



Italia!

Italian Day at St Gerard's School

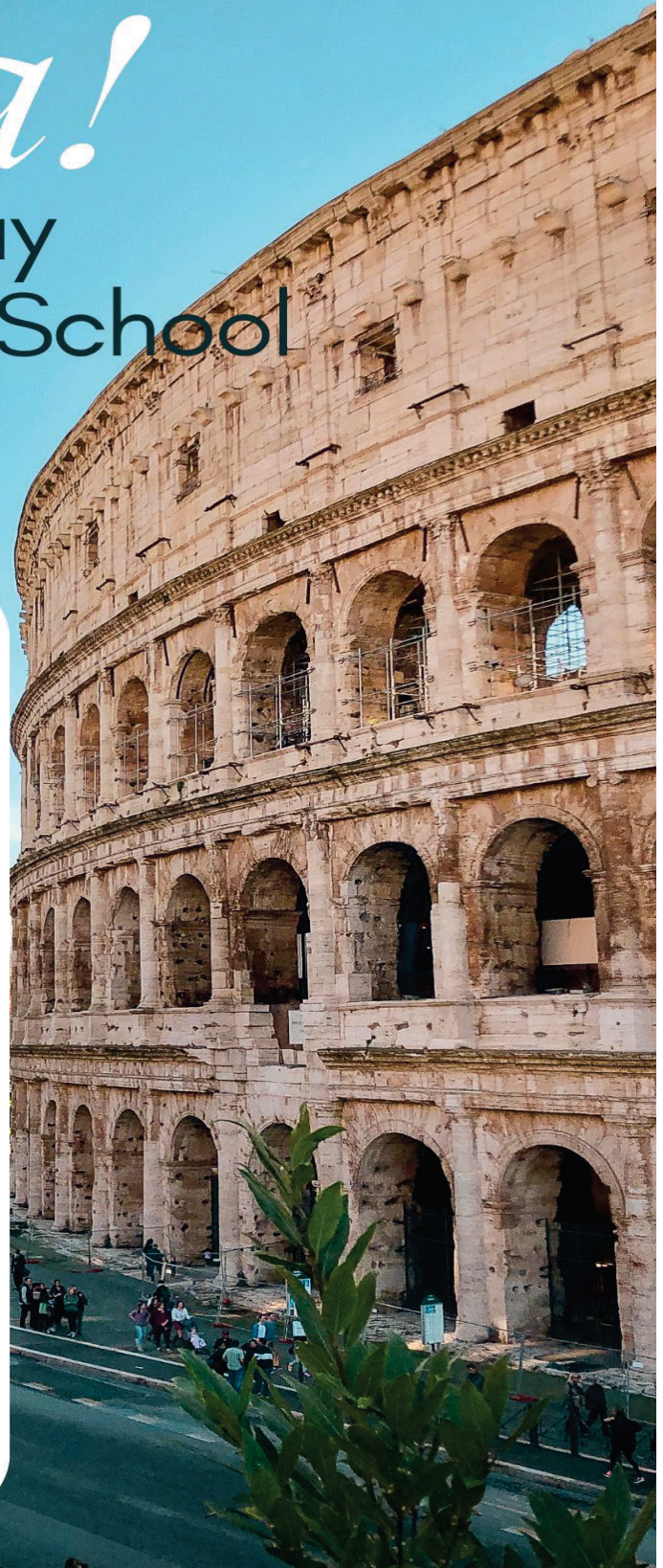
29th May 2026

This special day will provide students with the opportunity to immerse themselves in Italian language and culture through a variety of fun and engaging activities. Throughout the day, students will participate in experiences including:

- Cultural dance and music
- Italian-themed games and activities
- Simple Italian food preparation
- Tasting and exploring Italian foods
- A special performance and show presented in both English and Italian

Students are invited to come dressed in the colours of the Italian flag —

green, white, and red — to help us celebrate the day in true Italian style! Italian Day promises to be a vibrant and memorable celebration of language, culture, creativity, and community spirit. We look forward to sharing this exciting experience with all students.



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

Here we are at the end of Week 5 which finds us half way through the term. This week saw us celebrate our faith, provide opportunities for some of our athletes and gather as a community to look at some of the aspects of our Literacy program.

