

St Gerard's Newsletter

Term 2, Week 4 15 May 2026



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Celebration of The Sacrament of Confirmation



St. Gerard's Parish
Dandenong North

Saturday 28th June 2025, 5.30pm

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful,
and kindle in them
the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit
and they shall be created.
And you will renew
the face of the earth.
Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts
of your faithful.
In the same Spirit
help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*



LAST ORDERS BY MONDAY 18 @ 10:00AM



©LPI



@st.gerards3175

Principal - Mr Paul Cowan
principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au
71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



<https://www.facebook.com/stgerardsp>

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

I trust that all our mothers had a wonderful day last Sunday and the cards and gifts made by our children represented the love they have for you.

Our **Year 6** children have completed their final preparations to receive the **Sacrament of Confirmation tomorrow at 5.30pm**. This involved them participating in a **Reflection Day on Monday** and a **visit from Very Rev Fr Andrew Madry CR PP on Tuesday**. I would like to thank Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Te for preparing our children so well. I ask that you keep these children and their families in your thoughts and prayers. As a school community we will congratulate them at our Friday Assembly on 22 May.

We also had our **First Eucharist Family Workshop** on Thursday afternoon as preparations for this Sacrament of Initiation increases.

Thank you to all the families that have installed the **nForma App**, so that we can communicate and gain consent for excursions and events digitally. I am asking families to please install this as soon as possible. We will be having a 'stock take' next week to ensure all families are connected. If you are experiencing any difficulties please come to the Office and we will be able to assist you.

We are starting to experience some cooler weather, particularly in the morning, and with this weather comes coughs, colds and other illnesses. **While it can be challenging for families, for the health of students and staff, please do not send your child to school if they are unwell.** I thank you in advance for your support.

Looking to next week, we have our **School Photos on Tuesday**. Information was sent out to families via Seesaw and nForma. Orders need to be completed online and all children are asked to come in full school uniform. If your child has P.E. classes on this day they can bring their runners to change into. Please come to the Office if you experience difficulties in ordering.

We have our **Literacy Workshop Expo next Thursday night from 6.00pm – 7.15pm** which will provide an opportunity for our families to see what we are currently doing in this vital area of the curriculum. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Lastly, **next Thursday**, we have the first of our **OPEN Days**. This is an opportunity for prospective families to see all that we offer here at St Gerard's. If you know families who will be looking for a school in 2027, we would appreciate you letting them know of these dates. They may also arrange another time to visit our school by calling the School Office on 9791 7553 or emailing myself principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

God bless.

Paul COWAN
PRINCIPAL

Key Dates

Sacraments 2026

First Communion: (Grade 4)

- Thursday, 11th June, 2026, First Communion Reflection Day
- Sunday, 14th June, 2026, First Communion, 10:30am
- Friday, 19th June, 2026, First Communion Assembly in the PAC

Confirmation: (Grade 6)

- Saturday, 16th May Confirmation 5:30pm (Vigil) Fr Madry CR, Episcopal Vicar, Southern Region
- 22nd May Confirmation Assembly in the PAC

Whole School Masses:

- Monday 25th May Our Lady Help of Christians at 9:15
- Friday 12th June The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at 9:15

Other Important Dates for Religion

Sorry Day Assembly:	26th May, 2:50 pm
Refugee Week Assembly:	19th June, 2:50

Religious News

An Invitation to Bring Mary Home

We invite families to take the Our Lady statue into their home for a week as a special way to deepen family prayer time. Each family will receive a brochure with simple instructions for praying the Rosary, as well as a set of rosary beads. If you would like to take the Our Lady statue home, please let Mrs Stack know.



Lunchtime Rosary

The Legion of Mary Group is teaming up with the school to lead Rosary prayer sessions during lunch breaks. These will take place during the first lunch on Tuesdays in Weeks 4 and 8 of each term.

Altar Servers

Altar Server practice resumed on Thursday 29 January and will continue every Thursday evening at 5:30 pm at St Gerard's Church. To be eligible to serve, children must have received their First Communion.

This is a wonderful opportunity for young members of our parish to take part in the liturgy and learn the responsibilities of altar service.

For further information about practice times or eligibility, please contact the parish office on **9792 4422**.

St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal:

We're once again setting our sights on a full food cart for the St. Vincent de Paul Society Winter Appeal! Our Social Justice and Spirituality Leaders will begin gathering donated food items, with collections continuing through to the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As always, there is a little friendly competition involved. The class that contributes the most items will enjoy a well earned casual dress day.

Vinnie's **WINTER APPEAL**



'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Whatever you did for one of the least of mine, you did for me.' Mathew 25

When: 5th June

Kids Pyjama Day



Students wear their pyjamas to school over their sports uniform OR get dressed up as a character or animal that sleeps a lot.

