



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



ST GERARD'S SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Term 1, Week 3

14 February 2025



Love, Respect, and Friendship - The Best Valentine's Gifts!
Happy Valentine's Day
Our Give Me 5 Focus this week: Be Respectful in the Learning Areas

A Prayer for St. Valentine's Day

Loving God,

On this St. Valentine's Day, we thank You for the gift of love -
the love we share with family, friends, and all those around
us.

Help us to show kindness, respect, and care in all we do,
following the example of St. Valentine, who lived with great
faith and compassion.

May our hearts be open to love as You love us,
may our words bring encouragement and peace,
and may our actions reflect the goodness You call us to share.

Bless our school community as we strive to live out our Give
Me 5 values,
treating one another with respect, kindness, and gratitude.
Let this day be a reminder that true love is not just in words,
but in the way we care for and serve others.

We ask this in Jesus' name,

Amen.



@st.gerards3175

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



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

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

Here we are at the end of our second full week in which we were again challenged by the weather which can vary greatly at this time of year. As the health and safety of our school community is our first priority, the temperature, wind, UV rating, general conditions and official warnings are all monitored and considered to ensure that our children (and staff) are safe during our lunchtime breaks. This has seen us spend several lunchtimes inside this week in air conditioned comfort!

Now that we are back into our usual routines, we are noticing that we have children **arriving after 8.55am**. This can impact on a child's learning as they have not had time to organise themselves, socialise, be settled and the first session for the day has started. While no one intends to be late and sometimes there are factors out of our control,

I would ask that we focus on getting to school on time.

Yesterday (Thursday) information about our first **3 Way Conversations** was sent out via *Operoo*. These sessions will occur next Thursday 20 February and are an opportunity to get the 3 main stakeholders in your child's learning (child, family and school) together at the start of the year. These are 10 minute meetings to share information and clarify any questions about classroom structures and organisation. **You may choose to have a face-to-face meeting or via Google Meet.**

Please note: Families involved in Program Support Group Meetings (PSG's) do not have to have a 3 Way Conversation but may if they wish.

Our **Annual Whole School Athletics Day** is fast approaching and will take place on **Friday 28 February**. This is always a wonderful day where our children get to display their sporting talents, develop their House Spirit and enjoy being with the whole school. Families are more than welcome to come and be part of the day and if there is anyone who would be able to assist with setting up/ packing up or helping with some of the events please contact myself via email principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

(P) 9791 7553 or *Seesaw*. Please see *Operoo* for details and to grant permission.

I wish to inform our school community that **Mrs Dorothy Stack will be on leave from Monday 17 February until Friday 4 April (end of Term 1)**. During this time some of Dorothy's leadership responsibilities will be undertaken by other staff members.

Mrs Gwen O'Brien will assume the responsibilities for Learning Diversity and Religious Education and Ms Nicole Fernandez will assume the leadership responsibilities for Daily Organisation and Timetabling. I have full confidence in these 2 leaders to maintain these important aspects of our school.

Please feel free to contact Gwen, Nicole or myself if you have any questions or concerns regarding any of these areas.

Mrs Gwen O'Brien – gobrien@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

Ms Nicole Fernandez – nfernandez@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

Mr Paul Cowan – principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

We look forward to welcoming Dorothy back at the start of Term 2.

A further reminder to those families who have children with a **Medical Management Plan** that if there are changes to any aspect of the plan you need to **contact the School Office**. **It is vital that the information we have here at school is current and accurate and that the plan is not out of date.**

Lastly, information was sent out last week about our **St Gerard's AUSKICK (AFL) program**. This information is also contained in this newsletter.

God bless.

Paul Cowan
PRINCIPAL

Religious News

Key Dates

Whole School Mass

Ash Wednesday: 5th March, 9:15 (Parish Mass)

Class/Level Mass

5/6T: Thursday 20th February Parish Mass at 9:15am
3/4S: Thursday 27th February, Class Mass at 10:00am
3/4W: Thursday 20th March, Class Mass at 10:00am
1/2FB: Thursday, 20th February Parish Mass
1/2S: Thursday, 20th February Parish Mass

Reconciliation

Year 4S & 4WL: Thursday, 13th March at 10:15
Years 5/6O & 5/6T: Thursday, 27th March at 10:15am

Other Important Dates for Religion

4th March: Shrove Tuesday and Subway (optional)
17th March: Wear a **Touch of Green** with school uniform for St Patrick's Day
TBA: Delegation of Yr 6 leaders attend St. Patrick's Day Mass at Cathedral
31st March onwards: *The Passion Gallery Walk* for student and family participation
4th April: Parishioners and Family invited to attend *The Passion Gallery Walk* after Mass
17th April: Holy Thursday
18th April: Good Friday Day of Fast and Abstinence
19th April: Holy Saturday
20th April: Easter Sunday

Religious News



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 13th, 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.



