



St Monica's Primary School



PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET





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OUR STUDENTS ARE AT THE HEART OF ALL WE DO



After more than a century, St Monica's continues to offer the local community a comprehensive curriculum that supports and empowers its students to become independent, socially aware, lifelong learners.

At St Monica's the well-being of our students is paramount. For students to be able to learn they need to be happy. We aim to provide a warm environment where everyone feels that they belong.

The development of relationships between students and teachers as well as their peers, is fundamental to our work. We develop self-worth and confidence in our students, both requirements for actively engaged learners. Our students have opportunities to be immersed in new content across the curriculum and stimulate a lively curiosity about the world around them. We challenge our students through the Catholic Social Teachings that look to question the status of the global community and give our students opportunities to support others who are locally and globally less fortunate.

We prepare our students for the challenges of everyday living by developing their skills in Numeracy and Literacy, supporting them to problem solve and to think critically and creatively. Our specialist programs support holistic education through the Arts – Music and Visual Arts, Health and Indonesian language. Intervention teachers support Literacy, Numeracy and speech development. All this is underpinned by a family community of faith as we strive to support students in their spiritual understanding through prayer, Catholic traditions and stories.

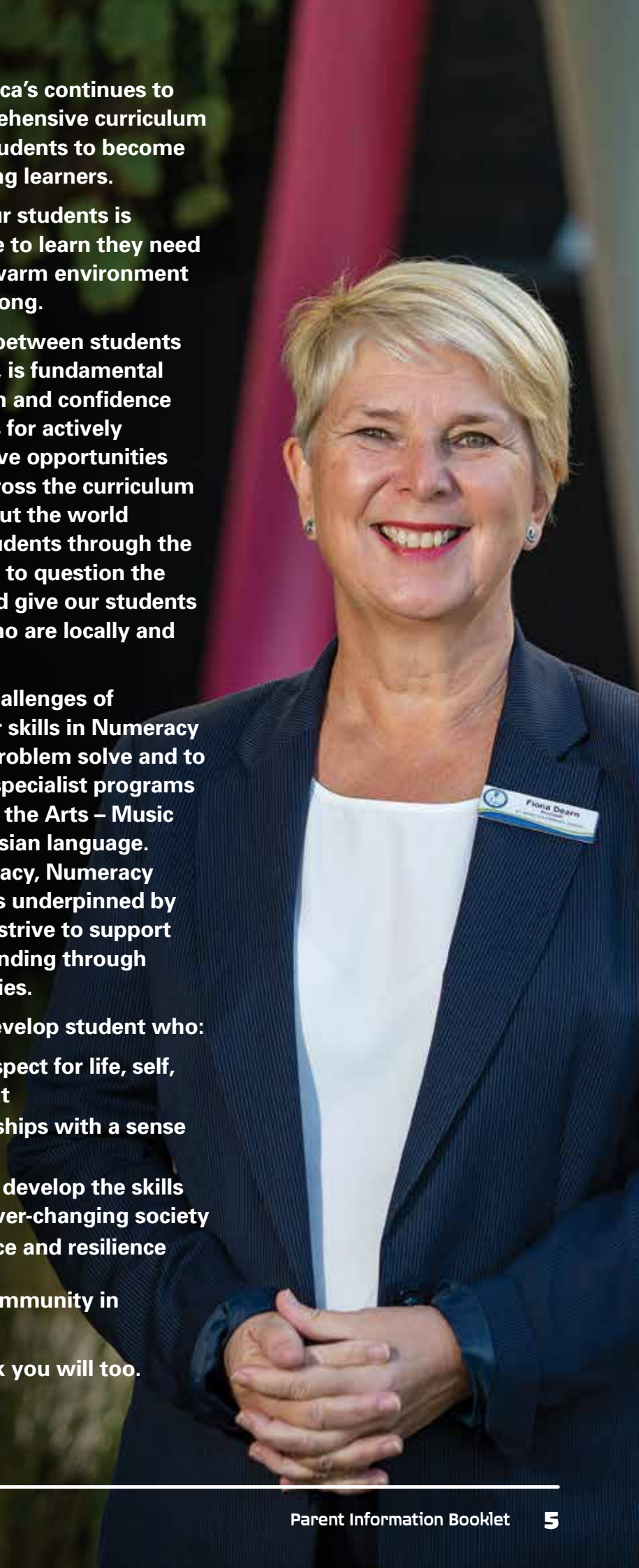
At St Monica's we endeavour to develop student who:

- Follow Christ in their care and respect for life, self, other people and the environment
- Can develop and sustain relationships with a sense of justice and empathy for others
- Have the academic confidence to develop the skills and strategies to succeed in an ever-changing society
- Follow their ideals with confidence and resilience

Welcome to our Catholic school community in Kangaroo Flat.

Our families love our school. I think you will too.

Fiona Dearn, Principal





OUR HISTORY

St Monica's has a rich history

Records show that a school building made of vertical slab walls lined with bark and with a bark roof was built for Dr Henry Backhaus at Kangaroo Flat in 1860.

Pupils attended the school under the care of a Miss Wall from 1859 to 1860. This bark school is believed to have been situated within the boundary of the present school grounds. The original church built at St Monica's in 1864 was used as a church school. This building was constructed from bricks fired in the open using clay from the present school oval area. The moulding and firing of these bricks was a unique process. The unfired bricks were placed in low stacks or in shallow trenches and a fire was maintained around each stack or trench to produce an even temperature until such times as the bricks were considered ready. This moulding and firing was carried out near the creek bed, behind the present school.

