

ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



TERM 1 - WEEK 8

24th MARCH, 2023



Celebrating Harmony Day with a joyful Samoan dance! These two children remind us of the beauty in diversity and the importance of embracing different cultures. Let's dance together towards a more harmonious world!



Dear God,

We come to you today to thank you for the beautiful celebration of Harmony Day that we experienced. We thank you for the diverse cultures and backgrounds that make up our community and the richness they bring to our lives.

We pray that you continue to guide us towards unity, understanding, and respect for one another. Help us to embrace our differences and to celebrate them, so that we can all work together towards a brighter and more peaceful future.

We ask that you bless our community with love, kindness, and compassion, and help us to always strive towards harmony and understanding.

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,

We find ourselves at the end of Week 8 and it is amazing how quickly the weeks seem to pass by. This leaves us with 2 weeks before the end of Term 1!

Last night (Thursday) our **Year 3 children celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time**. This is a significant step in a person's faith journey and the first sacrament we as a school community get to share with these children and their families, which is such a privilege. I would like to **thank Fr Shanthaiah for his ongoing support of our children and the school, Mrs Stack for her leadership and coordination of this sacrament and Ms Sonno and Ms Adrien for their work with the children in the classroom**. The children were congratulated by the school at Assembly today, shared their reflections and received their certificates.

Today was **Harmony Day** at St Gerard's with our children involved in a variety of activities designed to **celebrate our cultural diversity**. Through our liturgy, cultural parade, a performance by Didgeridoo Australia and cross age activities, we got to see all that makes our school so unique. I would like to **acknowledge the leadership and coordination of Ms Fernandez** in making this day so wonderful.

There are some **ongoing safety concerns with regard to our school car park**. I am again asking children and their families to use the **pedestrian crossing and designated walking areas**. The end of the day is particularly busy with plenty of pedestrians and cars and it is up to all of us to keep everyone safe. Students will be reminded again of our after school procedures and pedestrian areas and these procedures are on display in the School Office and contained in this newsletter. **There has also been a number of cars travelling too fast both before and after school. A reminder that there is a 5km speed limit in the laneway and car park**. I thank you in advance for your cooperation and support in keeping everyone safe.

In staffing news, I wish to inform you that **Ms Rachel Thoms will be leaving St Gerard's at the end of this term** to take up a position at St Joseph's, Springvale. Rachel has been a valued member of our staff and school over the past 13 years and has always been able to manage the many demands of her job in a calm and caring manner while being the welcoming 'face of our school'. While this is a big loss to our school community, it is a wonderful opportunity for Rachel and I am sure you join with me in wishing her well.

Lastly, we have our final **Open Day** for the term next **Tuesday 28 March**. These days are to allow families to see all the things we offer here at St Gerard's. If you know of families who are looking for a school in 2024 they are more than welcome to come from 9.15am - 5.00pm at a time that suits them or they can contact the School Office on 9791 7553 or email: principal@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au to arrange a meeting and school tour with myself.

God bless.

Paul Cowan
PRINCIPAL

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE cont'd

AFTER SCHOOL PROCEDURE

Pedestrian crossing and designated walking areas



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Important RE Dates for Term One

| Event | Date |
|-------------|---------------|
| The Passion | Wed 5th April |

Sacrament Dates, 2023

Confirmation: (Grade 6)

Confirmation Family Workshop Night:
Most Rev. Anthony J. Ireland Visit:
Confirmation:

Thursday 30th March, 7:00pm
Tuesday 2nd May, 9:30am
Saturday 13th May, 5:30pm

First Communion: (Grade 4)

First Communion Family Workshop:
First Communion:

Thursday 27th April, 7pm
Sunday 11th June, 10:30am

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

First Reconciliation Thank You

It was wonderful to be part of the beautiful First Reconciliation Ceremony last night and to witness the children take an important step in their spiritual journey. Thank you to everyone involved for making it possible.

