

# ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



TERM 1 - WEEK 2

09 February, 2024



Year 6 Leaders: Empowered with Faith, A Journey of Leadership,  
Guided by Blessings. 🌟👑 #BlessedLeadership

Dear Lord,

We come before you today to ask for your blessings and guidance on our new school leaders as they begin this new academic year.

We pray that you give them the wisdom and discernment to make the right decisions for our students and staff. May they lead with integrity, compassion, and fairness.

We ask that you bless St Gerard's school community with a year filled with love, learning, and growth.

Amen.



Spiritual Blessings, Leadership Hats and Badges,  
Guided by Faith, Leading with Grace. 🙏👑  
#DivineLeadership



@st.gerards3175

Principal - Mr Paul Cowan  
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71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



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

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

We are certainly back into the routines of school with our first full week coming to an end. This week saw our children engage in their **Specialist classes of Performing Arts, Visual Arts, P.E. and Italian**. These classes offer a broad range of **learning opportunities** for our students and **allow for specific skills to be encouraged, nurtured and developed**.

This week also saw the return of **Before School Reading on Wednesday mornings from 8.30am in the Library**. We have found this to be a popular event and a great way to start the day. As always, **there is a standing invitation to all our families to come along and be part of the fun**.

As a follow up from our AFL clinics conducted last week, Tyler from AFL Victoria visited us on Wednesday afternoon and spoke to families about our **upcoming after school AUSKICK program**. Flyers about this program were handed out and also sent to all families via Seesaw. This information is also on our Community Noticeboards and in this newsletter. This is a wonderful way to learn some new sporting and social skills and become involved in a local club. Please contact me if you have any questions or issues with registering.

Today (Friday) we gathered in the church for our **Beginning of the School Year Mass**. This was a wonderful celebration in which we **asked for God's blessing for the year ahead at St Gerard's**. An important aspect of this celebration was the **blessing of our Year 6 Leadership badges and Hats**. Our Year 6 Leaders play a significant role in our school and they were presented with these items at a special assembly in the afternoon. **We look forward to seeing these young leaders develop and have a positive impact on our school throughout the year**.

Last week I presented our Class Structure for 2024. Please find below our School Leadership Roles and Specialist Teachers.

Leadership Role	Staff Member
Deputy Principal/ Faith Formation/ Learning Diversity	Mrs Dorothy Stack
Mathematics Leader	Ms Melinda Sonno
Literacy Leader	Mrs Gwen O'Brien
Wellbeing Leader	Ms Nicole Fernandez
Mental Health in Primary Schools Leader (new role)	Mrs Mary-Jane Lewis



# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE....cont'd

Specialist Area	Teacher
Italian	Mrs Venerina Harris
P.E.	Mrs Tessa Wilson
Visual Arts	Mrs Shantelle Theodore
Performing Arts	Ms Stephanie Adrien

Information will be sent out next week to families about our upcoming **3 Way Conversations which are on Tuesday 20 February from 2.30pm - 6.30pm (Friday 23 February for Year 1/2S from 9.00am - 3.30pm)**. This is an opportunity for teachers, families and students to come together and share information to help with a successful year of learning. If you have any difficulties booking a time please contact the School Office.

As mentioned last week, **our school gates are opened at 8.40am each morning**. If children arrive or are dropped at school before this time there is a **genuine safety concern as they are unsupervised and outside the school grounds**. Also when it is raining there is no shelter. Therefore I am asking families to drop their children off after 8.40am or wait with them until the gates are opened.

At the end of the day I am requesting families in cars to reduce the traffic congestion in McNab Court. **Families that arrive before 3.25pm are asked to park in the carpark. Joining the drop off/ pick up line creates a backlog of cars which causes issues and does not allow families wishing to park access to the carpark.** I thank you in advance for your cooperation on these important safety matters.

