

St Gerard's Primary School

NEWSLETTER

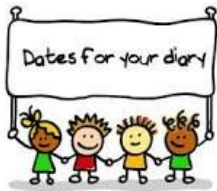


Term 1 Week 1

www.sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au

03 97917553

29 January 2021



Uniform Shop Opening Times 2021

Monday mornings
8:30 - 10:00

School Prayer

God, our Father, as
members of the Parish
Community of
St Gerard's we praise you
for your love.

May we grow stronger in
faith and hope, and may our
love for each other, become
deeper in our daily lives.

Grant this through your
Son, and our brother, Jesus
Christ,

AMEN

Prayer For The Beginning Of The School Year

God of wisdom and might, we praise you for the wonders of our being, for mind, body and spirit. Be with our children as they begin a new school year. Bless them, their parents and their teachers and staff. Give them strength and grace as their bodies grow; wisdom and knowledge to their minds as they search for understanding; and peace and zeal to their spirits. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear families,

Welcome to the 2021 school year!

I hope that you have all had a wonderful Christmas and holiday and are ready for a fantastic year of learning with us at St Gerard's.

I would like to congratulate our students for the **positive way they have started the year**. It was great to see our Year 1 - 6 children come through the gates on Thursday with big smiles and positivity. Today (Friday) we welcomed our Preps which always brings so much joy and enthusiasm to our school. It is a significant step in a child's (and their families) life and it is hard as a parent not to remember and reflect back on our children's and our own first day of school. I am sure you would join me in **welcoming these children and their families to our community**. In addition to our Preps, we do have some other new children starting with us. It is always wonderful to have new members added to the **'St Gerard's family'**.

The health and safety of our students, staff and families is our first priority at St Gerard's. Based on the current health advice, we have **updated/ refined some of our procedures and processes**. The state government decisions and actions that occurred at the start of the new year were a timely reminder that we need to continue to be vigilant to keep our community safe. A copy of the letter that **was emailed and sent out via Seesaw** to all families outlining our current procedures and processes is attached to this newsletter. Please make sure that you are aware of our current arrangements. I would like to **thank the parents and adults who have come on-site for their understanding and following of our procedures and processes**.

Next week is our **Give Me 5** Week. This provides our students with the opportunity to build and strengthen their relationships with their new classmates and teacher(s). They will get to experience our *Give Me 5* principles of Be Spirit Filled, Be Respectful, Be Cooperative, Be Positive and Be Your Best through a variety of activities. This promises to be an exciting and event filled week.

God bless.

Paul Cowan
Principal

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Sacrament Dates, 2021

Confirmation: (Grade 6)

Confirmation:

TBA

Reconciliation: (Grade 3 and 4)

Reconciliation:

Thursday, 8 March at 7 pm (TBC)

First Communion: (Grade 4 and 5)

First Communion:

Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th June at Parish Mass times (TBC)

Whole School Masses:

Please note that whole School Masses will be celebrated onsite at school this term for **students and staff only** due to restrictions relating to density ratios.

Friday, 12th February:

Beginning of the Year at 12:00 with Preps

Wednesday, 17th February:

Ash Wednesday at 9:15 (with Preps, day of Fast and Abstinence)

Level Masses:

Please note that Level Masses will be celebrated at the **Parish Mass** in the morning this term. Students and staff will sit in reserved seating. Families are warmly welcomed to attend Mass.

Prep and Years 5/6

Thursday, 4 March at 9:15 am

Years 3/4

Thursday, 11 March at 9:15 am

Years 1/2

Thursday, 18 March at 9:15 am

Other Important Dates for Term 1

Friday, 5 February

Give Me Five Assembly (for students and staff only)

Tuesday, 16 February

Shrove Tuesday. No pancake making due to COVID restrictions. Subway will be permitted for students who pre-order.

Wednesday, 17 February

Ash Wednesday - (day of Fast and Abstinence)

Wednesday, 17 March

St Patrick's Feast Day. Students wear full school uniform with a touch of green, eg, green socks, jumper, ribbon.

Week 9 & 10

The Passion Prayer Spaces for students

Week 10

Families and/or parishioners invited to the Passion Prayer Spaces (pending COVID-19 density restrictions) TBC

The Passion Prayer Spaces

Students taking an active role in The Passion has long been a tradition at St Gerard's. Due to COVID related restrictions, this year, The Passion will be presented through Prayer Spaces. This will be an opportunity for our children to explore The Stations of the Cross and link these to life questions, spirituality and faith in a safe, creative and interactive way. Taking a Catholic perspective as a starting point, The Passion Prayer Spaces will give our children an opportunity to develop skills of personal reflection and to explore prayer in an open, inclusive and safe environment.