Last Saturday evening some of our Year 6 children received the **Sacrament of Confirmation**. This was a true celebration with our children involved in aspects of the Mass as well as being confirmed. As a school community we congratulated them at our Friday Assembly and we recognise that we are privileged to be part of our children's faith journey.

There were plenty of smiles on **Tuesday for our School Photos** and **Thursday** proved to be a **full day of activities and events**. We had 20 children from Years 3 - 6 participate in the **Dandenong District Cross Country** event at Tatterson Park, Keysborough with all our children performing well. We have 2 children that will progress to the next level of competition next Friday. We congratulate Dhanvin and Gi'on and wish them all the very best for next week. It was also **SUBWAY Lunch** day on Thursday which is always an exciting day for our children. Our **Literacy Workshop Expo** provided an opportunity for our families to see what we are currently doing in this vital area of the curriculum. It was wonderful to see families from all across our school attend and our children articulate and display their learning. I wish to thank Mrs O'Brien for her coordination and all our staff for supporting this event.

Thursday was also the first of our **OPEN Days**. We have our second one **next Wednesday 27 May** and a third on Tuesday 2 June. 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

As I mentioned last week, 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 forward to next week, we have our **Italian Day next Friday 29 May**. This is promising to be a 'molto bene' day when we dress as Italian characters and celebrate the work being done in our Italian Program. Please see the **information which has been sent out to families through nForma and is contained in this Newsletter** for more details. **Please note: a parade of Costumes will occur at 2.35pm in the PAC as part of our Italian Day Assembly.** I hope to see you there.

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

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

Term 2, 2026 Dates

May

- 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
- 5th Kids Pyjama Day - 'Sleep for Wellbeing'
- **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 3.30pm**



Italia!

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29th May 2026



As part of the cooking and food-tasting activities, students may come into contact with the following ingredients.

Cooking Activities

- Mozzarella cheese
- Tomato passata
- Semolina flour
- Wheat flour
- Parmesan cheese
- Extra virgin olive oil (EVOO)

Gelato (Ice Cream) Ingredients

- Milk
- Milk cream
- Sugar
- Pasteurised cream
- Skim milk powder
- Sucrose
- Invert sugar
- Dextrose monohydrate
- Vegetable gums (E401, E407a, E410, E412)
- Stabilisers (E460, E466)
- Emulsifier (E471)
- Natural flavourings

Please also note that the gelato may contain traces of:

- Roasted hazelnuts
- Cocoa
- Fruit
- Chocolate chips
- Cookie crumbles

We ask families to please take note of these ingredients in case of any allergies or intolerances. If your child has any specific dietary requirements or concerns, please contact the school prior to the event.

Grazie mille for your support!

Fabio Giaccaria — Italian Teacher

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



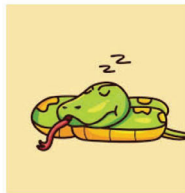
Students wear their pyjamas to school over their sports uniform OR get dressed up as a character or animal that sleeps a lot.

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

Pyjama Day



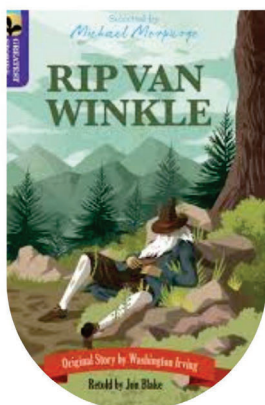
Your child might like to get dressed up in their **pyjamas** for Pyjama Day or get dressed up as an **animal** or a **character** that sleeps a lot.

Animals that sleep a lot: koala, sloth, brown bat, giant armadillo, python, possum, owl monkey, tiger, echidna, wombat.



Famous Characters that sleep a lot:

Snorlax from pokemon, Princess Aurora / Sleeping Beauty, Sleepy from Snow White, Rip Van Winkle from the book Rip Van Winkle, Mr Lazy from the Mr Men Books and Lazy Smurf.



Wellbeing



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Child Safe Standard 5

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.



Play your part visit: care.macs.vic.edu.au

Reviewed: January 2026

"No one is exempted from striving to ensure respect for the dignity of every person"

*Pope Leo XIV,
May 2025*

Wellbeing



Parent/Carer Newsletter

5



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Working
together for
Child Safety

Child Safe Standard 5

"Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice."

