

# St Gerard's Newsletter

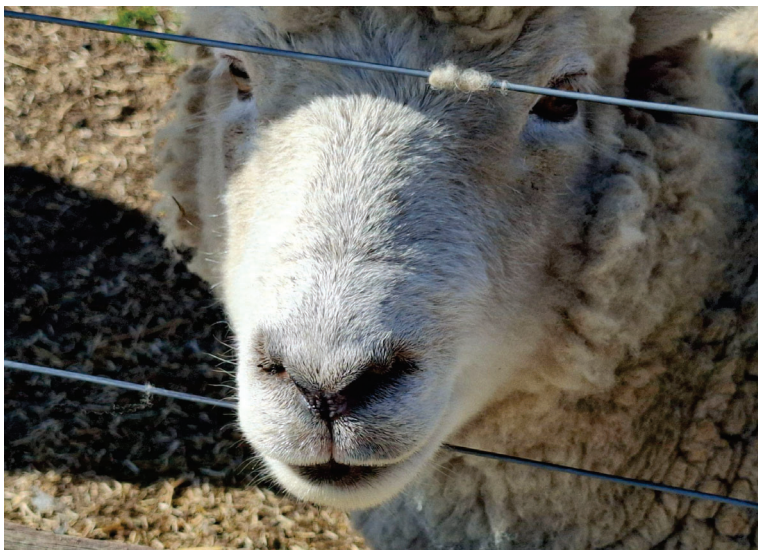
Term 2, Week 2 — 01 May 2026



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools



Foundation to Year 2 students at Myuna Farm studying different habitats and how animals have adapted to live in them.



## Learning About Animals

Dear God,

Thank You for the wonderful animals You have made.  
As we learn about them, help us to see Your love in all creation.

Guide our minds to understand,  
Our hearts to be kind and gentle,  
And our hands to care for all living things.

May we respect every creature, big and small,  
Just as You care for each one of us.

Bless our learning today,  
And help us grow in wisdom and love.

Amen.



@st.gerards3175

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



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

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear families,

This week saw some of our year levels access learning opportunities through incursions and excursions and some of our Year 6 families engage in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The title of our Inquiry Units for this term is CHANGE. This concept will be explored throughout the term in various ways across our school. To enhance learning, our **Year 3/4** classes participated in an incursion on Tuesday conducted by Swinburne University titled **States of Matter**. On Wednesday our **Prep and Year 1/2** classes went to **Myuna Farm**. These shared experiences were wonderful and support the classroom activities which build up the knowledge and understanding of our children.

Last night (Thursday) some of our **Year 6 children and their families** participated in our **Confirmation Family Night**. Celebrating Sacraments are milestone moments in the faith journey of a person and we are fortunate as a school community to be a part of it. Please keep these children and their families in your thoughts and prayers over the coming weeks.

As mentioned last week, **our school was represented by some of our Student Captains and Vice Captains** who along with myself **attended the Dandenong ANZAC Day ceremony** last Saturday. I would like to thank these leaders for giving up their time and laying a wreath on behalf of our school community. Their understanding of the significance of this ceremony was evident in the reverence they displayed.

A reminder that in the last week of Term 1 **an email was sent to all families about an nForma App** which we will use in place of *Operoo*. I am asking families to please install this App if you haven't already, so that we can communicate and gain consent for excursions and events digitally. If you experience any difficulties please come to the Office and we will be able to assist you. **We are hoping to have every family connected by the end of next week.** Thank you to those families that have done this already.

Families who have children with a **Medical Management Plan** are reminded that if there are changes to any aspect of the plan you need to **contact the School Office**. **It is vital that the information we have here at school is current and accurate and that the plan is not out of date.**

**A reminder that we have our Mother's Day Celebration next Friday 8 May in the PAC starting at 2.00pm.** We look forward to celebrating and thanking all our mothers and people who are mother figures to our children.

*It is with great sadness that I am informing you of the passing of one of our parents.*

*Mr Anh Tran, the loving father and husband of Lucia and Thi passed away recently. I am asking that you keep Anh, Thi, Lucia and their family in your thoughts and prayers at this very difficult and challenging time. As a school community we will 'wrap our arms around them' and support them in any way we can. At these times it is a reminder to us all how precious life is and how special families are.*

God bless.