What: Students will do rotational activities about sleep

Where: St Gerard's PAC and in Classrooms

Why: Sleep is an important factor for student wellbeing

Wellbeing

MACS

CARE

Parent/Carer Newsletter

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Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Working
together for
Child Safety

Child Safe Standard 4

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to uphold and actively promote the wellbeing and safety of every student entrusted in our care. Our commitment to the protection of students ensures they have agency and voice about all matters that impact their safety. Our Catholic communities ensure systems, processes, policies and cultures encourage and respect the voices of children and young people.

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

Overview of Child Safe Standard 4:

To be aligned, schools must support the following:

- Families participate in decisions affecting their child
- The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
- Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies
- Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

The Child Safe Standards

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

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

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

"The role of the family in building a culture of life is decisive and irreplaceable" This quote comes in the greater context of Pope John Paul's message about the family being at the heart of the "civilization of love".

Working together for Child Safety



What does this look like in a school environment?

- **Keeping families informed:** We provide parents, carers and the community with regular updates about child safety and wellbeing so everyone knows what is being done to keep children safe and so parents and carers can continue the conversation at home.
- **Inviting parent, carer and community involvement:** We create varied opportunities for families, carers and community members to participate in surveys, forums or school events that focus on child safety and wellbeing, and seek their feedback
- **Working together:** We build trust and open communication with families, carers and the wider community. We ensure families, carers and members of the community have access to a variety of communication channels.
- **Welcoming different perspectives:** We are always open and welcoming of ideas that help keep children safe. We create varied ways for people to provide us with their feedback and share their ideas. We also actively seek to go beyond the school gate to meet families and the wider community at different places of learning, so we are all walking together.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Child Safe Standard 4 is about making sure schools, families, carers and the wider community work together to keep children safe. Here are some simple ways families can help:

- **Stay informed:** Read school updates about safety and wellbeing
- **Keep talking:** Have regular, open conversations with your child about what safety feels like for them and how they feel when they are at school or other places away from home. Ensure they know they have trusted adults they can speak to if they are concerned. Make sure they know who these adults are.
- **Get involved:** Attend school events, take part in surveys or forums that seek your feedback. Let your children see that you prioritise this connection with the school.
- **Share your perspective:** Contact the school with any ideas or thoughts you have that will help everyone to keep children safe. You may be able to offer a unique perspective or idea that the school has not considered.

Want to know more?

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

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

Check out these additional resources from below to learn more:

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AFIS): [Parents' Involvement in their Children's Education Community Engagement](#)

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL): [Strengthening Parent Engagement to Improve Student Outcomes](#)



School Photos

School Photos 2026

Dear families,

Our 2026 School Photo Day is **next Tuesday 19 May**.

Please see the details below from Elite School Photography on how to order your photos. **This involves ordering online via their website.**

<https://eliteschoolphotography.com.au> with the code: **ESP202515**

We ask that ALL children come to school in their FULL school uniform on this day.

There are some classes that have P.E. lessons on this day so they can bring their runners with them to change into for their class.

If you have any questions or encounter difficulties, please contact the School Office.



ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL PHOTO DAY IS COMING

The official School Photos will be taken by Elite School Photography on

TUESDAY 19th MAY 2026

All orders are to be completed online, via the Elite School Photography website, prior to photo day.

You can order your Child's School Photos by using the login code ESP202515 and follow the easy to use steps to order. Please ensure all relevant details are filled out correctly, including full class details.

Family Discount - If you have more than 2 children attending this School, please list all their First Names and all their Classes and select only 2 as the quantity, for the Deluxe and Standard packs. Your third and subsequent Child will receive their packs free of charge, but you must list all your children's names though. This family discount will only apply to the Deluxe & Standard Packs.

If you have any queries regarding School Photos, please contact our friendly staff at ESP directly on (03) 9570 9311

SIMPLE, SMART & SENSIBLY PRICED

Literacy



SAVE THE DATE!



LITERACY WORKSHOP EXPO - 2026

WHERE: ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL,
DANDENONG NORTH

WHEN: 21ST MAY. 2026

TIME: FROM 6.00PM TO 7.15PM

WHO: STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Join us in supporting your
child's Literacy journey
through Primary School!

**The class with the highest
attendance wins a Free Dress
Day!!!**

Reading before School



READ WITH ME!



Just 10~15 Minutes a Day Makes a Lifelong Difference



Why Reading Together Matters



Builds Strong Brains

- Improves concentration and memory
- Develops imagination and creativity
- Strengthens thinking skills



Grows Literacy Skills

- Expands vocabulary
- Improves spelling and writing
- Builds fluency and comprehension
- Increases confidence



Strengthens Relationships

- Creates special one-on-one time
- Encourages meaningful conversations
- Helps children feel supported and valued



Broadens Understanding

- Develops empathy
- Introduces new ideas and cultures
- Helps children understand the world



How You Can Help at Home

- ✓ Set a regular reading time each day
- ✓ Take turns reading aloud
- ✓ Ask questions about the story
- ✓ Praise effort, not just accuracy
- ✓ Make reading enjoyable
- ✓ Let your child see you reading too



Remember

- You don't need to be a teacher to make a difference.
- Your time, encouragement and interest matter most.