Also, a reminder to those families who have children with a **Medical Management Plan** that if there are changes or updates to any aspect of the plan or it has expired, you need to **contact the School Office and provide current documentation**. It is vital that the information we have here at school is current and accurate.

Lastly, an invitation is extended to all our families to join us **next Wednesday at 9.15am for the parish Ash Wednesday Mass** which marks the start of the Season of Lent. I hope you are able to join us.

God bless.

Paul Cowan  
PRINCIPAL



# Religious Education

## Whole School Mass:

Ash Wednesday: 14th February, 9:15

## Level Mass:

1/2 Level: 29th February, 9:15am

Prep/5/6 Level: 7th March, 9:15am

3/4 Level: 14th March, 9:15am

## Reconciliation:

Year 5/6 T: Thursday, 29th February at 10:15am

Year 4: Thursday, 7th March at 10:15

Year 5/6O: Thursday, 14th March at 10:15

## Sacrament Dates, 2024

### **First Reconciliation: (Grade 3)**

First Reconciliation Family Workshop:

Thursday 22nd February, 7pm

First Reconciliation:

Thursday 14th March, 6:30

### **First Communion: (Grade 4)**

First Communion Family Workshop:

Thursday 18th April, 6:30pm

First Communion:

Sunday 2nd June, 10:30am

### **Confirmation: (Grade 6)**

Confirmation Family Workshop Night:

Thursday 18th April, 7:30pm

Most Rev. Anthony J. Ireland Visits Yr 6:

Friday 31st May, 9:30am

Confirmation:

Saturday 1st June, 5:30pm

## Other Important Dates for Religion:

13th Feb:	Shrove Tuesday and Subway (optional)
TBA:	Delegation of Yr 6 leaders attend St. Patrick's Day Mass at Cathedral
25th March onwards:	The Passion Prayer Spaces for student participation
28th March:	Holy Thursday
29th March:	Good Friday Day of Fast and Abstinence
30th March:	Holy Saturday
31st March:	Easter Sunday

# Religious Education

## Project Compassion

Caritas Australia's yearly Lenten campaign unites countless Australians in the global fight against poverty, championing justice, and upholding dignity. On Ash Wednesday, Project Compassion Boxes will be handed out to every class, each assigned a specific fundraising target for the Lenten season. The class that achieves the highest fundraising amount will enjoy a well-deserved free dress day as a reward! Stay informed about each class's progress in fundraising efforts through regular updates provided by the Social Justice Leadership Team during school assemblies.

## Altar Servers

Altar service practice will resume on Thursday, February 15th, and will take place every Thursday evening at 5:30 pm in St. Gerard's Church. To be eligible for service, individuals must have completed their First Communion. This provides a wonderful opportunity for young members of the Church to participate in the liturgy and take on the responsibilities associated with altar service. For any inquiries regarding altar service practice or eligibility, please feel free to contact the parish office at 97924422.

## An Invitation to Bring Mary Home

An Invitation to Bring Mary Home: A Week of Family Spiritual Connection

We extend an invitation to families to bring the Our Lady statue into their homes for a week, enhancing their family prayer experience. A brochure containing instructions for engaging in rosary prayer, along with sets of rosary beads, will be provided. If you are interested in taking the Our Lady statue home, please let Mrs. Stack know.





# Religious Education

## Lunchtime Rosary

The Legion of Mary Group is collaborating with the school to lead the praying of the Rosary during lunch breaks. These sessions will be available during the first lunch on a Tuesday in weeks 4 and 8 in each term.

## The Passion Prayer Spaces

We're pleased to invite families to our Prayer Spaces starting March 25th. Each class will create a unique prayerful experience reflecting on The Passion through assigned Stations of the Cross.

Details:

- When: March 25th onwards
- Where: PAC Prayer Spaces

Come join us for a reflective journey and we look forward to sharing this meaningful time with you! More details to follow.

## Easter Prayer Spaces

Stay tuned for more information on the specific date and location of our Easter Prayer Spaces.