This building was officially blessed by Bishop Gould from Melbourne on July 24th, 1864. It served as a Church until the present St Monica's was built in 1926. In 1920 the Sisters of Mercy took over St Monica's. Sr M Clare and Sr M Magdalen were the teachers and 58 pupils were enrolled.

Many people worked tirelessly to help St Monica's School and Church.

In the late 1920s and 1930s dances and euchre nights were held to raise funds for the school and church. In the 1930s an Irish gentleman canvassed the Golden Square area every Sunday, asking parishioners for two shillings or whatever they could afford to help support the school. This man did not even have children at the school.

A school committee ran card parties, fetes and raffles to raise money. The ladies on the committee provided breakfast for the school children after Mass on the first Friday of each month. Also, about this time (1946) Monsignor Arthur Owens was living at Genazzano and worked in this area before it became a parish. The school committee also provided a scholarship each year for a pupil to go to St Mary's College or Marist Brothers College.

In 1952, after this Parish was formed, all organisations were disbanded, except the school committee and the Altar Society. St Mary's Parish Committee was formed to attend to works and programs at the school and Church.

Fast forward to 2014 where we celebrated the redevelopment of our school, which included completely new buildings with appealing modern facilities. The Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst Bishop Leslie Tomlinson led a short tour of the site to bless the new buildings.



THE ST MONICA'S DIFFERENCE

At St Monica's we provide your child with more than an education

We are proud of our rich history of providing high quality education to generations of children from all areas. As a welcoming school community with a diverse range of people in our school family, we provide an inclusive environment for learning. Exposure to diversity benefits each child's social development as they grow into an inclusive young person.

Values are important for a child's development, and parents who have received a Catholic education often want the same for their children. St Monica's operates under a values system based on Catholic beliefs and principles. Our school motto is 'Be Safe, Be Friendly, Be a Learner' and each child comes to know, respect and live by these rules.

Families hold St Monica's close to their hearts. We have had families where three consecutive generations have attended our school. St Monica's is a community-minded school, and participating in the local community is a big part of school life. Our staff are connected to local sporting, community and church groups within the local area, and each staff member knows they are role models both in and outside of our school.

Curriculum

The core curriculum document in Victoria and therefore St Monica's School is Victorian Curriculum.

Our school curriculum covers the following domains:

- Health & Physical Education
- Languages Other than English (LOTE)
- Interpersonal Development
- Mathematics
- Personal Learning
- Science
- Civics and Citizenship
- Communication
- The Arts
- Design, Creativity and Technology
- English
- Information and Communications Technology
- The Humanities – Economics, Geography, History
- Thinking Processes
- Religious Education



IDENTITY, VISION AND GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Vision

We believe in a Catholic community that fully develops the whole child and celebrates their faith journey with Jesus.

We believe that the community, families, teachers and students are partners in the learning process challenging each other to grow and be the best we can be.

We acknowledge our founders who started our school and chose St Monica as our patroness enabling us to provide a Catholic education whose faith, compassion and love we seek to reflect.

We are committed to promoting a curriculum that promotes self-worth and recognises the dignity and uniqueness of each individual. We are stewards of our environment who respect, care for and maintain the resources that God has provided us.

Positive Behaviour Ideas

St Monica's students are expected to follow our positive behaviour ideas. Each assembly, a select number of students will receive an award for displaying these around the school. The PBI's are:

- Be Friendly
- Be Safe
- Be A Learner

Graduate Outcomes

At St Monica's, Kangaroo Flat, we endeavour to develop students who:

- follow Christ in their care and respect for life, self, others and the environment,
- are able to develop and sustain relationships with a sense of justice and empathy for others,
- have the academic confidence to develop the skills and strategies to succeed in an ever-changing society, and
- follow their ideals with confidence and resilience.

Catholic Identity

Strategic Direction:

- Ensure all staff and teachers understand Sacraments, Scriptures and Traditions in order to recontextualise our faith story in the modern world.
- Develop an understanding throughout the school that actively promotes Catholic Social Teachings in a way that underpins our learning and school life.

Key Actions:

- To explicitly teach and deliberately integrate Catholic Social Teachings across all areas of school life.
- To consistently live our Catholic Identity through our daily actions and words.



Nurturing our Children Key Actions

- That families have a relationship with their child's teacher.
- That teachers share regular information about what families can do at home or within classes.
- To encourage families to have a voice in their child's learning.



- Parents and Friends Committee
- Mercy in Action
- Community Engagement Group
- Breakfast Club
- Chaplain
- School Advisory Council
- Fundraising
- Volunteering

Pastoral Wellbeing

Strategic Direction:

- To be a community of learners who model resilience, hope and confidence.
- To be a compassionate community who works together to focus on the wellbeing of students, staff and families.

Key Actions:

- To partner with the parent community in decision-making relating to student learning, Parish, and the school community.
- To create and offer opportunities to build resilience, hope and confidence.

Learning and Teaching

Strategic Direction:

- To develop a collaborative culture of student centered learning that empowers all.

Key Actions:

- To plan together in Units sharing ideas and best practice in order to create and maintain a culture of continuous improvement.
- To provide opportunities for learning based on best practice.

Leadership

Strategic Direction:

- To build capacity of the school community to understand and participate in continuous School Improvement.
- High expectations that leadership reflects best practice and is evident across the school community.

Key Actions:

- To encourage students, staff and parents to learn and reflect upon effective leadership.
- To create a culture of continuous improvement throughout the entire school.





