

St Gerard's Newsletter

Term 3, Week 7

28 August 2026



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Dear God,

Thank you for the joy of reading and the exciting adventures we discover in books.

Thank you for the stories that make us laugh, help us think, and open our minds to new ideas.

May the books we read at St. Gerard's inspire our imaginations, teach us valuable lessons, and help us grow in kindness, curiosity and understanding.

Bless our love of learning and guide us to share the joy of reading with our friends, classmates and family, so that together at St. Gerard's we can explore new worlds and celebrate the wonder of every story.

Amen.

2026 CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

SYMPHONY OF
STORIES



22-28 August 2026



@st.gerards3175

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71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



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

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

This week we celebrated Book Week with a stronger than usual focus on books and reading with activities throughout the week culminating **today** (Friday) with our **Dress up Day**. It was wonderful to see **families come to the PAC for our parade** and the school full of book characters. Reading certainly is not only for learning, but also a wonderful way to relax, be transformed to another time/place and create lifelong memories. I asked the children to find out what their families favourite childhood books/ stories were. You may even want to read/ share them together at home. I would like to thank our families for their efforts in organising costumes and acknowledge all the work **Mrs O'Brien** did to make this such a successful week. All our staff once again got into the spirit of the day and it was certainly a **celebration** of this special week.

As mentioned last week, we have made a safety addition to our after-school arrangements. The first car space on the Church side of the Car Park will have a bollard placed in it to allow more space for cars turning right out of the Pick Up Area. This should also create more space for pedestrians. **I would like to remind all families that park in the Carpark** that after picking up your child(ren) **the safest way to get to your car is via the Pedestrian Crossing or along the footpath near the church.** **Walking through the carpark is a genuine safety concern as there are many cars and lots of potential distractions.** The children have been informed and reminded of these points.

A further reminder that the **current nForma for Parents App will be decommissioned on 1 September**. Parents have been prompted to download the [new nForma Connect App](#) which many have already done so. I am asking all families to do this as soon as possible to allow you uninterrupted access. If you encounter any difficulties please come to the School Office. Thank you in advance.

As part of our SunSmart Policy children are required to wear a school hat when outside from 1 September - 30 April. Therefore, **from next Tuesday 1st September children are required to wear a School Hat when outside for any learning activity and during Lunchtimes.** It is therefore time to locate your child's School Hat or you may need to purchase a new one through our uniform supplier LOWES at Fountain Gate.

We are heading into the final few weeks of preparation for our **School Production which is on Thursday 10 September starting at 7.00pm in the St Gerard's Parish Hall.** More information will be sent out to families next week.

Lastly, our **Father's Day Breakfast will occur next Friday 4 September from 8.00am.** This is an important event for our school community as we get to acknowledge and thank the fathers and father figures that play such a vital role in the lives of our children. I hope to see you there.

God bless.

Paul COWAN
PRINCIPAL

Key Dates

Term 3, 2026 Dates

August

- 31st 8.55am Monday Meditation

September

- **1st School Hats must be worn when outside**
- 2nd 8:30 - 8:40 am Reading before school in the library
- 3rd 8.30 - 8.40am Before School Skipping in the Courtyard
- 3rd St John's Taster Day (Year 5 children)
- 3rd Walk/ Ride to School Day
- **4th Father's Day Breakfast from 8.00am**
- 7th 8.55am Monday Meditation
- 9th 8:30 - 8:40 am Reading before school in the library
- 10th 8.30 - 8.40 am Before School Skipping in the Courtyard
- **10th School Production 7.00pm**
- 11th 2.50pm Assembly
- 14th 8.55am Monday Meditation
- 16th 8:30 - 8:40 am Reading before school in the library
- 17th 8.30 - 8.40 am Before School Skipping in the Courtyard
- 18th Footy Day
- **18th End of Term 3 - school finishes at 3.30pm**

Father's Day

You're Invited To



Breakfast

Cheers to Dad – Enjoy Food & Family Moments!"

SEPTEMBER 4TH
2026

8:00 AM – 9:00 PM
ST GERARD'S PAC

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.

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 O'Brien know.



Altar Servers

Altar Server practice will resume on Thursday 23 July 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**.



Wellbeing



How does exercise affect mental health and wellbeing?

Physical activity promotes many aspects of child and adolescent development, including social and emotional skills, as well as physical development of motor skills.

