



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



# ST GERARD'S SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Term 4, Week 10

12 December 2025



Mary and her baby reminding us what Christmas is all about



## Christmas Prayer

As we come to the close of another year, we give thanks for the many blessings we have shared as a school community.

Loving God, fill our hearts with the peace and joy of Christmas. May the light of Christ guide our families, our staff, and our students during this holy season and into the year ahead.

Bless our homes with hope, our relationships with kindness, and our days with gratitude.

Be with those who are travelling, those who are in need, and those who find this time difficult. May they be comforted by Your love.

We pray that the spirit of giving, compassion and unity remains in our hearts long after Christmas Day has passed.

As we look forward to a new year, help us to walk with faith, courage, and generosity.

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 what has been a wonderful school year!

Reflecting back over the term it was filled with a wide variety of learning opportunities for our children.

From a faith perspective we had our **St Gerard's Feast Day** celebrations with the parish and as a school community which encompassed our **St Gerard's Talent Quest**. Our **Class masses** continued and we joined with our parish to celebrate **All Saints and All Souls Day Masses**. Our Year 3 - 6 children celebrated the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** on several occasions with Fr Shanthaiah. We supported people in other countries through the funds we raised from our **White Elephant Stall for Mission Month** and our **Christmas Carols** evening helped to spread Christmas cheer and remind us of the true meaning of this special time of the year. We also celebrated our **End of Year Mass** to reflect and give thanks for the 2025 year.

In the health and wellbeing area we had our final **Year 5/6 Gala Day, Bike Ed. for Years 4 - 6 and our whole school Swimming Program**. We also continued with **Walk/ Ride to School Days, Before School Reading every Wednesday morning** and **Before School Skipping every Thursday**. These activities have helped to promote a healthy start to the morning and to set us up for a productive day of learning.

Today (Friday) children brought home their **2025 Semester 2 School Report**. Please take the time to **read and discuss it with your child(ren) making sure to celebrate the successes and set goals for 2026**. I would like to congratulate all our children for their hard work throughout the second half of the year.

Looking to next week, children will spend some time with their 2026 teacher and class on Monday. We also have our **Year 6 Graduation Mass and Ceremony** where we will reflect on their time here at St Gerard's. **I would like to thank these wonderful young people for their contribution to our school and wish them all the very best for the future.** I would also like to thank Mrs Stack, Mrs O'Brien and Mrs Te for planning this evening which I am sure will be a memorable event. These celebrations will continue the following day (Tuesday) when we will have a **Guard of Honour for our Year 6 students** as they leave Primary School for the final time. All families are invited to come and be part of this celebration which will start at 3.10pm.

To our families that are leaving us I would like to thank you for being part of our school community and I hope that your future is bright. **You are always part of the 'St Gerard's Family'.**

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy and Holy Christmas and a safe holiday period filled with family, friends and fun. I pray that the true meaning of Christmas brings you joy, peace and optimism. If you are travelling near or far please be careful as we want to see you all back with us in 2026.

Lastly, **we finish school for the year next Tuesday 16 December at 3.30pm** and that **school starts next year on Wednesday 28 January, 2026.**

Until then continue to stay safe and God bless.

Paul Cowan  
PRINCIPAL



# Religious News

## Important Dates for Term 4

Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> December:

Graduation **Mass and Ceremony 7.00pm**



### **An Invitation to Bring Mary Home: A Week of Family Spiritual Connection**

Families are welcome to take home the Our Lady statue for a week to support and enrich prayer time at home. It comes with a brochure on how to pray the rosary and some rosary beads. If families would like to take the statue home, please let Mrs Stack know.

## Lunchtime Rosary

The Legion of Mary Group is working with the school to lead the Rosary during lunch breaks. These Rosary sessions will take place during the first lunch break on Tuesdays in Weeks 4 and 8 of each term.