Ash Wednesday  
14 February



This week, the season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which also marks the beginning of the annual Caritas Australia Project Compassion Appeal. Donations to Project Compassion allow Caritas Australia, the Catholic Agency for International Aid and Development, to work with local communities around the world to end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Please give generously to Caritas Australia this Lenten season and help vulnerable people around the world, now and **for all future generations**.

With your support, Caritas Australia has been able to assist communities around the world through income generation, water and sanitation, food security, education and disaster risk reduction programs.

Project Compassion 2024 reminds us that the good we do today will extend and impact the lives of generations to come. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and online by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](https://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413.





ST GERARD'S ART NEWS..

FEB 2024

## VISUAL ART



### GROWING AS ARTISTS

This term the students will be looking at ways in which we can grow as an artist. In connecting this theme with our whole school unit of 'growth' through health, students will be exploring ways in which we can use Art to improve our health and personal wellbeing. They will discuss how creating art can change the way we feel and can be used as an approach to regulate our emotions.



Krystn in Year 5/6 dance painting



Foundation students dancing in the paint

### DANCE PAINTING DANCE DRAWING

Studies show creative expression helps maintain our immune systems and that art is clinically proven to reduce stress and elevate mood. This week students explored how dance painting / drawing helped us identify how we are feeling when we listen to different songs. Students made various lines on their page to reflect the emotions they were feeling when listening to the music.





# WELLBEING

In primary school, some students **miss** on average **3 weeks** of school **per year**. That's **half a year** of school by the end of **year 6**.



## EVERY DAY COUNTS

### Primary school attendance

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education. Students learn new things at school every day – missing school puts them behind.

#### Why it's important

We all want our students to get a great education, and the building blocks for a great education begin with students coming to school each and every day.

If students miss school regularly, they miss out on learning the fundamental skills that will set them up for success in the later years of school.

There is no safe number of days for missing school – each day a student misses puts them behind, and can affect their educational outcomes.

Each missed day is associated with progressively lower achievement in numeracy, writing and reading.

#### Getting in early

Attendance patterns are established early – a child regularly missing days in kindergarten or in the early years of school will often continue to miss classes in the later years, and receive lower test scores than their classmates. It's vital that students go to school every day – even in the early years of primary school.

#### What we can do

The main reasons for absence are:

**Sickness** – There are always times when students need to miss school, such as when they're ill. It's vital that they're only away on the days they are genuinely sick, and setting good sleep patterns, eating well and exercising regularly can make a big difference.

It's vital that holidays are planned during school holidays where possible, and not during the term if it can be avoided.

**"Day off"** – Think twice before letting your child have a "day off" as they could fall behind their classmates – every day counts.

**Truancy** – This is when students choose not to go to school without their parent's permission. There can be many reasons for truancy. The best way to address this is for schools and parents to work together.

If for any reason your child must miss school, there are things you can do with your school to ensure they don't fall behind:

- Speak with your classroom teacher and find out what work your child needs to do to keep up.

- Develop an absence learning plan with your teacher and ensure your child completes the plan.

Remember, every day counts. If your child must miss school, speak with your classroom teacher as early as possible.

Openly communicating with your child's school about all absences is a good way to prevent attendance issues being escalated to a School Attendance Officer. A School Attendance Officer is a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Regional Director who has authority to follow up attendance issues. Attendance issues that are escalated can lead to an Infringement Notice.

If you're having attendance issues with your child, please let your classroom teacher know so we can work together to get your child to school every day.

**For more information and resources to help address attendance issues, visit:**

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/behaviour/Pages/studentattendance.aspx)

Department of Education and Training



Education  
and Training



# WELLBEING

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## Student Representative Council

### **SRC**

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is made up of a group of students who want to help other students by presenting ideas which are of benefit to all students. The SRC also informs its peers of any important information which affects the student body.