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 children and young people is grounded in fairness, inclusion, and respect for diversity, ensuring every child is treated with dignity and care. Our Catholic communities strive to create welcoming and inclusive environments where diversity is honoured, equity is embedded, and the unique needs of every child and young person are respected.

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 5:

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 and practices.
- 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.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

(Galatians 3:28)

Working together for Child Safety



Wellbeing

How do our schools ensure every child is treated fairly and their unique needs are respected?

- In our schools, we believe that every child has the right to be treated fairly, included, and supported according to their individual needs and background. These three principles are part of **Child Safe Standard 5**, which focuses on equity and diversity.
- **Equity** is about fairness, recognising that children may need different levels of support to participate fully in learning, activities, and school life.
- **Inclusion** means creating environments where all children, regardless of culture, ability, language, or background, feel valued, respected, and welcomed.
- **Respect for diversity** is about honouring and celebrating the unique identity of every child, ensuring that differences are recognised as strengths and that everyone's rights and dignity are upheld.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Child Safe Standard 5 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:

- **Talk about inclusion and fairness:** Discuss diversity, equity, and respect with your child, and encourage them to appreciate differences in others.
- **Share insights about your child:** Let staff know if your child has specific needs or cultural practices that should be considered in school activities.
- **Participate in school programs and events:** Support initiatives that celebrate diversity and inclusion, such as cultural festivals, learning programs, or wellbeing initiatives.
- **Provide feedback:** Take part in surveys or discussions about school policies and practices, ensuring the school considers diverse perspectives.
- **Model respect and inclusion:** Demonstrate equitable, respectful, and inclusive behaviour at home and in community activities, children learn these values through example.



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:

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) Resource Centre: [Explore NCEC Resource Centre \(Inclusive education & wellbeing\)](#)

Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA): [Visit Catholic School Parents Australia \(family support & engagement\)](#)

Parents & Families - Catholic School Parents: [Family Resources for Supporting Diverse Learning \(Catholic School Parents ACT/NSW\)](#)

Australian Catholics Magazine & Education Hub: [Read Australian Catholics \(family & faith resources\)](#)

Inclusive School Communities Toolkit (Australian education resource): [Access Inclusive School Communities Toolkit \(parent & school collaboration\)](#)

Working together for Child Safety



Reviewed: April 2026

Cross Country



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

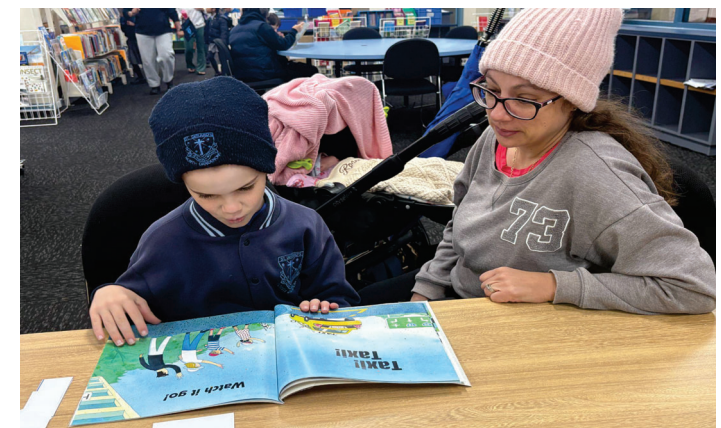


Remember

- 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 5, 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 at Library Club, students participated in a Puzzle Race Competition. Working in teams, students showed excellent teamwork, problem solving skills, and persistence as they raced to complete their puzzles.

Congratulations to our winners: Azalea, Joanne, Riona, Sophia, Dekota and Naomi.

It was wonderful to see all students working so well together. One group even chose to help the final team complete their puzzle, and together they celebrated with a group photo. Superstars all round.

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 next week. 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 5, May 2026



Well done to these winners from last week for creating the highest number in the Magic Number activity we played and receiving their certificates this week.



Miss Stephanie Adrien



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.



COMMUNITY NOTICE

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

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

- Rutesh Yr 1
- Andrew Yr 3
- Nila Yr 1