Paul COWAN  
PRINCIPAL

# Key Dates

## Sacraments 2026

### First Communion: (Grade 4)

- Thursday, 14th May, 2026, First Communion Family Workshop 6:30pm
- Thursday, 11th June, 2026, First Communion Reflection Day
- Sunday, 14th June, 2026, First Communion, 10:30am
- Friday, 19th June, 2026, First Communion Assembly in the PAC

### Confirmation: (Grade 6)

- Monday 11th May Confirmation Reflection Day (Yr 6 wear casual)
- Saturday, 16th May Confirmation 5:30pm (Vigil) Fr Madry CR, Episcopal Vicar, Southern Region
- 22nd May Confirmation Assembly in the PAC

### Whole School Masses:

- Monday 25th May      Our Lady Help of Christians at 9:15
- Friday 12th June      The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at 9:15

### Level Mass:

- Prep/5/6 Level:      7th May, 9:15am

### Other Important Dates for Religion

Mother's Day Activities:	8th May 2:00pm TBC
Sorry Day Assembly:	26th May, 2:50 pm
Refugee Week Assembly:	19th June, 2:50

# Religious News

## 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 Stack know.



## 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.

## Altar Servers

Altar Server practice resumed on Wednesday 29 January 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**.

## St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal:

We're once again setting our sights on a full food cart for the St. Vincent de Paul Society Winter Appeal! Our Social Justice and Spirituality Leaders will begin gathering donated food items, with collections continuing through to the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As always, there is a little friendly competition involved. The class that contributes the most items will enjoy a well earned casual dress day.



'I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Whatever you did for one of the least of mine, you did for me.' Mathew 25

# Wellbeing



## What is resilience?

Resilience enables people to shift back along the [mental health continuum](#) towards good mental health. It's not static but is something that can change over time due to experiences and circumstance.

### Resilience is particularly important for children and young people

A child or young person's ability to be resilient can depend upon many things, particularly their relative balance of risk and protective factors. Depending upon their situation, a child or young person's resilience may vary. Importantly, specific situations or events that one child or young person may find challenging, another may not.

The transition from being a child to an adolescent to a young adult occurs over a relatively short period of time. Rapid changes in physical, psychological and social development can present numerous challenges. Children and young people who are more resilient are better able to stay on track with the biological, psychological and social demands of growing up and moving through early childhood into adolescence and beyond.

Being resilient is associated with better academic performance and school behaviour and, over the longer term, fewer mental health issues and greater life opportunities (including employment and relationships). Individual resilience (as well as family and community resilience) is something that can be fostered and developed over time.

From the Be You website

## Give Me 5 Focus

Next week, our *Give Me 5* focus will be on *being cooperative in the playground*. Students will learn and practice important behaviours such as following directions, moving safely, playing fairly, accepting rules, taking turns, and sharing and using equipment responsibly. When students are seen demonstrating these positive behaviours, they will be rewarded with a silver band in recognition of their efforts. Let's work together to make our playground a safe, fun, and respectful space for everyone!

# Wellbeing



## Child Safe Standard 3

**‘Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.’**

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 is enabled in nurturing, respectful and safe communities where the uniqueness and sacred dignity of every young person are celebrated, and they can flourish in their learning and development.

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

### Overview of Child Safe Standard 3:

To be aligned, schools must support the following:

- Children are informed about all their rights, including safety, information and participation
- The importance of friendship is recognized and support from peers is encouraged
- Where relevant to setting or context, young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs in an age-appropriate way
- Staff are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns
- Organisations have strategies to develop a culture that facilitates participation and are responsive to input from children and young people.

### The Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards are a set of guidelines that help organisations create safe environments for children and young people.

They make sure that children are protected from harm, listened to, and respected. These standards require organisations to have strong leadership, clear policies, and a culture that puts children first.

As a parent or carer, you can expect organisations to involve families, empower children, train staff properly, and respond to concerns quickly and respectfully.

This standard focuses on empowering children and young people by ensuring they are informed, respected, and actively involved in decisions that affect them. This participation helps build a school culture that is safe for them and values their voice.

Working together for Child Safety



# Wellbeing

## What does this look like in a school environment?

- **Creating Opportunities for Student Voice:** We create formal structures such as student councils and leadership programs, but we also include fewer formal opportunities so all students, especially the most vulnerable, can have their voice heard.
- **Acting on Student Feedback:** We listen deeply to what students are telling us and we respond to concerns, suggestions and ideas. This includes making sure students are aware when we have acted on their feedback.
- **Building Staff Capacity:** Our staff receive professional learning, so they understand the importance and benefits of listening to and responding to, student voice. This also includes training for staff regarding how to incorporate student voice, agency and empowerment in their daily interactions and decision making.