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February the SRC reps of St Gerard's attended their first meeting. They discussed the role of an SRC member and upcoming events. The next SRC meeting will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> of February.

A big congratulation to the following students who were voted in by their class members to be the SRC reps for Semester One 2024.

### **Foundation B- Jacob and Rosana**

**1/2S- Grace and Leo**

**1/2FW- Ansel and Pahul**

**3/4SG- Hudson and Nevyn**

**3/4LG- Evelyn and Hailey**

**5/6T- Sofiya and Ariana**

**5/6O- Chelsea and Ariana**



## What's self-regulation?

Self-regulation is learning about your own feelings and emotions, understanding how and why they happen, recognising them (and those of others), and developing effective ways of managing them.

When children and young people learn to self-manage their emotions, they feel more confident, capable and in control. They have stronger relationships, are more able to pay attention, learn new things and can cope better with the normal stresses and disappointments of daily life.

- **How can you help?**

**Children and young people need repeated experiences of having their needs met by a caring adult.**

Warm, trusting and responsive care helps children to respond with appropriate emotions, internalise a positive view of themselves and others, and learn appropriate behaviour. Children and young people also develop self-management skills by watching and experiencing how other people manage their emotions. Here are some tips about how you can support the development of self-management in children and young people

### **Explicitly teach skills**

- Talk about ways of managing upsetting situations.
- Help them to develop strategies to use when they're feeling out of control.
- Help them express their emotions in productive ways (for example, by drawing or acting out their feelings).
- Practise mindful breathing with older children and young people.
- Explore the immediate and long-term consequences of actions.
- Promote empathy by talking about emotions and understanding how people will have different reactions to events depending on their circumstances.
- Teach problem-solving and decision-making skills.

### **Talk about emotions**

- Acknowledge and respond to emotional communication.
- Role-model how you manage your own feelings.
- Talk about strategies to manage strong or uncomfortable emotions.

### **Promote a calm environment**

Environment contributes to children and young people's self-management. Promote a calm, welcoming and encouraging environment by:

- providing structure and predictability
- establishing age-appropriate routines and limits
- avoiding competitive experiences for young children
- including relaxation breaks in the day
- encouraging ways to release tension they might be holding in their body

demonstrating calmness and staying in control of your own feelings and behaviours – self-awareness allows you to maximise your positive interactions with children and young people and better manage situations where they 'push your buttons'.



Please note the following changes in relation to uniform purchases for St Gerard's Primary School:

Uniforms can now be purchased in the following ways:

**Option 1 - Online Order**

**Access to our Online Ordering System**

1. [www.aplusschoolwear.com.au](http://www.aplusschoolwear.com.au)
2. Go to **SHOP ONLINE NOW** (red box)
3. Select your school
4. Uniform listing with images will appear.

Select items you are wishing to purchase:

Style  
Size  
Colour  
Quantity  
Add items to bag

5. Once all items are added to bag, proceed to checkout.
6. Select delivery options
  - a. Pick up from school (free) in comments section please enter your child's name and class
  - b. Pick up from A Plus Schoolwear (free)
  - c. Postal address (delivery charges will apply)
7. Either checkout as guest, returning customer or create a new account.

**Orders placed by Sunday will be delivered to the school the following Thursday**

**Option 2 - Fill out the order form and leave it at the school office.**

**Orders received by Friday will be delivered to the school the following Thursday**

**RETURNS**

Can be given to the school office and will be either exchanged or refunded by A Plus School wear.

