



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



Term 4, Week 08

ST GERARD'S SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

28 November 2025



Prayer for the First Sunday of Advent

Loving God, As we begin this season of Advent, open our hearts to the hope that your Son brings into our world.

Help us to slow down, to listen, and to make room for Jesus in our lives.

Bless our St Gerard's school community with patience, kindness, and a spirit of welcome.

May we prepare for Christmas not just with decorations and gifts, but with acts of love and generosity.

Guide us to be people of light, bringing peace and joy to others each day.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



@st.gerards3175

Principal - Mr Paul Cowan
principal@sgdandenongnths.catholic.edu.au
71 Gladstone Road, Dandenong North 3175



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

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

This week saw us celebrate our faith, reflect on the past and look to 2026.

On **Wednesday, our Year 6 children had their Reflection Day** which provided them with the opportunity to look back on their time at St Gerard's. On **Thursday** at lunchtime, some of our children gathered with the **Parish Legion of Mary to pray the Rosary** after our **Prep and Year 5/6 classes had attended the Parish Mass**. We also had our latest **Walk/ Ride to School Day** in what made it an exciting day.

Also on Thursday our **Year 5 children presented their applications for some of our student Leadership roles for 2026**. It was wonderful to see the thought, effort and detail the candidates had put into their speeches. If the quality of the speeches is anything to go by then we will be well served next year.

Today (Friday) we had a **special focus at our Assembly** to acknowledge the **First Sunday of Advent** which is this weekend. This marks the start of our preparation for Christmas - the **Coming of Jesus**. Each week from now until the end of the year we will be highlighting the key message for each week of Advent. **As always, families are more than welcome to join us in the PAC.**

Every year our school nominates a Year 6 student to receive a **Community Spirit and Leadership Award**. This award is presented by Julian Hill (MP) Federal Member for Bruce. **I would like to congratulate Gabriel who is our 2025 recipient.** Gabriel

consistently demonstrates respect, responsibility, and a genuine desire to be his very best in all that he does. His leadership reflects the essence of service, teamwork, and inclusion—placing others before himself and fostering a spirit of unity across the school. His quiet leadership, consistent positivity, and care for others make him a role model for his peers and a source of great pride for our school. He will be attending a ceremony this Sunday with his family to receive his award. **Well done Gabriel!**

As I mentioned last week, at present there are a **large number of items in our Lost Property**. The unpredictable weather and Swimming have added to this collection. If your child is missing an item it would be worth a look. Unfortunately many of the items are not named so we are unable to return them to the children. **We have relocated the Lost Property to the space outside the Year 1/2FB classroom.** I encourage families to come and have a look if you are missing items.

As Term 4 continues, I wanted to remind families that **this newsletter contains important dates** for the remainder of the year. These dates were **also in our Level Newsletters** and are **published on the front page of our website**. Our website also has a **'TRANSLATOR' function** on the front page next to the 'Event Calendar' and 'Event Quick View' which may be of assistance. From a **week by week perspective, the electronic sign at the front of the school is updated every Friday for the following week and the TV in the Office foyer displays events for the current week.**

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

CONT'D

In staffing news, Signora Venerina Harris who has been on leave this year, has decided to retire.

Venerina has been wrestling with this decision for quite a while as she is a passionate educator who has delivered quality programs at St Gerard's for over 20 years. Venerina started at St Gerard's as a Casual Relief Teacher (CRT) before coming on staff as an Intervention and English as a Second Language teacher and then moved into her most recent role as Italian teacher. A legacy that Venerina leaves is Italian Day when our school turns Red, White and Green and everything is molto bene! I am sure you will join me in congratulating and thanking Venerina and wishing her and her husband Glenn all the very best as they start the next stage in their lives. Venerina will be at our Christmas Carols Night so we can thank and farewell her as a school community.

Lastly, a reminder that our **Art Show Opens next Tuesday** and from what we have already seen it is going to be a wonderful display of the artistic gifts and talents of our children. The Art Show will be **open each day from 8.40am - 5.00pm in the PAC** and will close on Tuesday 9 December (our Christmas Carols Night).

Thank you for your ongoing support.
God bless.