Thank you, Miss Adrien, Mrs Govic, and Miss Sonno, for preparing the children for this sacrament with patience, guidance, and care. Your commitment to their faith formation is admirable, and the children are grateful for all that you have done.

To our wonderful parish priest, Fr Shanthaiah, thank you for your leadership and support in creating a meaningful and memorable ceremony. Your presence and guidance have been invaluable, and we are fortunate to have you as our spiritual leader in our community.

Thank you to Mr Cowan, we are grateful for your continued guidance and support as we move forward in our faith journey.

To the parents, thank you for entrusting your children's spiritual development to us. Your love and support have been instrumental in helping the children prepare for this sacrament, and I know that they will continue to look to you as they grow in their faith.

And finally, to the children, thank you for your openness and courage in participating in this ceremony. Your enthusiasm and joy are a true inspiration, and I know that you will carry the lessons of this sacrament with you for the rest of your lives. May God bless you all.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Passion Presentation



You are cordially invited to
a re-enactment of The Way of Jesus

Performed by
The Children of St. Gerard's Primary School

Wednesday 5th April, 2023 - 2:00pm
St Gerard's Primary School Hall

The Passion

We would like to invite you to join us in commemorating a significant event in our school's calendar - The Passion. This powerful performance takes place during Holy Week and allows us to journey with Jesus as we remember his last days and moments.

During Holy Week, we experience a range of emotions, from jubilation to anxiety, suffering, humiliation, and abandonment, culminating in Jesus' death on the cross. Through The Passion, we journey with Jesus towards the cross and prepare to welcome him into our presence.

We encourage you to mark your calendars for Wednesday 5th April at 2pm when The Passion will take place in the hall. We understand that some may need to take time off work, but we hope you can arrange to attend this momentous event.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you at The Passion.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Passion Costume Ideas

for children

Grade Prep – 4

Grade 5/6 children wear all **BLACK**



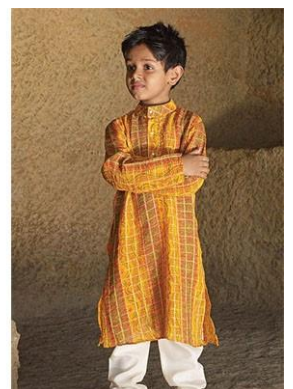
To reflect on the events of Holy Week, we are having a special school event on **Wednesday, 5th April at 2.00pm**. All children will be involved by either being a part of the crowd or re-enacting the events of Holy Week and singing.

We ask that children in Grade Prep – 4 **come to school dressed 'in the times of Jesus'**. Children are required to bring a pair of thongs or sandals as footwear to change into before the event to help make the washing of the feet run more smoothly. All grade 5/6 children wear all black.

We ask that all children bring a gold coin donation on this day to go towards Project Compassion.

Costume Ideas:

- Traditional Indian/Sri Lankan/Arabic clothing would be fantastic if you already have some at home that could look like they come from the time of Jesus
- Tea towels on heads with a headband or scarf holding it on
- Cut up old sheets with a rope or belt around the waist
- Scarf around the head



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Palm leaves needed

If you need to prune any palm trees, please wait until the weekend before The Passion and bring any palm leaves that can be used as props for The Passion to Mrs. Stack on Monday, April 3rd.

Costume for The Passion

We ask that children in Grade Prep – 4 **come to school dressed 'in the times of Jesus'**. Children are required to bring a pair of thongs or sandals as footwear to change into before the event to help make the washing of the feet run more smoothly. All grade 5/6 children wear all black.

We ask that all children bring a gold coin donation on this day to go towards Project Compassion.



The season of Lent began with Ash Wednesday, which also marked the beginning of the annual Caritas Australia Project Compassion Appeal. Donations to Project Compassion allows Caritas Australia to work with local communities around the world to end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

The theme of Project Compassion 2023 is 'For All Future Generations' and reminds us that the good that we do today will extend and impact the lives of generations to come. It invites us to make the world a better place by working together now and finding long-term solutions to global issues. We encourage you to put your compassion into action this Lent through your prayer, fasting and almsgiving by supporting Project Compassion.