# Christmas Carols Night





# Christmas Carols Night





# Wellbeing



## FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND CARERS

### WHAT IS THE NCCD?

The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) takes place every year.

The NCCD is a collection that counts:

- the number of school students receiving an adjustment or 'help' due to disability
- the level of adjustment they are receiving to access education on the same basis as other students.

Students are counted in the NCCD if they receive ongoing adjustments at school due to disability. This 'help' allows them to access education on the same basis as a child without disability. The NCCD uses the definition of disability in the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#).

Schools provide this information to education authorities.

Go to *What is a reasonable adjustment?* below to learn about adjustments.

### WHY IS THIS DATA BEING COLLECTED?

All schools in Australia must collect information about students with disability.

The NCCD:

- ensures that the information collected is transparent, consistent and reliable
- provides better information that improves understanding of students with disability
- allows parents, guardians, carers, teachers, principals, education authorities and government to better support students with disability.

### Student with disability loading

Funding from the Australian Government for students with disability is based on the NCCD through the student with disability loading.

Students with disability who are counted in the top three levels of the NCCD (extensive, substantial and supplementary) attract the loading. Funding is based on a per-student amount at each of the three levels of additional support. The amount of the loading reflects the level of support students with disability need to participate fully in school, with higher funding for those who need higher levels of support.

Australian Government recurrent school funding is provided as a lump sum to school authorities including state and territory governments, which can then distribute the funding to their member schools according to their own needs-based arrangements.

The Government expects schools and school systems to consider their funding from all sources (ie Australian Government, state and territory and private) and prioritise their spending to meet the educational needs of all of their students, including students with disability.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE NCCD FOR STUDENTS?

The information collected by the NCCD helps teachers, principals, education authorities and governments to better support students with disability at school.

The NCCD encourages schools to review their learning and support systems and processes. This helps schools to continually improve education outcomes for all students.

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# Wellbeing



## WHAT MUST SCHOOLS DO FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY?

All students have the right to a quality learning experience at school.

Students with disability must be able to take part in education without discrimination and on the same basis as other students. To ensure this, schools must make reasonable adjustments if needed for students with disability. Educators, students, parents, guardians, carers and others (eg health professionals) must work together to ensure that students with disability can take part in education.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* describe schools' responsibilities.

## WHAT IS A REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT?

An adjustment is an action to help a student with disability take part in education on the same basis as other students.

Adjustments can be made across the whole school (eg ramps into school buildings). They can be in the classroom (eg adapting teaching methods). They can also be for individual student need (eg providing personal care support).

The school assesses the needs of each student with disability. The school provides adjustments in consultation with the student and/or their parents, guardians and carers.

Schools must make reasonable adjustments if needed. The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* define 'reasonable adjustment' as an adjustment that balances the interests of all parties affected.

## WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE NCCD?

The definition of disability for the NCCD is based on the broad definition under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

The following students are examples of those who may be included in the NCCD if they need monitoring and adjustments.

- students with learning difficulties (such as dyslexia)
- students with chronic health conditions (such as epilepsy or diabetes).

## WHO COLLECTS INFORMATION FOR THE NCCD?

Schools identify which students will be counted in the NCCD. They base their decisions on the following:

- adjustments provided for the student (after consultation with the student and/or their parents, guardians and carers)
- the school team's observations and professional judgements
- any medical or other professional diagnoses
- other relevant information.

School principals must ensure that information for the NCCD is accurate.

## WHAT INFORMATION IS COLLECTED?

A student is counted in the NCCD if they receive reasonable adjustments at school due to disability.

Each year, schools collect the following information about the student, including:

- their year of schooling
- the level of adjustment received
- the broad type of disability.

For students who have more than one disability, the school uses professional judgement to choose one category of disability. They choose the category that most affects the student's access to education and for which adjustments are being provided.

A high level summary of the NCCD data is available to all Australian state and territory governments to improve policies and programs for students with disability.