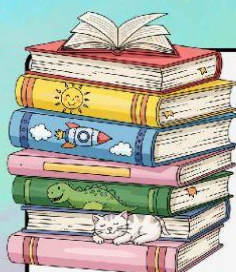
"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents."



Reading before School



Library News



LIBRARY NEWSLETTER



Week 4, May 2026

Exploring New Worlds at the Library, Together!

Come join us at the library, where there's more than just reading books! Engage in our library club and explore a world of knowledge, creativity, and community. Whether it's through interactive sessions, engaging discussions, or collaborative projects, there's something for everyone to enjoy and learn.

LIBRARY CLUB UPDATES

This week, students enjoyed learning a new game called Magic Mixer. This maths-based game encouraged students to use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to create a series of numbers. It was wonderful to see everyone trying different strategies and thinking carefully about their choices. The winner from each pair will be announced next week. The Prep students worked with Miss Adrien, and the winner from this group was Jacob.

Students should now be returning books borrowed over the past two weeks and selecting new books to borrow. Miss Adrien will be checking for any overdue books in Week 6. Students are reminded to bring a separate library bag (book bag) on their allocated library day when borrowing books. This helps protect library materials, encourages responsibility, and ensures all students can continue to enjoy our library resources.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Miss Stephanie Adrien



Library News



LIBRARY CLUB



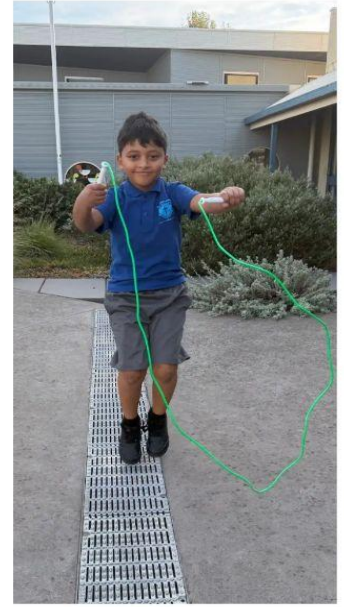
Week 4, May 2026



Miss Stephanie Adrien



Thursday Skipping



2026 DATES TO REMEMBER

Term 2, 2026 Dates

May

- 16th Confirmation at 5.30pm
- 19th School Photos
- 21st OPEN DAY
- 21st SUBWAY Lunch
- 21st Literacy Workshop Expo at 6.00pm
- 24th PENTECOST Sunday
- 25th Our Lady Help of Christians whole school mass at 9.15am
- 26th National Sorry Day
- 27th OPEN DAY
- 29th Italian Day

June

- 2nd OPEN DAY
- **8th King's Birthday Public Holiday**
- 11th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 11th First Communion Reflection Day
- 14th First Communion 10.30am
- 22nd - 24th Year 5/6 Camp
- 25th SUBWAY Lunch
- **26th End of Term 2 at 3.30p**

Important Notes

Medical Plans And Asthma Plans

This is a friendly reminder to provide the school with updated medical and asthma plans for 2024. If your child has asthma or requires other medications, please ensure that Ventolin, a spacer, and any necessary medications are supplied on the first day back to the school office.

All medications will be stored in individually labeled bags in the school office for safekeeping.

Any families who hold a current Health Care Card are asked to please provide a copy to the school office.

This will ensure you receive the MACS Concession on your school fees.

Please note, this must be a valid Centrelink Health Care Card. Private health insurance cards or Medicare cards are not eligible.

**ST GERARD'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

SERVICE CONTACT:
0402 192 685 (Marina) | sg@ylv.com.au

SERVICE HOURS	COST
Before School Care 6:45AM – 8:45AM	\$30/\$35 PERMANENT/CASUAL
After School Care 3:30PM – 6:30PM	\$35/\$40 PERMANENT/CASUAL
Pupil-Free Day 7:00AM – 6:00PM	\$83

fees effective 02 Mar 2026

ylv.com.au

Important Information



Happy Birthday to all who have celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays, this week including this weekend and January.



COMMUNITY NOTICE

- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- Springvale Indoor Sports - Indoor Soccer
- Mazenod College - Open Day Information



Chicken Eggs For Sale

- St Gerard's would like to offer families the opportunity to purchase delicious organic eggs laid by our resident flock of chickens.
- You can purchase these eggs from the school office at a cost of **\$8** per dozen.
- All proceeds from the sale of the eggs will go towards purchasing food for our feathered friends.
- Please message [Nicole Fernandez](#) via Seesaw if you would like to purchase some eggs.