LEARNING AND TEACHING



Everyone has the potential to learn

At St Monica's we believe that:

- Learning takes place through inquiry: questioning, exploring, experimenting and problem solving.
- Learning occurs by acquiring skills and knowledge, constructing meaning and transfer to other contexts.
- Learning is active and social and best takes place through collaboration and interaction.
- Learning takes place when we feel secure, valued and are able to take risks.
- Learning needs to be challenging, meaningful, purposeful and engaging.
- Learning includes meta-cognition and reflection, and requires learners to take ownership of their learning.

At St Monica's, we pride ourselves on personalising the learning for all students, as seen by our learning principles. We are directed by the Victorian Curriculum and we are always researching and adopting best practices to ensure Learning and Teaching is always current and engaging to enable every individual to reach their full potential.

Teachers use up to date technology to support the learning and teaching in their classrooms.

Specialist Programs

Our specialist programs have an emphasis on the Arts – Performing and Visual, Physical Education, Science and Coding. We have specialist visual arts, performing arts and physical education teachers.

St Monica's has a choir, which performs in various capacities, and we hold a whole school production every second year.

Our Language other than English (LOTE) is Indonesian which is taught from Foundation to Year 6.

Musical specialists are available on an individual or group basis for guitar, keyboard and specialist singing. There is an extra cost for this.

Learning Support

Support is provided for students who require extra assistance in a variety of areas. Support includes speech pathology, occupational therapy and access to psychologists, where required, for further testing and support. Teachers work with learning support workers to ensure every child's individual needs are met. Reading Recovery is also offered at Year 1 level. Learning support is embedded in all learning centres.

Excursions and Camps

Throughout the year, the children attend excursions according to topics studied in the classroom. A permission form with details is sent home prior to any excursion children are attending. Students in the 3/4 Area attend an overnight camp. Students in the Senior Area attend a two night camp.

Library

At St Monica's library we have a wonderful collection of books in different genres in both fiction and non fiction titles. Children are encouraged to borrow frequently from the collection. Classroom teachers work closely with the librarian to ensure a range of titles are available in the classroom environment for children to access. We are blessed with our library's incredible facilities. It even opens for extra sessions during the school holidays!

Reading Recovery/Support

Reading Recovery is a research-based, short-term, early literacy intervention. Originally developed in New Zealand by Dame Marie Clay, it is now a worldwide intervention.

The Program:

- identifies students experiencing reading and writing difficulties after their first year of school,
- provides an intensive, individually designed and individually delivered series of lessons for 30 minutes each day to selected students,
- is delivered by a trained Reading Recovery teacher,
- is supplementary to the ongoing literacy activities in the classroom, and
- is most successful when actively supported by parents/guardians.

Mathematics Support

Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) is a research-based intervention program developed by Dr Ann Gervasoni of ACU in association with the Early Numeracy Research Project (1999-2002), focusing on the early years of schooling.

The EMU Program has been shown by detailed research to improve children's learning and confidence with mathematics.

EMU is the Second Wave Intervention for Numeracy. At St Monica's children who have been identified as being at risk in their numeracy learning attend small focus numeracy support groups based on the EMU Program.

Drama

Every second year St Monica's offers the students in the senior school the opportunity to be part of a Musical Performance programme. The senior school production provides all students with a platform to express themselves creatively and develop their vocal, acting and dancing skills. Students are encouraged to rehearse, refine and showcase their musical talents in a supportive environment. The students rehearse and perform with the specialist accompaniment of live musicians. St Monica's Primary School has been part of many successful productions including Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, Aladdin and Alice in Wonderland.

Arts

The school actively promotes the Arts curriculum. A musical production is held every second year involving our senior students and school choir. A focus on the Visual Arts is held on alternate years.

Biennial Art Show

The St Monica's Art Show is held every two years, the last in 2019. A much anticipated event in the school calendar, it showcases the art work of our students from Prep to Year 6. After months of preparation, the Jaara Centre is transformed into an amazing space, filled with art of all kinds thanks to the incredible, artistic talents of our St Monica's students.





LEADERSHIP ROLES FOR YEARS 5 & 6

The senior year levels have access to a wide range of activities, responsibilities and opportunities to enhance their learning and development.

Since St Monica's is a Prep to Year 6 school, our Year 5s and 6s are the 'big kids' of the school. This allows them to mature and take on responsibilities as senior students at St Monica's.

Our range of leadership opportunities include:

- Buddy Program: one to two days a week Year 6s share a lunch time with a Prep student to make them feel safe with a friend to always look out for them.
- Sporting Days: Our Year 6s are given the opportunity to be leaders on sporting days and embrace roles that involve encouraging involvement across all year levels.
- Leadership Teams: The Year 6 children are all leaders across the school.



These opportunities aid in developing a deeper level of identity, creating confident, socially adept students and providing a strong foundation for when they enter their teenage years. For a teenager, knowing who they are and their range of abilities is crucial.

By providing our students with avenues to develop and practice maturity, responsibility and confidence we are setting them up for the best possible start to the next phase of their education and life. Early teenage years are a delicate time in a child's life, and at St Monica's parents can rest assured that students will be supported in a safe, motivating and nurturing environment that is understanding of their needs.





RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Monica's Catholic Identity

St Monica's is a Catholic school that embraces faith and learning together, as a community, to reflect Christ. Religious Education (RE) is part of our curriculum on a daily basis. We plan from the Source of Life which is our Diocesan RE Program. RE is not just a stand alone subject, but demonstrated through everyday activities and interactions with teachers, families and students.

We believe the students will best understand the teachings of Jesus by celebrating and praying together and through a well planned Religious Education curriculum. The Religious Education program aims to develop in the students an appreciation of the love of God as revealed through the person of Jesus Christ and God's creation and the dignity of the human person experienced in everyday life.