# Wellbeing



## HOW IS THIS DATA USED?

The NCCD data informs funding and work by schools and sectors. It ensures that support for students with disability becomes routine in the day-to-day practice of schools. The NCCD also supports students in the following ways.

- The NCCD helps schools better understand their legislative obligations and the Disability Standards for Education 2005.
- Schools focus on the individual adjustments that support students with disability. This encourages them to reflect on students' needs and to better support students.
- The NCCD facilitates a collaborative and coordinated approach to supporting students with disability. It also encourages improvements in school documentation.
- The NCCD improves communication about students' needs between schools, parents, guardians, carers and the community.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) annually publishes high-level, non-identifying NCCD data.

## WHEN DOES THE NCCD TAKE PLACE?

The NCCD takes place in August each year.

## IS THE NCCD COMPULSORY?

Yes. All schools must collect and submit information each year for the NCCD. This is detailed in the *Australian Education Regulation 2013*. For more information, ask your school principal or the relevant education authority.

## HOW IS STUDENTS' PRIVACY PROTECTED?

Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all students is an essential part of the NCCD.

Data is collected within each school. Personal details, such as student names or student identifiers, are not provided to federal education authorities. Learn more about privacy in the [Public information notice](#).

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your school if you have questions about the NCCD. You can also visit the [NCCD Portal](#).

There is also a free [e-learning resource](#) about the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and Disability Standards for Education 2005.

This document must be attributed as *Fact sheet for parents, guardians and carers*.



# Wellbeing

## How does confidence develop?



### **Babies are born curious**

- They want to touch, see, hear and taste everything within their reach. Toddlers and preschoolers demonstrate their need to understand their world by asking many 'why' questions. From their repeated experiences of seeing their actions affect their world and the people in it, young children begin to see themselves as capable and having control. This helps them to feel good about themselves and builds their self-confidence.

### **When they begin school, children typically start out with high expectations**

- But when they see how they do things compared to others, their view of their own abilities often changes. They learn that they're good at some things and not so good at others. They also see how other children and educators respond to what they do. These things influence children's confidence in their abilities. They also influence how willing they are to have a go in situations where they feel unsure.

### **Your response**

- The way adults respond to children as they explore their place in the world is their template for solving many challenging and difficult problems later on. For young children, it helps strengthen their sense of self when significant adults nurture their natural curiosity and demonstrate patience and interest. In primary school years, children who are suddenly less sure of themselves may need extra support and encouragement to build a functional sense of confidence they can take with them into adolescence.



### **Give Me 5 Family Night - Planning Has Begun!**

This Thursday, we held an online meeting for families to help with the preparation and organisation of our Give Me 5 Family Night for 2026. A big thank you to our wonderful parents who attended and generously shared their time, creativity and invaluable ideas. Your contributions are helping us shape an event that is meaningful, fun, and memorable for our whole school community.

We are excited to bring these ideas to life and look forward to another fantastic Give Me 5 Night next year. Thank you once again for your ongoing support and partnership!



# Wellbeing



SAVE THE DATE

**GIVE ME 5 NIGHT**

*Thursday, 5th February 2026*

*St. Gerard's Primary School*



# Visual Arts

DECEMBER, 2025

## Visual Art Exhibition

### ST GERARD'S VISUAL ART

Over the past week, our school has proudly showcased the incredible creativity and talent of our students through the **St Gerard's Visual Art Exhibition**. This year's exhibition brought our learning spaces to life, transforming them into vibrant galleries filled with colour, imagination and thoughtful storytelling.

Thank you to **Mr Cowan** for supporting the exhibition and empowering students to share their voice in shaping this experience. Deep appreciation also goes to our LSO's, **Mr Cooke** and **Mrs Tanya**, for their tireless work in mounting student work, setting up, and preparing the exhibition.

Many of our students and staff members also gave up their own time to assist prepare for the show, and we are truly grateful for their dedication.

