrated throughout this special milestone.

In Literacy, students have been wrapping up our novel study of *Us Mob Walawurru* by completing a character analysis on the main character, Ruby. Students have been developing their ability to use evidence from the text to make inferences about a character's personality, actions and experiences.



In Mathematics, students have been exploring probability and chance through a range of hands-on chance experiments. They have been comparing the probable outcomes of events with the actual outcomes and discussing how likely different events are to occur.

As part of our wellbeing learning, students have also been exploring different coping strategies that can help when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Students created their own personalised "toolboxes" filled with strategies and supports they can use and refer back to when needed.



## **Cross Country Division Athletics**

On the 27th of May in the year 2026, three young girls named Ava, Olivia and Grace made their way to Keilor stadium for cross country. With all their hard work and training they had made it from District to Division.

The huge stadium was big and grey with a red athletics track near it and there was a gigantic crowd under its shelter. The girls then lined up to get their labels, Olivia's was 753 and Ava's was 745 while Grace's was 750 while rain poured down. It soaked the hard concrete ground and made the fence guarding the track saturated. "I'm so nervous!" exclaimed Grace, "I know right?!" responded Olivia. "I wonder if we'll get in," said Ava. The rain kept pouring until suddenly it stopped? "ALL UNDER NINES AND TENS GO TO THE STARTING LINE!!!" So the girls ran to the start line and got ready to run.

Before the cross country we stretched a lot because we did not want to feel sore before the race. After that we went in our groups because there's different ages. The boys in our ages went first then we had to go. It was so nerveracing. When we lined up to go for our race everyone was in their running position. There was this guy and he said "On your marks, get set... GO!!!" We first had to sprint so we could get in front of the people who were first. It was so tiring because we had to do 2K. There were 2 big ovals and we had to go on one and then there was the first oval that cut on to the running track. We had to do that and when we were on to the track every one was huffing and puffing .

After all that running in the rain everyone was drenched. And top 12 made it into the next round and Ava came 9th and Grace came 8th and Olivia came 15th because she ran with a sore knee and she felt uncomfortable running. When we all met up again we said to each other "You did a good job and I think we all had a great run and all the girls were so brave running in the rain and not crying because that rain out there was so bad and I think everyone was so cold." We are so proud of ourselves for representing our school.

**Written by:** Grace M (5 Lime), Olivia B (3/4 Orange) & Ava F (3/4 Purple)

## Specialists

### AUSLAN

Our Junior students have been learning about bugs and minibeasts in Auslan. They learned the signs for insects such as bees, mosquitoes, spiders, ants, cockroaches and worms. Students enjoyed discovering that many of the signs look like the bugs themselves, making them easier to remember.

To practise their new signs, students played a partner game where they described a bug in Auslan while their partner drew it in a bug collection. It was a fun and engaging way to learn about our creepy crawly friends!

Can you guess the sign with the insect?



Alicia Wilson  
AUSLAN Teacher

### Book Bash 2026

In collaboration with the State Library Victoria, the Year 3 – 6 students will be taking part in interactive online sessions with 3 leading children's book authors this term. They will have the chance to co-create stories and to quiz the author's on their craft, along with students from schools across Victoria.



### Premier's Reading Challenge

It is wonderful to see so many students taking part in the Premier's Reading Challenge this year! As a school we have published almost 100 book reviews for finished books, and we even have one student who has completed the challenge - congratulations to Reggie F in 2 Yellow!



### Scholastic Book Club - LOOP Orders

The parent ordering platform is called LOOP. Our website has many resources for parents to set up and order through LOOP. Parents wishing to order products through Book Club can follow the following step-by-step instructions:

1. Log in, or create a new account at [scholastic.com.au/LOOP](https://scholastic.com.au/LOOP)
2. New parents can follow the Wizard to set up a child's profile
3. Click the ORDER tab, and select the child's school and Issue of Book Club
4. Select your child's name
5. Enter the product item number from the Book Club catalogue



Lucy McCarthy  
*Literacy Enhancement Leader*

## Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) News

### This week's topic is: Managing Stress Responses

The stress response, also known as 'fight, flight or freeze', is a natural brain response to perceived danger, changes or challenges. Students can often show stress through behaviours. Helping students learn about and recognise this 'body alarm system' assists with developing self-regulation and building resilience. A co-regulated adult can calm the stress response in children. A co-regulated adult is someone whose own emotional and physiological state is stabilised. Children who are dysregulated can utilise the calmness and 'groundedness' of the stabilised regulated adult.