The Diocesan Religious Education Program is 'Source of Life'. This program is organised through seven main content areas (strands) – God, Jesus Christ, Church, Christian Prayer, Religion and Society, Scripture, Christian Life and Sacraments.

Prayer

Prayer is an important part of the St Monica's School community. Through school and classroom prayer we join as a community to pray to God. In order to encourage staff and children to share prayerful experiences, both formally and informally, we will provide the opportunity for quiet prayer at certain times. Teachers pray with their students daily by beginning with a group prayer and quiet reflection time.

Sacramental Program

Children throughout the Parish are invited to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Eucharist. The preparation for these Sacraments involves the Family, the Parish and the School Community. Students follow the 'Steps In Faith' Program from the Sandhurst Diocese. This usually takes place when students are in Year 3 and Year 4.

School Masses

The school celebrates the start and end of the school year with a Mass for the school community in the Jaara Centre. The students also celebrate Mass as a class/unit throughout the year at St Monica's Church.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

St Monica's operates a Uniform Shop where items of the school uniform can be purchased. The Uniform Shop is open on Tuesday morning from 8.45am to 9.15am and on Thursday afternoon from 3.15pm to 3.45pm. It is expected that all students wear the correct uniform at all times. Parents must clearly name all items of uniform to avoid loss.

Summer - Term 1 and 4

- Grey shorts (not cargo shorts).
- Blue polo shirt with contrast collar.
- Grey or light blue socks.
- Blue check school dress.
- Black school shoes.



Winter - Term 2 and 3

- Grey pants (not cargo pants).
- Pleated pinafore.
- Blue polo shirt with contrast collar.
- Light blue polo shirt.
- Bomber jacket.
- Grey or light blue socks or navy tights.
- Black school shoes.

Sport Uniform

- Royal blue school tracksuit.
- Light blue polo shirt with logo.
- Navy sport shorts.
- White sport socks.
- Sport shoes.

In Year 6 students are able to purchase a Year 6 polo shirt with school logo, Year 6 teachers and student names on the back. This is only to be worn with their sport uniform.

Method of payment

Please see page 25 for details.



Jewellery, Hair & Accessories

Jewellery and nail polish are not permitted as part of the school uniform. Hair should be tied back with ties in school colours. For safety reasons, flat metal hair slides should be worn in preference to plastic combs.

Art Smock

All children must have an art smock. The most appropriate smock is a waterproof garment with elasticised or rib trim arm and neck openings, or an old shirt will suffice. All art smocks should be clearly named.

Lost Property

Please make sure all your child's property is clearly marked with his/her name, especially school jumpers. All unnamed property is stored in a lost property box for parents and children to recover. Lost property is stored at school for a term only. At the end of the year unclaimed items will be sold through the uniform shop.

Hats

Hats should be kept at school as they are worn throughout the year. Hats are required as sun protection in summer and can also be required for high UV days in winter.





OUR SPORTING INVOLVEMENT

At St Monica's we are proud of our commitment to sport and physical activity in our students

Swimming Program

Our swimming program is conducted at the Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre by a team of highly professional trained swimming instructors. The program is held for students from Prep to year 6 throughout the school year.

Sporting Teams

St Monica's School has both junior football and netball teams. Teams compete in local weekend competitions. Our students have gone on to represent at State level and beyond. These great achievements are made possible from the assistance that parents provide to help manage the teams and support the children.

Interschool Competition

At times throughout the year, there are opportunities for students to represent St Monica's in local interschool competitions. Students are chosen on ability, performance and attitude during lessons, trials and school competitions. If successful at a local level, there is often an opportunity to compete at Regional and State levels.

House Sports

We divide our school community into separate Houses as part of our annual athletics and swimming sports days. This is a great way to create some healthy competition and encouragement in the school community.

Our new House names are:

- McAuley (Green)
- Backhaus (Yellow)
- Augustine (Blue)
- Mercy (Red)

Bluearth

The Discovery School Experience (Bluearth) has been designed to engage students in physical activities that promote self-acceptance and provides a stepping stone for their lifetime involvement in physical activity. Discovery teaches movement patterns with emphasis on posture and other basic functional movement features that are seen to be lacking in modern education and physical activity experiences for children.

The objectives of the Discovery School Experience are to:

- Provide physical activity that encourages and promotes health, fitness and general well being.
- Engage students in movement experiences that provide positive and constructive feedback to enhance ability.
- Activate and promote intrinsic motivation through meaningful movement experiences.
- Stimulate creativity and imagination through individual and group movement experiences.
- Create an environment that encourages maximum participation through inclusive practices.
- Educate students about choice, composure and responsibility through dynamic interaction.
- A key component of the program delivery is the education of key persons who have a direct influence on the ongoing support and guidance given to children. Accordingly, professional development of teachers is seen as critical to building long term program sustainability in schools.



PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

A strong consistency between school and home life has immense benefits to a child's education

We have strong parental involvement at St Monica's. We believe that every school can improve and we do this in partnership with parents, students and staff.

At St Monica's we value the partnership between home and school. Parents will always be the first educator of their child and we work together to ensure every child is challenged and supported. There are many avenues for communication between home and school and we encourage families to stay in regular contact with classroom teachers.

Communication

Every fortnight a newsletter is published on the school website and emailed to families.

Unit Newsletters

At the start of every term, each Unit sends home a newsletter outlining the activities and key learnings your child will be involved in for that term. It is distributed to each child during the first week of each term.