A compassion box is assigned to every class, and the class that collects the highest amount of money will be rewarded with a casual dress day.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Seasons - A Program for Grief and Loss

The Seasons program provides peer support for children facing grief and loss, such as death, separation, or divorce. This useful resource will be accessible in Term 3. If you have any inquiries, please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher or Mrs. Stack.



Altar Servers

Altar serving practice takes place every Thursday evening at 5:30pm - 6:30pm in St Gerard's Church. To be eligible to serve, servers must have made their First Communion. This is a great opportunity for young members of the Church to get involved in the liturgy and learn the responsibilities of serving at the altar. If anyone has any questions regarding altar serving practice or eligibility, they can contact the parish office at 97924422.



WELLBEING



Australian Government

Harmony Week



St Gerard's celebrated Harmony Day on Friday 24th of March. Students were encouraged to pack a lunch and wear clothing related to their cultural background or something orange.

The students began their day with a Para Liturgy and cultural parade followed by a Didgeridoo Australia incursion in the courtyard where the students listened to the didgeridoo being played by Ganga Giri who is a descendant from the Palawa people in Tasmania.

Students then participated in exciting activities from around the world which taught them about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Have a look at some of the fun we had!



WELLBEING

HARMONY WEEK



everyone Belongs
www.harmony.gov.au

WELLBEING

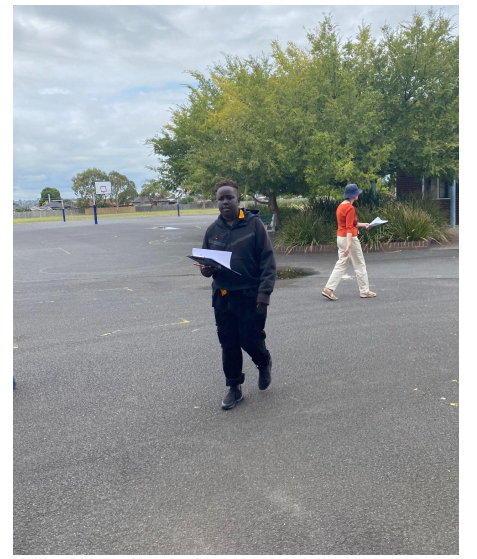
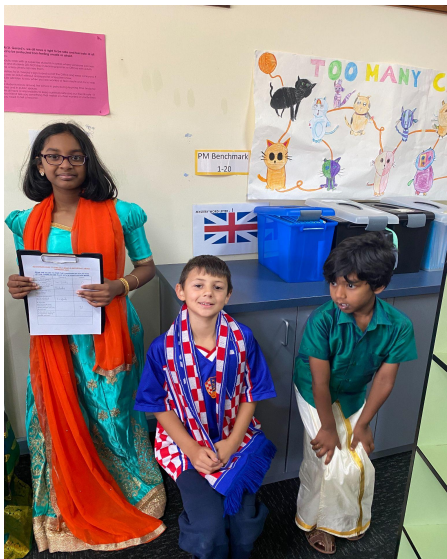
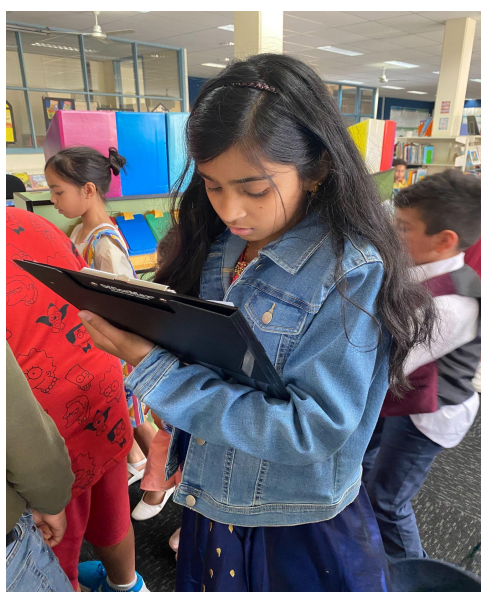
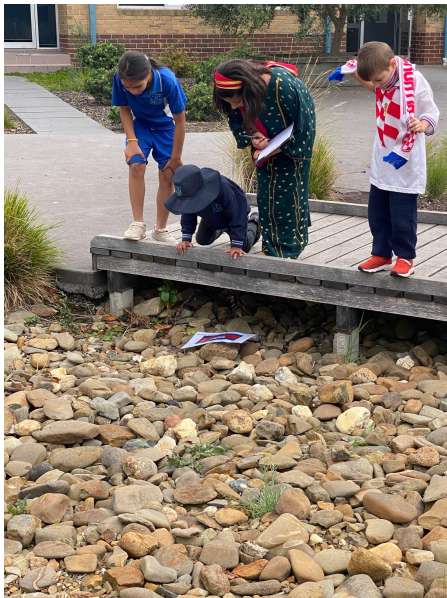
HARMONY WEEK