It also supports mental wellbeing. We know that high levels of inactivity can lead to a greater risk of both physical and mental health problems.

Physical activity:

- can increase levels of serotonin and endorphins; the neurotransmitters involved in regulating and improving mood
- promotes sleep – which also helps regulate moods, increase energy levels and improve memory and learning
- increases the connections between the brain neurons, which improves memory and learning capacity
- pumps blood to the brain to boost mood, concentration and alertness
- promotes relaxation by reducing skeletal muscle tension
- provides children and young people with an outlet for excess energy and frustration, which relieves tension
- provides an opportunity for children and young to socialise and meet new people, reducing loneliness and isolation
- improves motor and cognitive skills, which boosts self-esteem
- distracts children and young people from negative thoughts.

These benefits also serve to improve classroom behaviour and promote a more positive learning environment.

Wellbeing



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

**Working
together for
Child Safety**



Parent/Carer Newsletter

7

Child Safe Standard 7

“Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.”

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to uphold and actively promote the wellbeing and safety of every student entrusted in our care. Our commitment to the protection of students includes ensuring that children, families and community members can raise complaints and concerns safely, are listened to respectfully, and understand how to access child-focused complaint processes that prioritise children’s voices and wellbeing. Our Catholic communities uphold clear, accessible and child-centred policies and procedures for responding to complaints and concerns, supporting staff and volunteers to act promptly, lawfully and with integrity so that child safety and wellbeing are central to every response.

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 schools governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are doing to prioritise and achieve this.

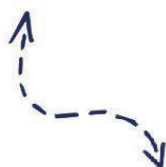
Why is it important that complaints and concerns are child-focused?

Children are safest when they know that adults will **listen** to them, take their concerns **seriously**, and act in **their best interests**.

When schools have clear and child-focused processes for handling complaints and concerns, children and families are **more likely to speak up early**.

This helps schools respond **quickly**, provide **appropriate** support, and **prevent** harm.

Child-focused processes also **promote fairness, transparency, and trust**, ensuring that concerns are addressed respectfully and with care for everyone involved.



Child Safe Standard 7

Child Safe Standard 7 reminds us that children and young people have the right to be heard, listened to, and responded to with care and justice. As scripture tells us:

“Learn to do good; seek justice” (Isaiah 1:17)

This teaches us that safeguarding children is not only about protection, but about acting justly when concerns are raised. It calls us to listen attentively, respond wisely, and place the dignity and wellbeing of children at the center of our actions.

By ensuring that complaints and concerns are handled through clear, accessible, and child-focused processes, Child Safe Standard 7 supports a school culture where children feel safe to speak up, families feel confident to raise concerns, and issues are addressed promptly and fairly, strengthening trust across the whole school community.

Working together for Child Safety



Reviewed: June 2026

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

Wellbeing

What does this look like in a school environment?

- **Clear and accessible policies and processes:** We provide simple, child-friendly and family-friendly ways to raise concerns or make complaints, including clear information about who to contact and what to expect.
- **Listening and taking concerns seriously:** All concerns raised by children, parents, carers, staff, or community members are treated with respect and care.
- **Timely and thoughtful responses:** Concerns are responded to promptly and thoroughly, with appropriate action taken to support safety and wellbeing.
- **Appropriate reporting and cooperation:** Where required, concerns are reported to relevant authorities, and the school cooperates fully to ensure children are protected.



How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Child Safe Standard 7 works best when schools and families partner together to support children's safety and wellbeing. Families can help by:

- **Encouraging children to speak up:** Let your child know they can talk to you or a trusted adult at school if something doesn't feel right.
- **Knowing how to raise concerns:** Get familiar with the school's complaints and concerns policy and processes and who to contact if needed.
- **Sharing concerns early:** If you notice changes in your child or have a worry, raising it early helps the school respond quickly and appropriately.
- **Working in partnership:** Engage openly and respectfully with the school, knowing that listening, fairness, and child wellbeing guide how concerns are managed.



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 below to learn more:

The Australian Human Rights Commission offers practical guides, resources and information on how to develop, review and maintain Child Safe organisations: [AHRC: Child Safe Organisation Resources](#)

The Federal Government has a National Office for Child Safety; National Principle 6 Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused reflects Child Safe Standard 7.