Email

Email is a very effective way of contacting classroom teachers. It is important that email addresses are current to ensure good communication between home and school. The school newsletter is also emailed home to families that have provided their email address to the office.

Student Reports and Parent/Teacher Interviews

All students receive a written report at the end of each semester. To accompany this report, Parent/Student/Teacher interviews happen during terms one, two and three. These meetings are an important part of the reporting process, enabling clear and effective communication between the student, parents and the school. It is expected that each family will attend these meetings. We encourage the communication established in these meetings to continue as required throughout the year.

School Facebook

A St Monica's Facebook page is available for communication from school to home. It is a communication board and we encourage all families to like our page as it provides regular important updates, information and current news on learning and achievements.

Grievances

In the event of a grievance, St Monica's has a protocol for dealing with grievances involving a student, parent or staff member:

- Issues involving students will firstly be dealt with by the class teacher.
- Failing a satisfactory conclusion, or if the issue is a wider school issue, it is then referred to the Principal.

Before and After School Care

Before school care is available from 8am to 8:30am, a teacher will then be on duty till the beginning of class. You can enrol your child through the front office and pay via CBF Pay.

After school care is from 3:30pm to 6pm and is provided by the YMCA. To enrol your child in after school care you can do this via their website.

School Website

Check out our school website regularly for the latest news: www.smkangarooflat.catholic.edu.au

100 WAYS TO BE INVOLVED AT ST MONICA'S

IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

Cover books for the library
Do the student school banking or book club (Scholastic)
Assist in the canteen or uniform shop
Help with classroom reading
Speak to a class about your job/career
Do some art or craft together
Play board games together
Add up sports scores or grocery purchases together
Explain your culture
Impart your knowledge on any topic and have a conversation about it
Do puzzles or colouring-in together or next to each other
Cook together - try a new recipe, try new food
Measure - the rain, food in the kitchen, length of the driveway, distance
Build something together - wood, metal, garden
Read together or with each other
Go to Church as a family
Introduce your pet to the class
Educate - you are your child's first and lifelong educator
Join the School Board
Be a classroom guest speaker
Attend assembly
Ask the teacher what help you can offer in the classroom
Encourage your child to explore all their options.
Do some gardening together or help in the gardens at school
Help at Cross Country, Swimming, Athletics Carnival - time keep, supervise, cheer!
Share your talent - whatever that may be
Cook or bake for Mercy in Action
Help feed the troops at Breakfast Club
Cook the BBQ at any event

Join in Mother's & Father's Day breakfasts	Discuss the olden days
Teach your child to tie their shoelaces	Come to year level or any information sessions
Support Grandparents Day	Remember and remind: Be friendly - Be Safe - Be a Learner
Sew or build props for production	Help your child represent the school on ANZAC Day
Assist with hair & make up for production	Be a buddy family or introduce new families
Suggest your own project to classroom teacher	Don't miss the culture experience A Taste of St Monica's at the AGM
Come along to our Pancake Night	Take a stand against bullying together
Coordinate an event or join P&F Committee	Join in parent engagement sessions
Sports equipment maintenance	Go to a child safe session at school

Marong cup - tickets, canteen, join the party!

Source funding grants

Coordinate or wrap gifts for the

Mother's or Father's Day stall

Volunteer with St Monica's Football & Netball teams

Work through the **Sacraments** with your child

Join in whole school or year level **Mass**

Get creative and **draw or paint** together

Read and act on **Children's Chatter Matters** from the newsletter

Be a **super hero** (lice team)

Go on **camp or excursions** for extra supervision

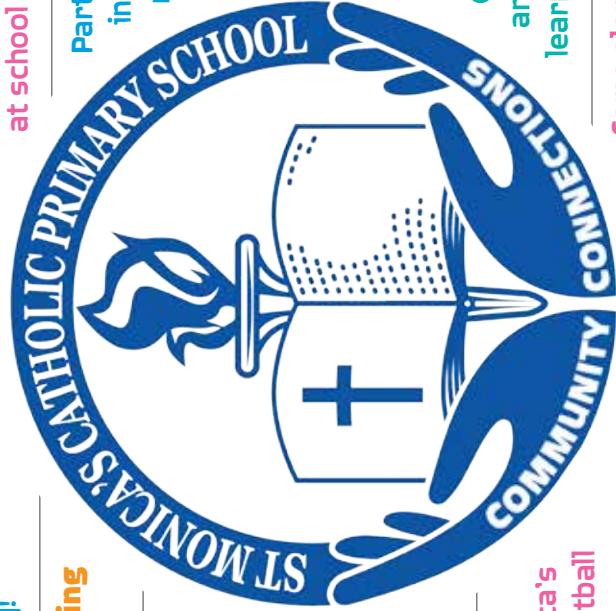
Make sure you get along to **Parent Student Teacher interviews**

Help your child prepare for **show and tell**

Assist with **homework**

Go for a walk and **talk about nature**

Discover the **animal kingdom** together



Participate in **holiday reading challenge** as a family

Visit the **library** together

Tap into the **class topic** and extend learning at home

Come along and sing at the **Christmas carols** or any songs

Check out the annual **Art Show**

If you know your **finances**, join the Board

Show **kindness and compassion** to your child

Play = learning

Be a role model of **good manners**

Show others **respect and generosity**

Prepare a **chores list** together

Offer **encouragement and reward**

Teach grooming and good personal **hygiene habits**

Exercise together - walk, ride a bike, shoot hoops

Role model **good citizenship**

Do a **science experiment** together

Talk about your **family history**

Start a **weather chart**

Support your child to **explore and research** topics they are interested in

Encourage your child to **think about a job/career** they would like

Talk to your child about your **work and workplaces**

Encourage your child to **talk with other adults** and relatives about the kind of work they do