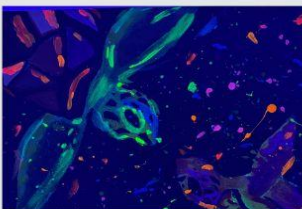


### Glocean

A highlight of this year's exhibition was our special UV gallery room, **Glocean**. Stepping inside, visitors were transported into a glowing underwater world inspired by our Sustainability Unit. Students investigated how sea creatures and ocean environments are affected by issues such as global warming, pollution, and society's increasing wastefulness.

Using fluorescent paints, recycled materials and UV-reactive elements, students created artworks that not only shone brightly under blacklight, but also carried powerful messages about caring for our oceans. From bioluminescent sea creatures to coral reefs impacted by climate change, Glocean encouraged viewers to reflect on the beauty of marine life and the urgency of protecting it.

The immersive space quickly became a favourite among students, families and staff, celebrating both creativity and environmental awareness.



VISUAL ART 2025



# Visual Arts

DECEMBER, 2025

## ST GERARD'S VISUAL ART EXHIBITION



## ST GERARD'S VISUAL ART RECOGNITION AWARD

This year, Chelsea Vilorio is the proud recipient of the **Visual Art Recognition Award**, celebrating her outstanding dedication, creativity and growth as an artist. Throughout the year, she consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic, thoughtful artistic decision-making and a willingness to experiment with new materials and techniques.

Awarded for her outstanding contribution to Visual Arts at St Gerard's, Chelsea's creativity, dedication and artistic excellence have greatly enriched our school community. Her positive attitude, leadership and passion for the arts have made her a valued role model in the school.

We congratulate Chelsea on this well-deserved achievement.



VISUAL ART 2025



# MHiPS





# MHiPS

This term, the students explored different ways to create mandalas, as a way to manage their feelings when challenged by Big Worries. The Foundation class created them out of objects found in the classroom. The children enjoyed working together and learning about mandalas.





# Library News

## LIBRARY NEWS

### LIBRARY CLUB UPDATE

This week at our final Library Club, students took part in a Scavenger Hunt activity. They worked individually, in pairs, or in small groups to find selected ornaments that had been coloured, decorated, or cut out and then hung or placed around the space to bring festive cheer. We listened to Christmas tunes while students worked wonderfully together, showing great perseverance during this quite challenging task. They also showed strong enthusiasm when counting the different ornaments they found. Well done to all students who participated and collaborated with others during this activity. Congratulations to Ameya and Grace who placed first, Willow and Drishika who placed second, and Ryan, Michael, and Anthony who placed third. Please note that borrowing has now finished for the term. It was fantastic to see regular borrowing from most students across the school, and I'm excited to see even more borrowing take place next year. Thank you all for your encouragement of reading at home and at school, and for helping to build such an important lifelong skill.

#### THE LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO BOOK ETIQUETTE





# Library News

## LIBRARY CLUB





# Important Dates / Info

## Paying School Fees

St Gerard's understands the financial commitment associated with providing a quality education for your child. Recognising the diverse needs of our families, the school has a convenient and flexible solution for paying school fees through our payment schedules accessible via the office.

**If you are having trouble paying or require assistance in setting up your payment schedule, please contact the office who will be more than happy to assist you in setting up a suitable payment arrangement.**

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in providing the best possible education for your child at St Gerard's School.

### Updating Payment Details

Parents are reminded to contact the school office if there are any changes to your payment details. This includes expired credit cards or updated bank account information. Keeping these details current helps ensure your payments are processed smoothly.

### Outstanding School Fees

If you have not yet made any payments toward school fees, we kindly ask that you begin doing so as soon as possible to avoid falling behind.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please don't hesitate to contact the school office to arrange an appointment with Principal Paul Cowan. We are here to support you and work together on a solution.