Paul COWAN
PRINCIPAL



ART SHOW

ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

ART SHOWCASE



03-09

DECEMBER

8:30 - 9:00 AM BEFORE SCHOOL

3:30 - 4:00 PM AFTER SCHOOL

- Food sculptures and drawings
- Glocean interactive art space
- Life in perspective
- Collaboration of Christ
- Student personal artpieces

**CLOSING NIGHT
AFTER CHRISTMAS CAROLS**

Religious News



Religious News



"It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas..." Join us for a festive evening of Christmas caroling! Enjoy performances of your favorite carols by the talented students of St. Gerard's School in the quadrangle on Tuesday, December 9th, at 7:00 pm. We ask all children to be seated with their class by 6:45 pm.

What to wear:

Children have been asked to dress in a theme for the Christmas Carols.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Foundation | Wear a Christmas T-shirt with black pants, leggings or shorts, or a Christmas dress instead. (Foundation staff will supply any additional costumes). Santa hats if you have one. |
| Year 1/2 | Wear a Christmas T-shirt with black pants, leggings or shorts, or a Christmas dress. Students will also be given a Rudolph headband by the school. |
| Year 3/4 | Christmas coloured t-shirt, green, red, gold, white or silver (with or without Christmas design) Tinsel and Christmas hats optional. |
| Year 5/6 | All black long or short sleeve tops and long pants with different coloured tinsel around wrists and forehead. Santa hats if you have one. |

Religious News

Level Mass

Yrs: Foundation, 5/60 & 5/6T
Yrs 3/4S & 3/4W
Yrs 1/2FB & 1/2S

Wednesday 3rd December, 9:15am
Thursday 4th December, 9:15am

Reconciliation

Yrs 3/4W & 3/4S:
Yrs 5/60 and 5/6T:

Thursday, 27th November at 10:15am
Thursday, 4th December at 10:15am

Important Dates for Term 4

| | |
|--|--|
| Friday, 28th November: | First Sunday of Advent Assembly at 2:30 |
| Tuesday 9th December: | Christmas Carols Evening |
| Wednesday 10th December: | Christmas Activities Rotations |
| Wednesday 10th December: | Christmas Carols Tour of the Nursing Homes Excursion TBC |
| Friday, 12th December: | End of Year Mass, 12:00 |
| Monday, 15th 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.

Reflection Day Yr 6



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



Healthy eating helps children and young people cope more effectively with stress, better manage their emotions and get a good sleep – all of which assist learning.

Most research about nutrition and mental health has focused on adults. We know that good nutrition is associated with better mental health outcomes, whereas a poor diet is associated with a greater risk of depression and anxiety. However, emerging research that focuses on children and young people has also found a relationship between unhealthy diets and poorer mental health outcomes.

Poor nutrition has been associated with:

- externalising behaviour (such as hyperactivity, aggression, disobedience)
- symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- poor concentration and tiredness, which interfere with learning
- immune system function, which is also linked to mental health
- delayed brain development – high-fat, high-sugar diets can affect proteins in the body that are important for brain development
- iron deficiency, which has been linked to cognitive function impairments associated with learning and memory
- nutrient deficiencies, which have been associated with mental health conditions including depression and anxiety (we know that fruits and vegetables, grains, fish, lean red meats and olive oils are rich in important nutrients such as folate, magnesium, vitamins and zinc which all impact on body and brain functions, including mood regulation)



Celebrating Positive Behaviour with Raffle Tickets

At our school, we are committed to fostering a positive and respectful learning environment. To encourage and celebrate the demonstration of our core values—Be Co-operative, Be Spirit-Filled, Be Respectful, Be Best, and Be Positive—students are awarded raffle tickets when they exemplify these behaviours.

These raffle tickets serve as a tangible acknowledgment of students' efforts to uphold our school's expectations. By consistently displaying these values, students not only contribute to a harmonious school culture but also have the opportunity to participate in our monthly raffle draw.

The raffle was drawn during today's whole school assembly on Friday, November 28, 2025. The winners will be announced in next week's newsletter. We encourage all students to continue demonstrating our core values and look forward to celebrating their achievements.