Try and support your child's **interests and strengths**

Encourage participation in **out of school activities** such as sport, music and volunteering

Talk with your child about what they like, their strengths, interests and why they like them

Listen, don't judge, be open to ideas

Keep informed - read the newsletter, app or Facebook

Help your child get to **school on time**

Tell the Teacher about **your child**

Bring pre-schoolers to **Mini Monica's**

Participate in **fundraising** for the School

Celebrate your child's success

Encourage **healthy eating, sufficient sleep and regular exercise**

Encourage **positive attitudes, values and behaviours** like courtesy, confidence, persistence, and doing your best

Email your child's teacher if you are unable to get to the classroom

Book an appointment to speak to your child's teacher if you need to

Help your child set '**personal bests**' related to their learning

Challenge your child to **try something new** - sport, food, craft, activity

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

At St Monica's we invite parents and guardians to participate in the life of the school. Some of the opportunities for involvement are:

Community Engagement Committee

The Community Engagement Group work to ensure that all of the St Monica's community are partnering to enhance student learning. Research tells us that the most meaningful partnerships are those where schools, parents, students and the community work together to focus on student learning. Parent and community engagement that is effectively focused on student learning will deliver powerful outcomes. The focus of the St Monica's Community Engagement Group is to:

- encourages genuine dialogue and shared responsibility for student success;
- build the capability, and the confidence, of staff, parents and community members to engage with each other; and
- enable widespread engagement and sustain this meaningful involvement over time.

Parents and Friends Committee

The St Monica's Parents & Friends Committee works for the welfare of the school community. Parents are welcome and encouraged to be members. Meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month. All parents are urged to contribute in any way they can, to help support this committee.

The aims of this Committee are:

- To encourage the voluntary assistance of parents to support the school, the teachers and the curriculum.
- To promote the building of a stronger community through social occasions.
- To raise funds towards the general recurrent costs of the school, as well as specific projects.

School Advisory Council

The School Advisory Council is made up of a group of parents, the Principal, Deputy Principal, Parish Priest and members of the School Leadership Team. Meetings are held every month.

Canteen

Friday is canteen day. Our canteen has two part time coordinators. They rely on volunteers to assist them. Students place their orders on a Thursday. Pricelists and menus are distributed regularly to let parents know what is available. Duty Rosters are published in the School Newsletter.

Bookclub

Your child will receive Scholastic Book Club catalogues throughout the year. These provide you with an opportunity to purchase quality children's literature at discounted prices. There is no obligation to purchase but, if you wish to buy from the catalogues, please return the money with the order form by the due date in a sealed envelope. If paying by cheque please make cheques payable to Scholastic Bookclub. Clearly write your child's name and the amount of money enclosed on the front of the envelope.

Mercy In Action

The 'Mercy In Action' program aims to support families within the school community in times of need by providing them with food items. 'Mercy In Action' is coordinated by the School Chaplain and Welfare Coordinator and continues to be an extremely positive program for all involved. Families from the school community who volunteer to be part of this program are asked to assist by providing food items, which are stored in the 'Mercy In Action' freezer for use when a need arises.

Buddies

All prep students are assigned a 'Buddy'. The Year 6 students love the responsibility of looking after their special prep. The preps also enjoy having a 'big kid' to look up to. The role of the Year 6 student is to make sure their prep is settling in well at St Monica's and feeling comfortable in their new surroundings.

School Chaplain

The School Chaplain is responsible for maintaining the social and emotional wellbeing of students. They provide support for a range of day to day matters affecting the school community and communicate effectively with a diverse group of people.

The Chaplain works collaboratively with the staff, students and parents/carers to explore possibilities for support of children. They sustain the school values in all aspects of their work, providing support towards the wellbeing of staff, students and parent community.



ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS AND FRIENDS

On behalf of the Parents and Friends committee, welcome to St Monica's Primary School!

Our Parents and Friends Committee is an open group of enthusiastic volunteer parents who work to add to the quality of school life. We play a vital role in building and promoting a sense of community with parents, students, staff and the wider school community by organising and overseeing a number of community minded social events and activities. Pancake Night, Mother's and Father's Day Stalls, Barbeques and our Easter and Christmas Raffles are just some of the events we organise.

St Monica's Primary School Parents and Friends gives parents an opportunity to be involved with our school, while supporting its future growth.

We aim to:

- Promote a sense of community and cooperation amongst parents, students and staff, as well as the wider school community through social occasions
- Raise funds that contribute towards the development of our school's facilities and classroom resources, as well as specific projects and community social events
- Assist in building the participation of parents in the life of the school
- Provide a social network within the school community
- Provide an informal forum for discussion of ideas and relevant matters that will benefit the education and general facilities for students
- Support the work of School Advisory Council

We welcome and encourage all families to become actively involved in the St Monica's Parents and Friends Committee.

Meetings are held twice a term (dates and times appear in the newsletter) and all assistance, whether large or small is welcome and appreciated.

For further information, please contact the committee via the school email address admin_office@smkangarooflat.catholic.edu.au and join the 'St Monica's Primary School Parents and Friends Notice board' group on Facebook.



FINANCES

Enrolling your child with us costs no more than about a cup of coffee a day

People may assume that Catholic Primary Schools have expensive costs that are out of their reach and often shy away from further exploring the options available to them. We don't want this to be the experience of anyone who is interested in joining our community. We strive to maintain a school that is inclusive, diverse and welcoming of all people irrespective of finances, as we believe everyone is equal and deserves access to quality education.