Religious News

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. O'Brien know.



Religious News

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.



The Passion Gallery Walk

We're excited to invite families to experience *The Passion Gallery Walk* starting March 31st. Each class will contribute two artworks inspired by their assigned Stations of the Cross, reflecting on The Passion.

Details:

When: From March 31st
Where: PAC - The Passion Gallery Walk

Join us for this reflective journey as we share this meaningful time together. Stay tuned for more details!

Easter Gallery Walk

Families are invited to follow up on *The Passion Gallery Walk* by viewing the Resurrection artwork, which will be displayed after Easter.

Valentine Activities

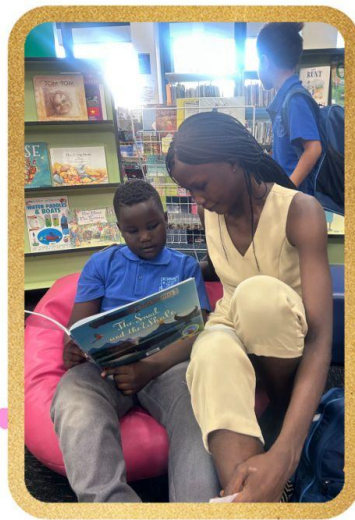


Valentine Activities



Reading Before School

Reading Before School has started full steam ahead. We had a very good turn out with parents and students reading to each other this week. Children receive a raffle ticket and go into a draw to win a prize. Students are encouraged to attend and read a book by themselves, to each other or with their families.



Reading Before school



Wellbeing



How are nutrition and mental health linked?

Healthy eating helps children and young people cope more effectively with stress, better manage their emotions and get a good sleep – all of which assist learning.

Most research about nutrition and mental health has focused on adults. We know that good nutrition is associated with better mental health outcomes, whereas a poor diet is associated with a greater risk of depression and anxiety. However, emerging research that focuses on children and young people has also found a relationship between unhealthy diets and poorer mental health outcomes.

Poor nutrition has been associated with:

- externalising behaviour (such as hyperactivity, aggression, disobedience)
- symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- poor concentration and tiredness, which interfere with learning
- immune system function, which is also linked to mental health
- delayed brain development – high-fat, high-sugar diets can affect proteins in the body that are important for brain development
- iron deficiency, which has been linked to cognitive function impairments associated with learning and memory
- nutrient deficiencies, which have been associated with mental health conditions including depression and anxiety (we know that fruits and vegetables, grains, fish, lean red meats and olive oils are rich in important nutrients such as folate, magnesium, vitamins and zinc which all impact on body and brain functions, including mood regulation).

Dietary habits aren't always a choice

'Food insecurity' – where people don't have enough food due to because of things such as unemployment and poverty – is also a problem for many families in Australia. Food insecurity can result in poorer academic performance, time off from school, stress, depression, anxiety, aggression, and difficulty getting along with others. Food insecurity can result in:

- psychological stress – high levels of ongoing stress have been related to depression and delayed brain development
- poorer academic performance
- time off from school
- anxiety
- aggression
- difficulty getting along with others.

The good news is that improving what you eat can lead to improvements in your mental health, so it's never too late to encourage healthier eating patterns.

Wellbeing



Thursday, 20th February is a Ride to School Day. Students are encouraged to walk or ride to school from home or from a nearby drop off point. If your child doesn't normally walk to school, you could do this together.

Students who ride are given a sticker and the class who has the most students riding or walking get to keep our Ride to School trophy in their classroom for that month.

Students can ride bikes, skateboards or scooters.

They must wear a helmet at all times.

Upon arrival at school, students must hop off their bike or scooter and lock up their bike or scooter in our bike parking area (in front of the Performing Arts Centre).

Wellbeing

Give Me 5 News

Next week our Give Me 5 whole school focus is to be Respectful in all learning areas. You can do this by speaking appropriately and using manners, caring for property, taking turns, showing whole body listening and greeting people by their name. Students who are being Respectful in the learning areas will be rewarded with a raffle ticket.

The raffle tickets will be drawn during next week's whole school assembly.