### How can we manage stress responses in children and young people?

**Acknowledge the feeling:** This is calming to children who are agitated because feeling seen and heard de-escalates the nervous system and winds down the emotional part of the brain. It sends a 'you are safe' signal to the brain, which helps to activate the 'logical brain'. This can also build trust because when children see that their emotions are respected, they are less likely to push back and escalate the behaviour.

**Safety to Physical and Emotional (Calm space):** This is a designated area to support self-regulation. It offers an alternative environment that can help to lower physical stress responses and promote self-soothing. Many classrooms have calm corners to help a child feel safer and more secure.

**Breathing (Regulates the autonomic nervous system):** Focusing on the breath calms the body's stress response. Longer exhalations are a natural way to help slow the heart rate and lower blood pressure. When we are upset, breathing can become shallower. It can disrupt oxygen and carbon dioxide levels in the blood. Slow, deliberate breathing or learning breathing exercises can restore the balance in our bodies

**Grounding:** [Grounding techniques and exercises for children and teens](#) can help everyone calm down and manage emotions. Grounding exercises can be done anywhere. The hyperlink from the Raising Children parenting website explains how grounding can be a beneficial lifelong skill for children to learn. Parents can also utilise the strategies to help manage stressful parenting situations.

**Discussing it later:** In a heightened state, the stress response is activated due to a perceived threat to the body. The logical, reasoning part of our brain shuts down. Before we can engage in discussion about an incident or reflect on our actions, the body needs to return to a calm state. Once the body has returned to a calm state, productive discussion can occur about making safer/better decisions next time.

Kath Novak  
*MHiPS Leader*

# SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

As excitement begins to build for our whole-school production, *A Night at the Museum*, we are beginning conversations with a small number of local and family businesses connected to our St Margaret Mary's community who may wish to support this special project. This year's production will involve every child and will work alongside an exciting 10-week Performing Arts residency program with Kinect Performing Arts, helping students build confidence, creativity, teamwork and joy through music, dance and drama. Support from community businesses may take a variety of forms including:



- SPONSORSHIP TOWARDS AUDITORIUM HIRE AND PRODUCTION COSTS  
eg. tech, lighting and sound production, costuming and props



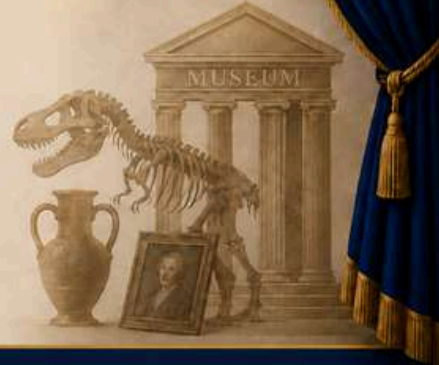
- DONATIONS OF WATER, SOFT DRINKS OR MOVIE-STYLE SNACKS AND REFRESHMENTS FOR SALE AT PERFORMANCES



- RAFFLE ITEMS OR OTHER IN-KIND SUPPORT.

Our hope is to keep this very community-focused, with local businesses helping local children shine. If your family owns or works within a business that may be interested in supporting the production, or if you have a community connection that may be worth exploring, please feel welcome to contact me directly via the school office at [office@smmspotswood.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office@smmspotswood.catholic.edu.au).

We are very excited about the opportunities this production will create for our students and grateful for the ongoing support of our broader SMM community.



THANK YOU FOR HELPING OUR STUDENTS SHINE  
TOGETHER, WE CAN BRING A NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM TO LIFE!

Please join us for

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# Gala

AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup> 2026  
6:30 PM  
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Formal Attire  
Tickets \$250pp | Table of 10 \$2,500

PURCHASE TICKETS	DONATE CLOTHING	VOLUNTEER

## Community News



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**book a  
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### Upcoming Tour Dates

- 28 May
- 11 June
- 23 June
- 16 July

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



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**Twilight  
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Thursday July 16  
5:00-7:30pm



**SECURE  
YOUR PLACE  
TODAY**

SCAN OR CLICK CODE

Accepting Enrolments for 2028. Applications Close 14 August.

"LIMITED NUMBER OF 2027 ENROLMENT SPACES REMAIN!"



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



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PRIMARY SCHOOL  
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