## How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

- **Listen and talk often:** Encourage your child to share their thoughts and feelings. Let them know it's always ok to speak up.
- **Talk about rights and safety:** Help your child understand that everyone deserves to feel safe and respected.
- **Be a role model:** Show kindness, respect, and inclusion in everyday life, children learn from what they see.
- **Stay connected with the school:** Take part in conversations or surveys about student wellbeing and safety.
- **Support student voice:** Encourage your child to get involved in school activities where their ideas can make a difference.

## 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](#).



Working together for Child Safety



Reviewed: January 2026

# Wellbeing

PLEASE JOIN OUR

*Mother's Day*

AFTERNOON

TEA

MAY 08 AT 2:00PM

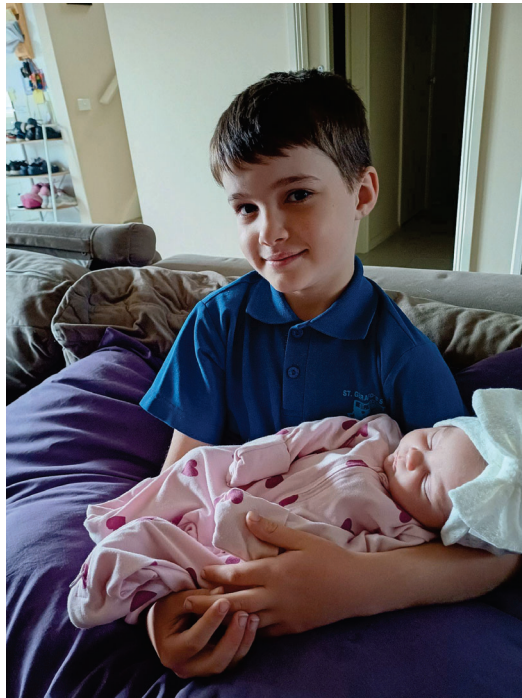


ST GERARD'S SCHOOL  
IN THE PAC

# Special Mention

We are delighted to share the joyful news that two beautiful baby girls have recently been welcomed into our school community. This is a special blessing for the families and for us all, as we celebrate new life and the love that surrounds it.

May God bless these precious children and their families abundantly. May He watch over them, grant them good health, and fill their lives with love, joy and peace. As it is written, "Children are a gift from the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). We pray that these little ones grow in faith and grace and always feel God's presence guiding them.



# Literacy

SAVE THE DATE!



LITERACY WORKSHOP EXPO - 2026

**WHERE:** ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
DANDENONG NORTH

**WHEN:** 21ST MAY. 2026

**TIME:** FROM 6.00PM TO 7.15PM

**WHO:** STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Join us in supporting your  
child's Literacy journey  
through Primary School!

**The class with the highest  
attendance wins a Free Dress  
Day!!!**

# Reading before School



Just 10~15 Minutes a Day Makes a Lifelong Difference

## ★ Why Reading Together Matters

### Builds Strong Brains

- Improves concentration and memory
- Develops imagination and creativity
- Strengthens thinking skills

### Grows Literacy Skills

- Expands vocabulary
- Improves spelling and writing
- Builds fluency and comprehension
- Increases confidence

### Strengthens Relationships

- Creates special one-on-one time
- Encourages meaningful conversations
- Helps children feel supported and valued

### Broadens Understanding

- Develops empathy
- Introduces new ideas and cultures
- Helps children understand the world

## How You Can Help at Home

- Set a regular reading time each day
- Take turns reading aloud
- Ask questions about the story
- Praise effort, not just accuracy
- Make reading enjoyable
- Let your child see you reading too

## Remember

- You don't need to be a teacher to make a difference.
- Your time, encouragement and interest matter most.

*“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”*

# Library News



## LIBRARY NEWSLETTER



Week 2, April 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 a fun and fast paced Puzzle Race Competition. Working in teams, students demonstrated excellent teamwork, problem solving skills, and persistence as they raced to complete their puzzles.

Congratulations to our winning group, Naomi, Dekota, Joram and Dhanvin, who completed their puzzle in an impressive 6 minutes. The other team showed great determination and continued working together until they successfully finished their puzzle as well.

Borrowing continues for Term 2, and Miss Adrien will be checking for any overdue books next week. Students are reminded to bring a separate library bag (book bag) on their allocated library day when borrowing books. This helps protect library materials, encourages responsibility, and ensures all students can continue to enjoy our library resources.

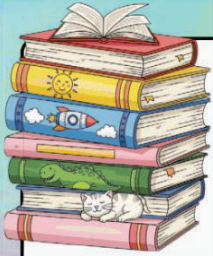
Thank you for your ongoing support.