everyone BELONGS
www.harmony.gov.au

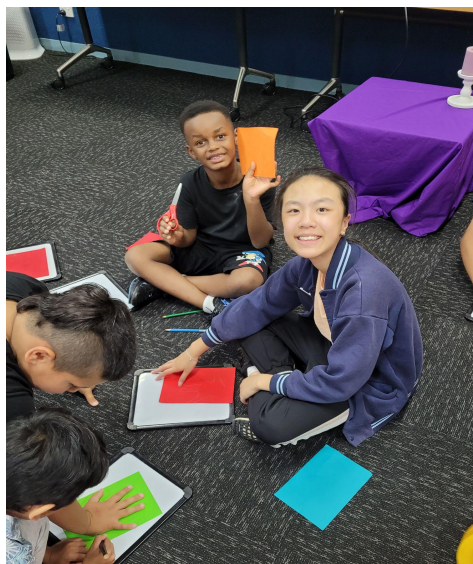
WELLBEING

Scavenger hunt



WELLBEING

Scavenger hunt



WELLBEING



WELLBEING



be
you

Facts from the Be You website

What's resilience?

Resilience refers to the ability to manage everyday stressors and challenges.

Resilience enables people to shift back along the mental health continuum towards good mental health. A child or young person's ability to be resilient can depend upon many things and can change depending upon their situation. Importantly, specific situations or events that one child or young person may find challenging, another may not. Learn more about how you can help [build resilience in children](#).

A child or young person who is resilient might:

- be optimistic
- use positive self-talk for encouragement
- have a positive sense of self
- identify and express their feelings and thoughts
- not hide away from strong feelings
- have helpful, age-appropriate strategies to manage their emotions when upset
- rearrange their plans to work around an unexpected situation
- have a sense of agency or responsibility
- keep on trying if something doesn't work out and use their judgment about when to stop
- hold a sense of purpose or hope for the future
- actively ask for help if they need it
- feel a sense of attachment to family, their learning community and to learning.

Dear Students and Families ,

Reading Before School is back by great demand.

Who? Students and parents

When? Wednesdays 8:15am - 8:30am

Where? St Gerard's Library

Come meet us there!!!

Bring a book or borrow one, come along
let's have some fun!

Reading



WELLBEING



A big thank you to all of the families who participated in National Ride to School day on Friday 24th March. Congratulations to 3/4S who had the most students walking, scooting and riding to school!!

A big thank you to Woolworths Dandenong Junction for helping us to celebrate the day by supplying us with delicious fresh fruit!

Well done to:

1st place- 3/4S with 57% riding, scooting or walking

2nd place- 3/4A with 55% riding, scooting or walking

3rd place- Foundation B with 45% riding, scooting or walking



WELLBEING



St Gerard's is a Child Safe School. Promoting the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children.