Resources regarding National Principle 6 can be found here: [National Office for Child Safety](#)

Working together for Child Safety



Ride, Walk or Roll..



Walk or Ride To School Thursday, 3rd September 2026

Thursday, 3rd September 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.

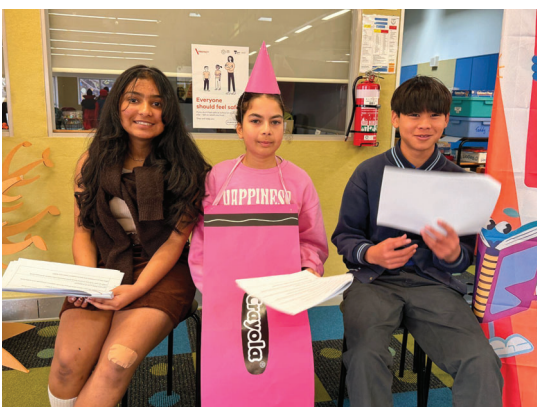
Upon arrival at school, students must hop off their bike or scooter and lock up their bike or scooter in our bike parking area (in front of the Performing Arts Centre).



Book Week



Book Week



Book Week



Winners of Book Week



Garden Club

Garden Club

This week in Garden Club, our students continued their wonderful work in the veggie garden!

The students added pea straw to our garden beds to help keep the soil moist, reduce water evaporation, regulate soil temperature and protect the plants and soil. Pea straw also helps to suppress weeds as it breaks down and adds organic matter to the soil.

The students checked on the growth and progress of our spring onions, beetroot and carrots, which were planted last week. They were excited to see how much their little seedlings had already grown! We also added silverbeet and parsley to our veggie patch, giving our garden even more delicious vegetables and herbs to grow.

The sun was shining, making it a beautiful day to be out in the garden. The students were especially excited when they spotted some worms! As we all know, worms are a wonderful sign of healthy, living soil and play an important role in helping our garden thrive.

A big thank you to all of our wonderful students who spend their time caring for our garden and being stewards of God's world. We are so proud of the way they nurture, care for and appreciate the beautiful world around us.



Garden Club

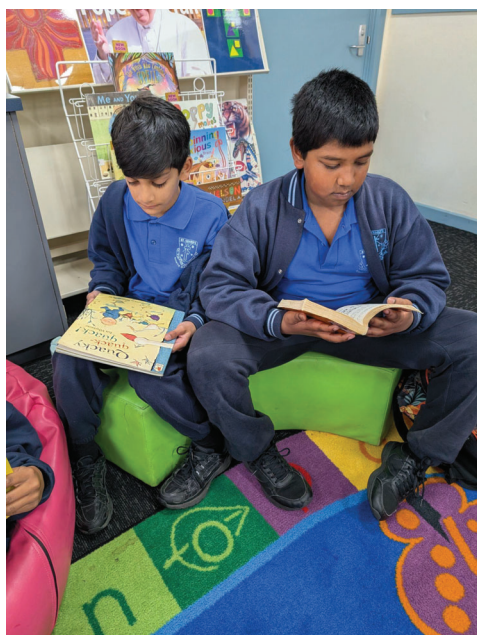
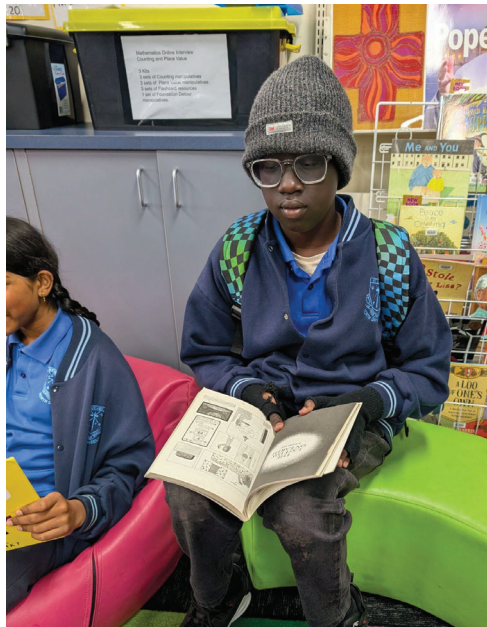


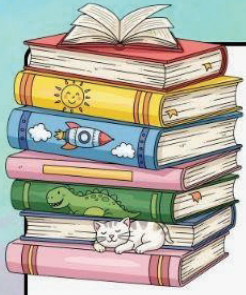
Reading before School

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.