The hall will be transformed for a week with a range of creative activities that encourage personal reflection on issues such as forgiveness, injustice, thankfulness, big questions, identity and stillness that relates to The Way. During week 9 and 10, teachers will bring their students for reflection in The Passion Prayer Space.

The opportunity for families and/or parishioners to be invited to The Passion Prayer Spaces, pending COVID-19 density restrictions will be confirmed at a later date.

Seasons - A Program for Grief and Loss

Seasons is a peer support program for children and young people who are experiencing grief and loss in their lives. This loss may be the result of a death, separation or divorce.

This valuable program will become available in term 2. If you have any questions about the program, please don't hesitate to speak to your classroom teacher or to Mrs. Stack.

Project Compassion

Caritas Australia's annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal. Millions of Australians come together in solidarity with the world's poor to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Project Compassion Boxes will be distributed to each class during Ash Wednesday Mass. Each class will have a target amount that they would like to raise during lent. Regular updates, by the Social Justice Leadership Team, with the amount raised so far will be announced at the school assembly.

Meditation

Thank you to everyone that has remembered that we begin each day with meditation. If you arrive late to school and the meditation bell has already gone, you need to wait in the office area until meditation time has finished.

Altar Boy Training

Altar boy training will commence on Thursday, 18 February at the St Gerard's Church from 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm. If your son is in Year 4 or above and interested in becoming an altar boy, please contact Mrs Stack at the school office.

GIVE ME FIVE WEEK

Every year each grade spend the first two weeks of school exploring our Give Me 5 values:

- Be Respectful
- Be Cooperative
- Be your Best
- Be Positive
- Be Spirit Filled

We do this because we think relationships are very important and we know we learn best if we are in a classroom where everyone is being respectful, co-operative, and positive, trying their best and trying to do the things God wants them to do. We know if we make good choices in the classroom and on the playground, we can learn and be happy at school.

Week	Class
Monday	Craft Power - woodwork incursion (3/4 students)
Wednesday	Craft Power - woodwork incursion (5/6 students. Nazareth College Concert at 2:30 pm
Thursday	Dandenong Library Texthibition (all classes)
Friday	Craft Power - woodwork incursion (Prep and 1/2 students) Give Me Five Assembly



Next week we will hold our first **Garden Market Stall** for 2021.

The Environmental leaders will be selling apples, rosemary, zucchini, tomatoes and eggs straight from the garden. Parents get in early to snap up a bargain.

The garden market stall will be held on **Monday 1st of February 2021 at 3:15pm.**

Garden Dates- Term One 2021

Week	Class
Friday 5 th Feb @ 11:45- 12:45	5/6O
Friday 12 th Feb @ 1:00-1:40	1/2FP
Friday 19 th Feb @ 12:45-1:40	5/6VT
Friday 26 st Feb @ 12:45-1:40	3/4C
Friday 5 th Mar @ 12:45-1:40	No Lesson
Friday 12 th Mar @ 12:45-1:40	3/4S
Friday 19 th Mar @ 12:45-1:40	1/2L
Friday 26 th Mar @ 12:45-1:40	Prep B



DID YOU KNOW?

Facts from the Be You website

How do decision-making skills develop?



Children and young people's decision-making is strongly influenced by the expectations and values they learn from those around them.

This occurs when they:

- observe others (particularly those close to them)
- hear about and discuss values
- have opportunities to make choices and experience their consequences.

Young children regularly choose how they'll behave, which toys or games they'd like to play with, which books they would like to read, or which television shows they want to watch. As they get older, children make bigger decisions that often involve their family, friends and schoolwork. The kinds of choices children and young people make affect their wellbeing, relationships and success.

Young children have some skills for making decisions, but they don't yet have the experience to understand complex adult situations. As their brain grows, a child is more able to hold things in their mind and remember what they've learned. They also improve the way they manage their thinking and feelings, control impulsive behaviour, think about time and plan ahead, and evaluate long-term versus short-term goals. All these skills help children become better at taking action and keeping things on track.



WELCOME PREP B





26 January, 2021

Term 1, 2021 School Procedures and Processes

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2021 school year!!

I hope that this letter finds you and your family safe, well and healthy and that Christmas and the holidays have been great. Our staff are all very excited and looking forward to seeing all our students and families in the coming days (Year's 1 – 6 Thursday 28 January and Prep Friday 29 January).

The state government decisions and actions that occurred at the start of the new year were a timely reminder that we need to continue to be vigilant and follow the health advice to keep our community safe.