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 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

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's background and their outcomes.

CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is:

- \$125 for primary school students
- \$225 for secondary school students

HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from the website below.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments;** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances;** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about CSEF visit:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/csef.aspx>



FINANCE



CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF) APPLICATION FORM

School Name

School REF ID

Parent/carer details

Surname

First name

Address

Town/suburb State Postcode

Contact number

Centrelink pensioner concession OR Health care card number (CRN)

- - - OR

☐ Foster parent under a temporary care order* OR ☐ Veterans affairs pensioner (Gold Card)**

*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

**Applicants must provide a copy of the Veteran Affairs Gold card

Is this an application for special consideration (no CRN needed)? Yes ☐ No ☐

Student details

| Student's surname | Student's first name | Student ID | Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy) | Year level |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
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I authorise the Department of Education and Training (DET) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry of my Centrelink customer details and concession card status in order to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Australian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to provide the results of that enquiry to DET.

I understand that:

- DFFH will use information I have provided to DET to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DET personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.
- this consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.
- I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DFFH and provide it to DET so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.
- If I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DET.
- Information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to the DFFH and/or State Schools Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You are able to request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child's school.

Signature of applicant Date / /



FINANCE



CSEF ELIGIBILITY

Below are the criteria used to determine a student's eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

Criteria 1 – General eligibility

To be eligible for the fund, a parent or carer of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one
 - on the first day of Term two
- a) be a holder of one or more of the eligible financially-means tested cards OR be a temporary foster parent, and;
- b) submit an application to the school by the due date.

For the list of eligible financially-means tested cards refer to the CSEF Policy:

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/policy>

Parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with the above.

Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. CSEF is not payable to students attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooled, or TAFE.

Special Consideration

A special consideration category exists for

- Families on a bridging visa, temporary protection visa, in community detention or are asylum seeker families
- Students in temporary out of home care arrangements, including statutory kinship care

For more information, see <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/guidance/eligibility>

Eligibility Date

For concession card holders CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/carer concession card being validated successfully with Centrelink on the first day of either term one (30 January 2023) or term two (24 April 2023).

PAYMENT AMOUNTS

CSEF payment amount

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

- Primary school student rate: \$125 per year.
- Secondary school student rate: \$225 per year.

The CSEF is paid directly to your child's school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth. For more information, see:

www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/csef.aspx

Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Secondary schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents/carers so please register your interest at the school.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM

NOTE: ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

1. Complete the PARENT/CARER DETAILS section.

Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.

If you are claiming as a temporary Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.

If you are seeking special consideration, mark this in the form and provide a copy of the relevant documentation.

2. Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.

3. Sign and date the form and return it to the school office as soon as possible. The CSEF program for 2023 closes on the 23 June 2023.

FINANCE



If you hold a valid means-tested concession card you may be eligible for Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF). The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions, or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

If you are in receipt of an Health Care Card as above you may be eligible to apply for a discount in the school fees, so if you hold one of these, please bring it into the office ASAP.

IMPORTANT DATES

15-27 March: NAPLAN Testing period - Year 3 and Year 5
30th March: Confirmation Family Workshop
30th March: 5/60 Reconciliation

April:

2nd April: Daylight Savings Ends
5th April: Subway Lunch
5th April: The Passion
6th April: Last day of Term 1, 3.30pm finish

Happy
BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday to all who had celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays this week

- Iona Yr 5
- Maleah Yr 2



5th April, 2023

Envelopes will be sent out next week.
Please ensure right money in enclosed
ans SUBWAY will not give change.



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

- Springvale Indoor Sports - School Holiday Program
- Noble Park Junior football Club (AFL)
- Netball Dandenong
- Ukraine Support Fund
- Swimland Swim Club
- Noble Park Auskick Centre (AFL)

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 \$6 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.