LIBRARY NEWSLETTER



Week 7, August 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 an exciting Book Scavenger Hunt to celebrate Book Week! Working in teams, students searched the library to find books on specific topics, as well as books with titles beginning with particular letters. It was wonderful to see students using their teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills while exploring the library and discovering new books.

Congratulations to our winning team: Naomi, Jacob, Diora and Jenesa! A big well done to all students for their fantastic effort, enthusiasm and teamwork throughout the challenge. It was wonderful to see everyone working together and enjoying the excitement of Book Week!

A reminder that next week will be the last week for borrowing library books before the end of the borrowing period. Please encourage your child to return any outstanding library books and make sure all borrowed books are returned on time. Thank you for your ongoing support in helping students develop responsible borrowing habits and care for our library resources.



Miss Stephanie Adrien





LIBRARY CLUB



Week 7, August 2026



Miss Stephanie Adrien



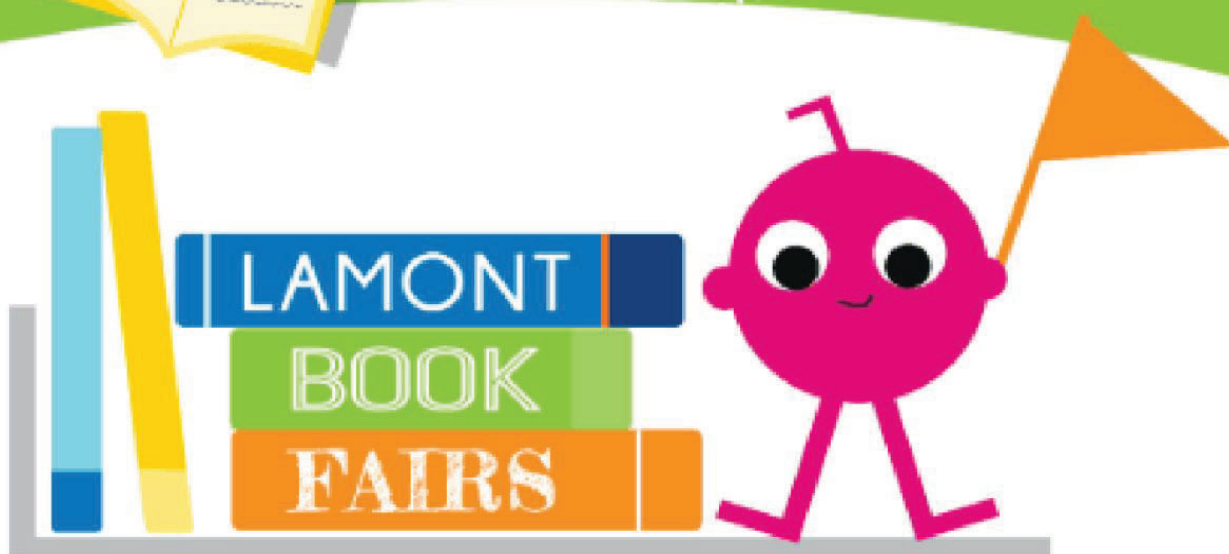
LAMONT BOOK FAIR

Coming soon,
Don't miss it! 1st
September – 9th
September

Every purchase

supports our school!

BOOKS FOR EVERYONE



www.lamontbooks.com.au

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.

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

★	RAPHAEL	Foundation
★	DINUKA	YR 2
★	IZABELLA	YR 5
★	OSCAR	YR 6
★	JESSTON	YR 4



SERVICE HOURS

COST

Before School Care
6:45AM – 8:45AM

\$30/\$35
PERMANENT/CASUAL

After School Care
3:30PM – 6:30PM

\$35/\$40
PERMANENT/CASUAL

Pupil-Free Day
7:00AM – 6:00PM

\$83

fees effective 02 Mar 2026

ylv.com.au



SALE ENDS SUNDAY 30TH AUGUST

20% OFF
SCHOOLWEAR
INSTORE & ONLINE*

*T&C's apply. Not in conjunction with any other offer. Excludes mark downs & gift cards. No Rainchecks. Discount applies to original prices, not markdown prices.



**ST GERARD'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

SERVICE CONTACT:
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