St. Gerard's Give Me 5 Whole School Matrix



| Principle | Learning Areas | Corridors | Toilets | Playground/Sandpit |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Be Respectful | Speak appropriately and use manners Care for property Take turns Whole body listening Greet people by name | Speak appropriately and use manners Care for property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the area neat and tidy | Speak appropriately and use manners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give other users their privacy Care for property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep toilets tidy and flush Wash hands | Speak appropriately and use manners Care for property <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place rubbish in the bin Keep sand in the sandpit and bark in the garden Include others Respect everyone's views and space |
| Be Co-operative | Follow Directions Move safely Stay on task Share with others and help each other | Follow Directions Move safely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the left hand side of the corridor to exit and the left hand side to enter | Follow Directions Move safely Wait for your partner | Follow Directions Move safely Play fairly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept rules Take turns Share and use equipment safely |
| Be Your Best | Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Ask for help | Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Only enter the area with permission | Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Report problems to a teacher | Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself Try to solve your problems |
| Be Positive | Never give up | | | Encourage others |
| Be Spirit filled | Treat others as you would like to be treated. Pray daily and during meditation | Treat others as you would like to be treated. | Treat others as you would like to be treated. | Treat others as you would like to be treated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say sorry and forgive others Be kind |

AUSKICK

St Gerard's AUSKICK 2025

St Gerard's is once again offering an exclusive AUSKICK (AFL) program for all students after school on Thursday afternoons from 3.30pm – 4.30pm on our school grounds.

This has proved to be a very popular program in the past and I am sure it will be again.

This will be a 5-week program starting on Thursday 20 February and continuing each Thursday until Thursday 20 March.

An online registration form is below and will need to be completed prior to the first session.

School staff will supervise the children from 3.30pm and children that attend OSHC will be escorted back to the room after the sessions.

If you have any questions, please contact myself via Seesaw or email

principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

This is a wonderful opportunity to develop some AFL and social skills and will hopefully lead to our children becoming part of the local AUSKICK Program.

AFL PLAY

FOR the Kicks

come find your awesome

ST GERARDS PS AUSKICK CENTRE

5 weeks for only \$25!

Use 30E4BB37 to redeem the discounted price!

Begins 3:30pm, Thursday 20th of February 2025
at St Gerard's Primary School - Oval

Scan the QR code to register!

nab AFL Auskick

play.afl/auskick

Important Dates

February

- 19th Foundation Rest Day 3 of 4
- 19th Reading before school in the library commences at 8:30am
- 19th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th Year 5/6 T Class Mass at 9:15am in the Church (Parish Mass)
- 20th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 1, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 25th Year 3 Reconciliation Family Night 7.00pm
- 26th Foundation Rest Day - 4 of 4 Final
- 26th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 27th Year 3/4 S Class Mass
- 27th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 2, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 28th St Gerard's Whole School Athletics Day at Mentone Athletics Track

March

- 4th SUBWAY Lunch
- 4th Shrove Tuesday
- 5th Ash Wednesday
- 5th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 6th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 3, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- **10th Labour Day Public Holiday**
- 13th Year 3 Reconciliation Reflection Day
- 12th - 24th NAPLAN Testing (Years 3 and 5)
- 12th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 13th Year 4 Reconciliation
- 13th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 4, 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 19th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 19th Rosary in the Church at 11.05am
- 20th Year 3/4 W Class Mass
- 20th Year 3 Reconciliation Celebration 6.30pm
- 21st Reconciliation Assembly 2.50pm
- 20th AUSKICK (AFL) Week 5 (FINAL), 3:30pm - 4:30 pm
- 21st National Ride to School Day
- 26th Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 27th Year 5/6 Reconciliation
- 31st *The Passion Gallery* Walk starts

April

- 1st Reading before school in the library from 8:30am
- 2nd - 4th Year 5/6 Camp - CYC The Island
- 4th *The Passion Gallery* Walk finishes
- **4th End of Term 1, school finishes at 3.30pm**

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
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 **AFTER** contacting AGS 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



A reminder to families that arrive before 3.25pm to park in the carpark.

Joining the drop off/ pick up line, particularly near the pedestrian crossing, creates a backlog of cars and prevents families from parking in the car park, which causes issues. Another aspect of this is to be mindful of our procedures at the end of the school day. There are designated pick up areas for our students and pedestrian pathways. It can be busy at the end of the day, especially when it is cold and raining, however we need families walking home or to their cars to use the pedestrian pathways. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Important Notes



Experience the
Mazenod advantage.

mazenod.vic.edu.au

Book a tour →



Bookings essential

2025 Open Day: Wednesday 5th March

2025 Tours: 1st May / 24th Jul / 5th Aug / 16th Oct

Year 7/2027 Applications Close Friday 15th August 2025

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.


Pick-up From After-School

Parents are asked to please be prompt when picking up your child/ren after-school. If a ride is not here when school concludes, the student may be sent to aftercare instead of the office. Please remember school aftercare does have a cost involved and time will begin accruing at the end of the school day. If a student's ride has run into an unexpected delay, please call the main office to let them know.

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

YLV.COM.AU

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

Important Information



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

- VARA Yr 5
- JACOB Yr 6
- LUCIA Foundation
- CHUDIER Yr 5



- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- AFL Auskick - st Gerard's 5 Week Program
- Ukraine Support Fund
- Springvale Indoor Sports - Indoor Soccer
- AFL Auskick - St Gerard's 5 Week Program



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.