# Important Dates / Info

**WELCOME!**  
TO  
**LOWES**

We're thrilled to welcome  
**ST GERARD'S  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
as the newest  
member of the Lowes family!

We look forward to supporting your school,  
families, and community with all your  
uniform needs.

**INSTORE AT LOWES FOUNTAIN GATE**

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SHOP 2012/352 PRINCES HIGHWAY,  
NARRE WARREN, 3805,

**LOWES**  
SCHOOLWEAR

FROM  
**MONDAY  
14TH JULY**



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**WEAR NOW, PAY LATER.**



# Important Dates / Info

## December

- 15th 8:45am Whole School Meditation in the PAC
- 15th Year 6 Graduation Mass and Ceremony 7.00pm in the PAC
- **16th Students last day of school** 3:10pm Guard of honour for Year 6 students

2026

## January

- 28th Prep (Foundation) -Year 6 commence Term 1, 2026



### 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.**



# Important Dates / Info



## OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE NEWS / INFORMATION



Youth Leadership Victoria provides a safe fun and secure environment for the quality care of school aged children through a structured well-balanced Program. Our services include Before School Care, After School Care and Curriculum Day (Pupil free day). We develop fun engaging activities for children aged from 5-12 years and have an outstanding relationship with the School Community.

We provide variety of board games/art and craft activities and encourage children to participate in outdoor activities including sports by using the school grounds. We encourage children to complete their homework (if required) during before/after care and we provide a healthy, tasty and nutritious breakfast and afternoon tea and consider each child's preferences by asking what they like. For more information, please speak to the OSHC Program Coordinator Marina Walallawita.

OSHC Responsible Person Educational Leader/Nominated Supervisor/Area Manager/

OSHC phone number: 0402192685 - email: [admin@ylv.com.au](mailto:admin@ylv.com.au) / [area1@ylv.com.au](mailto:area1@ylv.com.au)

Fax: (03) 98488156

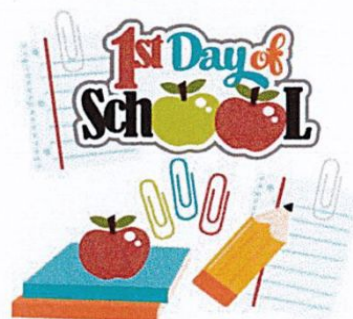
General Enquires and feedback: Rita 0412958601 Email: [rita@ylv.com.au](mailto:rita@ylv.com.au)

### OSHC operating hours:

Before School Care: 6.45am-8.45am

After School Care: 3.30pm-6.30pm

Curriculum Day 7.00am-6.00pm (depending on numbers)



### Enrolments/Booking procedures

Prior to commencing at our service please complete Enrolment form this can be uploaded by online [ylv.com.au](http://ylv.com.au) also by QR code given to all families on the OSHC family pack

### OSHC Fees

Before care 2-hour session (Permanent): - \$25.00 full fee (before rebate)

Before care (casual): - \$30.00 full fee (before rebate)

After care 3-hour session (permanent): \$30.00 full fee (before rebate)

After care (casual): -\$35.00 full fee (before rebate)

Curriculum day \$78.00 full fee (before rebate)

### CCMS Information

Did you know . . . Most of our families are eligible to receive the Child Care Subsidy this helps to cover some of the out of pocket expenses of childcare for eligible families Youth Leadership Victoria is a Child Care Subsidy approved service. For more information please call Family Assistance Office: ph. 136150





# Notice Board



Happy Birthday to all who have celebrated and will celebrate their birthdays this month.

- Chelsea Yr 6
- Joy Yr 4
- Reggie Yr 1
- Gabriel Yr 6
- Latara Foundation
- Kahlia Yr 5
- Harold Yr 2
- Elias Yr 2



- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- North Dandenong Cricket Club - Junior Teams & Woolies Blast
- Goodstart Early Learning - Princes Highway
- St John's Regional College - Tours & Information



## 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.