We've looked at the figures and our school costs are similar to local public schools, equivalent to about a cup of coffee a day. Our set pricing is all inclusive with no surprise costs throughout the year. This is one of the ways that we are making it easier for you to plan and track what you spend on your child's education.

Our school fees are set each year. They cover tuition, stationery, intensive swimming program and local excursions. This varies from year to year according to the excursion for the classes. We also have a Capital Levy component, which is in place to assist the school in meeting capital development including buildings and computer technology.

Classroom Supplies

Supplies used in the classroom, such as work books, pencils, rulers, erasers, etc are provided by the school with the cost being covered by the school fees.

Students will need to supply an art smock and library bag. Library/Reader bags may be purchased from the Uniform Shop.

Camps and Excursions

Parents will be notified with details and cost of any excursion or camp organised throughout the year by the classroom teachers. This fee is disclosed on the first fee statement.

Making payments

It is a recommendation of the St Monica's School Board that parents use the direct debit system for the payment of school fees. This has proved most successful in past years and we hope to increase the number of users in the coming year. The fortnightly payment will commence on the first Friday of January. The monthly payments will commence on the last Friday of January, and reoccur on the last Friday of every month. Direct debit payments are deducted from your nominated bank account on a Friday. It is expected that those not using the direct debit system pay their school fees in advance. Direct debit request forms are available from the office or our website.

Finance Options

No matter what expense you may incur in educating your child at St Monica's there is flexibility available and multiple payment options, including:

CDF Pay

EFTPOS

Direct Debit

Cash

Fee assistance

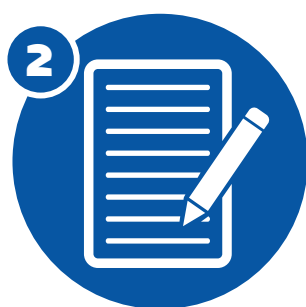
We have a range of fee assistance programs available for families who may be experiencing financial difficulties. We are here to support all families and will make every effort to ensure your child's education at St Monica's is accessible. Any person experiencing difficulty in making payment is encouraged to contact our Principal, Reuben Johnson, to discuss options.



STEPS TO ENROLMENT



Fill out enrolment enquiry on website



Complete enrolment form and return to St Monica's



We will send you a letter organising an interview date



Interview with parents, child and principal*



Letter of offer will be sent once all interviews are complete



Return your acceptance slip



You'll be sent a letter with the dates of transition and orientation days

* If not already supplied with enrolment application, you will need to bring along copies of your child's birth certificate, baptism certificate (if applicable) and immunisation certificate (or exemption certificate).

Enrolment Commitment

In Australia we have celebrated many years as a Catholic School System. It was a system set up to be alternative to the State school system. Its basis for existence is the firm belief in Christ being central to all we do in educating our children. With this belief comes the responsibility of members of the community to actively participate in the life of both school and parish.

Before accepting enrolment for your child you are asked to reflect on the following expectations which are based on the firm belief in the partnership between home and school.

That as parents you:

- Ensure that your child experiences the faith dimension of the Catholic Education Bendigo community.
- Support the ongoing education of your child by participating in school activities such as liturgies, masses and school assemblies where possible.
- Support school policies in the areas of discipline, uniform and behaviour which are designed to reflect the Catholic Social Teachings on which Catholic Schools are founded.
- Become involved in the school community where possible by attending meetings, functions and projects, assisting the teacher in the classroom, etc.
- Pay school fees.

Custody Orders

The school would appreciate you sending a certified copy of a Court Order if you have sole custody of your child/children. If you delegate a friend or relative (unknown to us) to take the child/children from school for you, a phone call or a note from you advising us of this saves us and your friends or relatives from an embarrassing situation when permission has to be refused or permission sought.





WHAT SHOULD MY CHILD BRING TO THEIR FIRST DAY?



On their first day, a child should bring their school bag, which should be well labelled and have a visible attachment to help children identify their bag. Also needed are a lunch box and drink bottle.

All outer clothing which children may be required to remove must be clearly labelled with the child's name. This will ensure your child does not lose any part of his/her uniform or any costly personal property. Please check the label periodically to ensure the name has not washed off and that it does in fact belong to your child.

No toys (including swap cards) are to be brought to school unless under teacher direction.

Handy Hints for Parents of Preps

It is a big change for a young child to pass from the intimacy of the family circle to school life. Here are some practical ways you can help the transition.

Over the next two months try to let your child get used to:

- Putting on and taking off clothes, e.g. tucking in shirts, doing up buttons and putting on jumpers.
- Putting on and doing up shoes.
- Eating and drinking without the help of opening packaging.
- Using a handkerchief or tissue.

It is important that your child knows how to:

- Open and close lunch boxes and drink bottles.
- Use and flush the toilet and wash their hands unassisted.
- Ask clearly for things. Could a teacher understand your child?
- Say his/her name and address.
- Recognise name/property.
- Recognise name among others.

Also try to let your child get used to:

- Playing with groups of children of the same age (Encourage your child to share toys and take turns).
- Using playground equipment safely.
- Staying at friends or relatives houses for a few hours without you around.
- Caring for and putting away belongings.
- Helping with small jobs around the house.
- Relaying the good and happy activities of the school day.
- Knowing what to do if parents are late.
- Following simple instructions.