The health and safety of our students, staff and families is our first priority at St Gerard's and with this in mind we will have **procedures and processes to keep us all safe**. While there are some changes, many of these are similar to those of Term 4, 2020. These procedures and processes are based upon the Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) '**School Operations Guide Term 1, 2021**'.

Please read the information below carefully.

Parent (adult) access to the school

- Parents are now permitted on-site. We are asking that when adults do enter the school grounds that they **sanitise their hands and wear a face mask when inside any of our school buildings**.
- **Adults are also asked to keep their on-site visits as short as possible. Any adult who is on-site for 15 minutes or more needs to record their details at the School Office for contact tracing purposes.**
- If parents need to **contact a staff member** they can also use **Seesaw, email or phone the school (9791 7553)**.
- **Adults are asked to maintain physical distancing near our children and staff and ensure that they are wearing a face mask.**
- The **Office foyer** can have a **maximum of 3 people** at any given time.

Start of the day

- Both the entry gates will be opened at 8.30am.
- A staff member will be positioned at the front of the school to assist with car flow/pedestrian traffic, to welcome students and families back to school and remind adults that if they do enter the school grounds that they must **sanitise their hands and wear a face mask when inside any of our school buildings**.
- A staff member will be positioned at the gates to welcome students and families, provide them with hand sanitiser and remind adults that if they do enter the school grounds that they must **sanitise their hands and wear a face mask when inside any of our school buildings**.
- Families are asked to **not congregate in groups** near the **front of the school**, in the **carpark** or the **Office foyer** due to physical distancing advice.

End of the day

- Both the entry gates will be opened at 3.25 pm.
- A staff member will be positioned at the gates to remind adults that if they do enter the school grounds that they must **sanitise their hands and wear a face mask when inside any of our school buildings.**
- A staff member will be positioned at the front of the school to assist with car flow/pedestrian traffic.
- Classes will be brought around to the front of the school by their classroom teacher.
- **Prep** will wait in the usual pick up place (**underneath the St Gerard's Sign**).
- **Year 1's** will wait on the other side of the Office entrance (**left hand side as you look at the front of the school**).
- **Year 2's** will wait near the cross that is in front of the new building (**near the pedestrian crossing**).
- **Year 3's** will wait on the other side of the Office entrance (**left hand side as you look at the front of the school**).
- **Year 4's** will wait near the cross that is in front of the new building (**near the pedestrian crossing**).
- **Year 5 and 6's** will wait in the usual pick up place (**underneath the St Gerard's Sign**).
- **Families with children across Year levels will wait in one of two areas.**
- **Families with a Surname from A- H will wait together as a family in the area between the school and the Church (there will be no access to the Carpark between the Church and the Hall at this time).**
- **Families with a Surname from I-Z will wait together as a family near the steps of the Church.**
- Additional staff will be present to supervise these areas to assist with students getting into cars and walking home.
- **For those families walking home or walking to cars, please use the Pedestrian Crossing and the path along the side of the Church.**
- **For families using the car pick up lane, please be extra mindful of pedestrians.**
- Please make sure that people collecting children are familiar with these procedures.



School Pick up Arrangements from Thursday 28 January, 2021



- Families are asked to **not congregate in groups** near the front of the school, in the carpark or the Office foyer due to physical distancing advice.

Other health and safety measures

- Students will be reminded by teachers and staff to wash their hands regularly throughout the day and regular times for handwashing will be organised by the classroom teacher.
- Each class will have designated taps for handwashing with soap.
- **Students are strongly encouraged to bring their own drink bottle of water, rather than using the drinking taps.**
- Each class will have a designated tap or water dispenser for re-filling their drink bottle throughout the day.
- Students will be strongly encouraged to use their own essential items (pencils, pens, glue stick etc.)

- Where items/ resources need to be shared, hand hygiene measures will occur prior to and after the use of items and the items/ resources will be sanitised.
- Students will have their own designated seat and work space with as much space as possible between students.
- P.E. equipment that has been shared will be sanitised. P.E. lessons will be conducted outside (weather permitting).

Cleaning throughout the School Day

- **Significant additional cleaning will continue to be conducted throughout every school day by our cleaning company.** This will include items such as **high touch areas** (eg: door handles, entry and exit points, handrails, playground equipment, sports equipment), **sinks and taps** being used for handwashing and water bottle filling, **toilets** and **emptying bins**.

Monday Meditation, Friday Assemblies and whole School Masses

- These events will be conducted in the PAC and will **involve only school students and staff at this stage.**

I understand that some families may feel anxious. **If you do have any questions or concerns please contact myself via email: pcowan@sgdandenongnth.catholic.edu.au phone 9791 7553 or send me a message via Seesaw.**

Thank you for your continued support. We are looking forward to a wonderful year.

Paul Cowan
Principal