Should you have any queries regarding the above, please contact A Plus Schoolwear

9354 8345 or email [angie@agsprints.com.au](mailto:angie@agsprints.com.au)

# IMPORTANT DATES / NOTES

## ***February***

- 13th Shrove Tuesday
- 13th Subway Lunch
- 14th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 14th Ash Wednesday Mass at 9:15am in the Church (Parish Mass)
- 14th Foundation Rest Day
- 20th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th 3 Way Conversations 2:30pm - 6:30pm
- 21st Foundation Rest Day
- 21st Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 22nd Ride to School Day
- 22nd First Reconciliation Family Workshop at 7.00pm
- 28th Foundation Rest Day
- 28th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 28th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 1, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 29th Year 1/2 Level Mass in the Church at 9:15am
- 29th Year 5/6T Reconciliation at school

## ***March***

- 1st St Gerard's Whole School Athletics Day at Mentone Athletics Track
- 6th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 6th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 2, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 7th Foundation and Year 5/6 Level Mass in the Church at 9:15am
- 7th Year 4 Reconciliation at school
- 7th First Reconciliation Reflection Day
- 11th Labour Day Public Holiday
- 13th - 25th NAPLAN Testing (Years 3 and 5)
- 13th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 13th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 3, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 14th Year 3/4 Level Mass in the Church at 9.15am
- 14th Year 5/6O Reconciliation at school
- 14th Sacrament of First Reconciliation at 6.30pm
- 19th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 20th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 4, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 22nd National Ride to School Day
- 25th Holy Week/Easter Presentations start
- 27th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 28th Holy Week/Easter Presentations conclude
- 28th End of Term 1 school finishes at 3.30pm



# IMPORTANT DATES / NOTES

## Medical Plans And Asthma Plans

Just a reminder to parents to provide the school with updated medical and asthma plans for 2024. If your child has asthma or requires other medications please supply ventolin, spacer and medications on the first day back to the school office.

All medications will be stored in individually labelled bags in the school office.

LEAVE NOTHING UNDARED

mazenod.vic.edu.au

FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

**MAZENOD COLLEGE**



**Dare to achieve.**

[Book a tour →](#)


Bookings essential

**Open Day 2024**  
Wednesday 6th March  
2:00pm - 6:30pm

**Year 7/2026 Applications Close**  
Friday 16th August 2024

## St Gerard's YLVOSHC

**Program Information**  
Service Phone Number: 0402 192 685



### Prices

**Before School Care**  
(Permanent) \$15.00  
(Casual) \$20.00  
After Max CCS: \$2.89

**After School Care**  
(Permanent) \$20.00  
(Casual) \$25.00  
After Max CCS: \$3.16

**Pupil Free Day and Vacation Care**  
(Permanent) \$65.00  
(Casual): \$72.50  
After Max CCS: \$6.50

\* MAX CCS REBATE FIGURES ARE PROVIDED AS APPROXIMATES AND MAY VARY

**OPERATING TIMES**

**Before School Care**  
**Hours:**  
6:45am - 8:45am

**After School Care**  
**Hours:**  
3:30pm - 6:30pm

**Pupil Free Days:**  
7:00am - 6:00pm

**Vacation Care:**  
7:00am - 6:00pm

**YLV.COM.AU**

# SCHOOL FEES

*If you have fees outstanding from 2023, we urge you to settle these outstanding balances as soon as possible. As you will be aware, funding that is provided to Catholic schools is done so on the basis of a calculation that is based on the 'local capacity to contribute' model. As such, St Gerard's school like all other Catholic schools, is reliant on families to meet the set fees and levies referred to below.*

## 2024 School Fees

The school in conjunction with our MACS Business Partner are always conscious of ensuring that Catholic Education is affordable for all families and any fee increases are minimal.

The School Fees for the 2024 year are:

### **FEES PER FAMILY - \$1875**

· Family Fee	\$ 1,235
· Capital Levy	\$ 554
· Maintenance Levy	\$ 86

### **LEVIES per student - \$ 445**

· Student Levy	\$ 254
· Excursion Levy	\$ 63
· Swimming Levy	\$ 74
· Computer Levy	\$ 54

FULL Payment can be made no later than 15<sup>th</sup> March, or calculated for equal monthly, fortnightly, termly or semester payments spread over the 10 months.