Some weeks in advance rehearse with your child, in a spirit of play, the different situations to be met with in school life:

- Opening and closing the school bag.
- Unpacking and eating the school lunch (a sensible amount).
- Dressing for school and making the journey to and from school.
- Being away from home for short periods.
- Listening to stories, looking at pictures and talking about them.
- Greeting friends and family members by name.
- Learning to line up and wait their turn.
- Learning to be a good sport when losing a game.

Oral Language

Most children in primary school years are able to use language readily to report on past experiences, to look ahead and predict, to look at possibilities and draw conclusions.

Learning to speak and listen starts with you at home.

Try to:

- Talk to your child about what you're both doing.
- Listen to your child carefully.
- Answer many of the endless questions.
- Read a story every day, maybe at bedtime.
- Borrow children's books and toys from your local library.
- Teach songs, rhymes, jingles, the names of colours and of parts of the body.

- Count things. Does your child know what the number means? Try activities like asking your child to set the table and count the plates etc. Also count backward.
- Sort and match collections of things like fruit, clothes, etc.
- Ask your child to follow simple instructions, such as, "Take off your shoes and put them on the veranda."
- Take some time to play with your child; find out about their ideas and feelings.
- The importance of listening to children cannot be overemphasised.
- Don't cut in on your child when they try to explain things. Ensure they talk their way through things.
- Allow and encourage your child to carry their own school bag.





STUDENT HEALTH

Head Lice

Screening for head lice is carried out on a regular basis by the Parent Managed Head Lice Program. Consent forms are sent home to all parents and students will only be examined with parental consent. The Parent Head Lice Team also offers advice and demonstrations on effective treatment of head lice and screening practices. Students with head lice are excluded from school until treatment has commenced.

Sunsmart Policy

- The school is registered as a SunSmart School. It is compulsory for students to wear hats from the beginning of October through to the end of April.
- Students wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside e.g. at play, sport lessons, sports carnivals, outdoor excursions and activities.
- Students who do not have their hats with them will play in an area protected from the sun.
- Students will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities and when eating lunch and morning recess.
- Outdoor activities will be held in areas of shade whenever possible.
- Parents are encouraged to role model SunSmart behaviour when participating in school functions that are outdoors.

Letter from Doctor

- All medication needs to be provided with a written and signed letter from your GP and or paediatrician.
- Arising from the duty of care that we owe our children, and in the interests of the children being able to continue to attend classes, there will be occasions when the administration of medication is necessary.
- Prescription medication to be administered to children at St Monica's by staff members will be permitted within specific guidelines.
- No medication will be administered without the written permission of the parents or guardians, in the form of a school medication administration form.
- All medications will be kept in the office in clearly marked containers.
- Where a child needs to be injected, a parent or their representative must be present to dispense the injection under the supervision of a staff member.
- Any possible side effects of the drugs must be explained to the school by the parent or responsible adult.

First Aid/Accidents

Students who are unwell or injured are placed in the school sick bay. When illness or accident occurs parents are notified and, when necessary, are asked to take their child home or to a doctor. First Aid notices are sent home when a child has received first aid during the school day. Parents are required to sign the Early Departure Register if their child is taken home from school.

Ambulance

As you are aware accidents do happen at school and occasionally we are required to call an ambulance. We trust that our families take the responsibility to ensure they are covered for ambulance at all times. If you are a Health Care Card Holder and depend on this for your Ambulance Cover, please read the information provided on the Ambulance Victoria website.

Prep Health Checks

Children in Prep receive a complete Health Check by the visiting School Nurse. Forms will be sent out, and they will need to be completed, signed by the child's parent/guardian and returned to the school.

Insurance

St Monica's is insured along with all other schools in our diocese, under an agreement between Catholic Church Insurances and the Sandhurst Catholic Education Office. This covers children in the event of an injury while involved in a school-based activity. Please speak to office staff if you require more information.



ATTENDANCE

School Times

School starts: 9.00am
Lunch: 11.00am – 11.45am
Recess: 1.45pm – 2.25pm
Dismissal: 3.30pm

Punctuality

Children need the opportunity to meet their friends prior to the commencement of class each day. We encourage all students to be at school prior to 8.55am. Regular late arrival interferes with a child’s progress.

Lunch Arrangements

Between 11:35am and 11:45am students are supervised by teaching staff whilst eating their lunch. From 10:55am until 11:35am and 1:45pm until 2:25pm students play in the grounds, supervised by the teaching staff on duty.

Dismissal

Students are dismissed at 3.30pm. When collecting your child, you are asked to please wait in the yard outside your child’s classroom – this can be a good time to meet with other parents whilst waiting for your child.

Assembly

Assembly is held on even weeks of the Term. Parents are most welcome to attend assembly.

Absence from School

If your child is absent from school please telephone the school on 5447 7832 or complete the absence note on you school PAM account before 9.30am.

Late Arrivals to School

If your child is late to school for any reason, we request that you enter the late arrival on the iPad which is located on the bench at the Office.

Early Departure from School

If you need to take your child from the school during school hours, we request that you sign out on the iPad which is located on the bench at the office. The iPad is also used if your child returns to school.

Visitors to School

Parents helping in the school during school hours must have a Working with Children card and are asked to sign the Visitor Sign-In Book on arrival and departure. The Visitor Sign-In Book is located at the front of the Office. We suggest all parents apply for a volunteer Working With Children Check (WWCC), that way you will have it before you need it.

Country School Bus

Students who live in the Maiden Gully, Marong and Lockwood areas are able to use the school bus provided by the Education Department. Application forms for bus travel are available online at:

<https://schoolbusapplication.ptv.vic.gov.au/content/school-bus-program>





CONTACT US

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