*Miss Stephanie Adrien*



# Library News



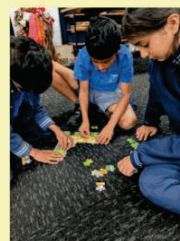
## LIBRARY CLUB



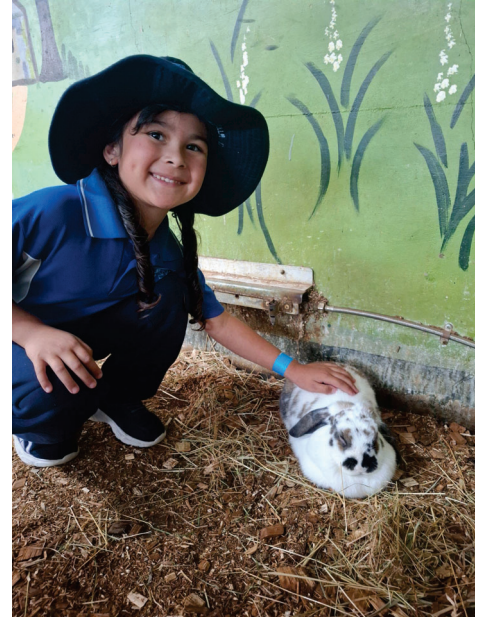
Week 2, April 2026



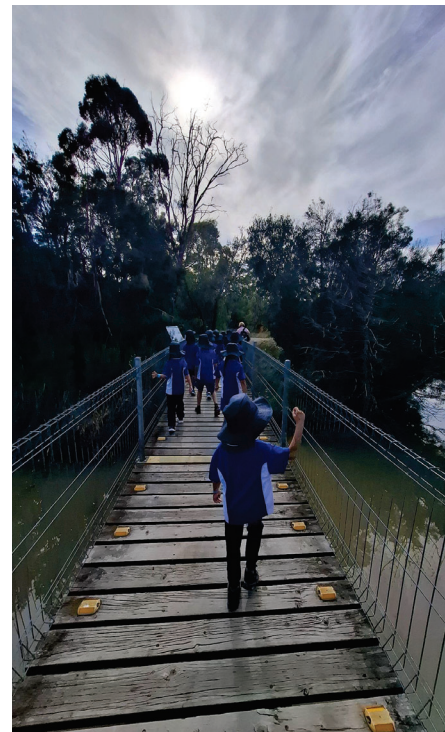
*Miss Stephanie Adrien*



# Myuna Farm



# Myuna Farm



# 2026 DATES TO REMEMBER

## Term 2, 2026 Dates

### May

- **1st SCHOOL CLOSURE DAY – Literacy Professional Learning**
- 4th Hats Off
- 8th Mother's Day Celebration at 2.00pm in the PAC
- 10th Mother's Day
- 11th Confirmation Reflection Day
- 14th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 14th First Communion Family Workshop at 6.00pm
- 15th Walk/ Ride to School Day
- 15th District Cross Country
- 16th Confirmation at 5.30pm
- 19th School Photos
- 21st OPEN DAY
- 21st SUBWAY Lunch
- 21st Literacy Workshop Expo at 6.00pm
- 24th PENTECOST Sunday
- 25th Our Lady Help of Christians whole school mass at 9.15am
- 26th National Sorry Day
- 27th OPEN DAY
- 29th Italian Day

### June

- 2nd OPEN DAY
- **8th King's Birthday Public Holiday**
- 11th Rosary with The Legion of Mary
- 11th First Communion Reflection Day
- 14th First Communion 10.30am
- 22nd - 24th Year 5/6 Camp
- 25th SUBWAY Lunch
- **26th End of Term 2 at 3.30p**

# 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.



## ST GERARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

SERVICE CONTACT:  
0402 192 685 (Marina) | [sg@ylv.com.au](mailto:sg@ylv.com.au)

SERVICE HOURS	COST
<b>Before School Care</b> 6:45AM – 8:45AM	<b>\$30/\$35</b> PERMANENT/CASUAL
<b>After School Care</b> 3:30PM – 6:30PM	<b>\$35/\$40</b> PERMANENT/CASUAL
<b>Pupil-Free Day</b> 7:00AM – 6:00PM	<b>\$83</b>

fees effective 02 Mar 2026

[ylv.com.au](http://ylv.com.au)

# Important Information



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

- RANSH Yr 1
- PROPHET Yr 5
- ENRIC Yr 1



## COMMUNITY NOTICE

- *Every Day Counts* - Primary School Attendance Information
- Springvale Indoor Sports - Indoor Soccer
- Mazenod College - Open Day 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.