**To show our appreciation, if payment in full is made by the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024, then you will receive a 5% discount off the total fee (not applicable to those eligible for the concessional fee policy).**

## Payment Options

The School continues to offer the following options to paying your schools fees:

- Direct Debit — form attached — payment deducted as selected from February to November 2024
- Manual EFT or Credit Card — **Strictly By Term** — unless Principal approved



# SCHOOL FEES

## Bank Details

### St Gerard's School Account

- BSB - 083 – 347
- AC# - 648 965 067

### Concessional School Fee Policy — 2024 - (Excluding any camp charges)

- One child family \$780 per annum
- Two child family \$1,196 per annum
- Three plus child family \$1,560 per annum

The following families are encouraged to apply for concessional school fees as outlined in the newly introduced MACS Concessional School Fee Policy:

- Any family holding a Health Care Card and eligible for Camps, Sports and Excursions (CSEF)
- Any family of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage
- Any family experiencing severe financial hardship
- Any family holding a DVA Gold Card
- Any family identified as refugees and holding an ImmiCard

Families who meet one of the above criteria are required to return the below documentation to the office:

- Concessional Fee Application Form (attached)
- A completed direct debit request service agreement (attached)
- A copy of the government concession card (if applicable)
- **A completed Camps, Sports and Excursions (CSEF) application form (attached - if applicable)**

We encourage parents who are experiencing financial hardship and/or have recently become eligible to a Health Care/Concession Card to advise the school and a confidential meeting can be arranged with me to discuss your circumstances.

Please contact the School Office for any questions or concerns you may have and look forward to an exciting year ahead at St Gerard's Primary School, Dandenong North

Thank you for your continued valued support.

Yours Sincerely

Paul Cowan

**School Principal**

# SCHOOL FEES



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



## SCHOOL FEES - METHOD OF PAYMENT FORM 2024

School fees will be invoiced annually (at the beginning of the year) with statements being issued at least once per term. Payment plans are established and organised to ensure you meet your financial obligations to the school.

Payment frequency options are available to suit parents/carers with the aim of having all fees paid by 30th November. Options for payment include, direct debit and credit card.

**Please advise the School if you have a Health Care Card as this can reduce your School Fees.**

Parents' Name	Account no.
Child's Name:	Year Level:
Address:	

☐

Annual (5% Discount applies if paid by 15<sup>th</sup> March) **OR**

☐

**Semester Instalments**  
(Twice per year)  
Feb & July

☐

**Term Instalments**  
(4 per year)  
Feb, May, Aug, Nov

☐

**Monthly Instalments**  
(10 per year)  
Feb – Nov

☐

**Fortnightly Instalments**  
(20 per year)  
Feb – Nov

Please return this form by 1<sup>st</sup> February email to [jferraro@sqdandenongnqth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:jferraro@sqdandenongnqth.catholic.edu.au)



### AUTHORISATION for Payments by Direct Debit from bank account or credit card

Preferred payment date

7th

☐

14th

☐

21st

☐

28th

☐

If this date falls on a weekend or public holiday, payment will be processed on the PRIOR Business Day.

#### Bank Details for Direct Debit

Account Name

BSB no.

Account no.

#### Credit Card for Direct Debit

Card no.

Expiry Date:

Cardholder name

I/We authorise St Gerard's to arrange through its own financial institution to debit from my/our nominated account or credit card as specified. I/We acknowledge by the signature/s below that I/we am/are the enrolling parents/guardians and are jointly and individually responsible for payment of all fees and charges.

**Mother (or guardian)**

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

**Father (or guardian)**

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

**It is your responsibility to notify the school in a timely manner of new card expiry dates/details or any new bank account numbers.**

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/PAL/CSEF-application-form.docx>



# Important Information



Happy Birthday to all who had celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays, this week and over the holidays.

- Shawn Foundation



- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- Mazenod College Open Day Information
- Ukraine Support Fund
- AFL Auskick
- Springvale Indoor Sports



## 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 **\$7** 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.