Wellbeing

**WALK &
ROLL to
SCHOOL
DAY**



Walk or Ride To School

Thursday, 27th november 2025

Ride to School Day Success!

A big *thank you* to all the families who participated in Ride to School Day on Thursday 30th October! It was fantastic to see so many students walking, scooting, and riding their way to school, helping to promote healthy habits and reduce traffic around our school.

A special congratulations goes to 3/4W, who had the *most students* travel to school in active ways, what an amazing effort!

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--|-------|---|----------|
| Here | are | the | final | results: |
| 1st Place: | 3/4W | - 91% | of students riding, scooting or walking | |
| 2nd Place: | 1/2S | - 71% | of students riding, scooting or walking | |
| 3rd Place: | 1/2FB and Foundation B - 66% of students riding, scooting or walking | | | |

Well done to everyone who took part, your enthusiasm made the day a huge success! Keep up the great work and remember, every day can be a Ride to School Day!



Garden Club

This Week in Garden Club

This Thursday in Garden Club, students helped care for our chickens by topping up their food and water and collecting their fresh eggs. We then moved on to the veggie garden, where the students decided it would be a great idea to open a last minute Garden Market Stall!

A big thank you to all the wonderful families who stopped by to support us. We were thrilled to sell freshly harvested cauliflower, silver beet, parsley, fennel, and of course, eggs from our lovely, feathered friends.

Have a look at some of the fun we had!



Library News

LIBRARY NEWS

LIBRARY CLUB UPDATE

This week at Library Club, students once again gathered around our extra-long, bauble-shaped table to continue our Christmas-themed activity. They coloured and cut out even more Christmas ornaments to create additional garlands for the library, and some of these have already been hung up to bring festive cheer to the space. We listened to Christmas tunes, along with a few favourite songs chosen by the students, making it an enjoyable and creative time for everyone. The students worked wonderfully together and showed great enthusiasm in adding to our growing collection of decorations.

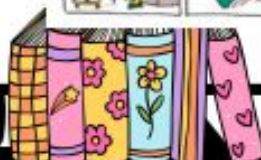
Please note that borrowing has now finished for the term. All books should begin making their way back to the library. Students with overdue books will receive a strike, and three strikes in a term will affect future borrowing opportunities.

There are lots of new titles on display, and it was fantastic to see regular borrowing from most students across the school and borrowing resumes next year!

REMINDER

Please support your child in returning library books on time by ensuring they use a library or book bag.

THE LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO BOOK ETIQUETTE



Library News

LIBRARY CLUB



Reading before School



ST GERARD'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL

READING BEFORE
SCHOOL
EVERY
WEDNESDAY
8:30 AM

Join Mrs O'Brien in the
library for some quiet
reading time with a good
book and receive a
Reading Before School
raffle ticket.



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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TO
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WEAR NOW, PAY LATER.

Important Dates / Info

December

- 1st 8:45am Whole School Meditation in the PAC
- 2nd Art Show Opens
- 3rd 8:30am Reading before school in the library
- 3rd Level Mass: Years 3/4S and 3/4W
- 4th 8:30am Skipping in the Courtyard
- 4th Level Mass: Years 1/2FB and 1/2S
- 4th Reconciliation Years 5/6O and 5/6T
- 8th 8:45am Whole School Meditation in the PAC
- 9th Christmas Carols evening at 7.00pm
- 9th Art Show Closes
- 10th 8:30am Reading before school in the library
- 11th 8:30am Skipping in the Courtyard
- 11th Subway Lunch
- 12th End of School Year Mass at 12.00 noon
- 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.



11th December, 2025

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 / area1@ylv.com.au

Fax: (03) 98488156

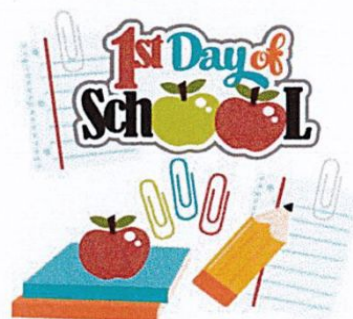
General Enquires and feedback: Rita 0412958601 Email: rita@ylv.com.au

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 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 week.

- Joseph Foundation



- *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.