



NEWSLETTER

Dear Families,

God calls us to give others a second chance. During this Lenten season, we are called to take time to reflect on this and challenge ourselves to act in a way that pushes us to genuinely give others a second chance. One such way we can do this at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School is by participating in Project Compassion. To assist with our school fundraising effort for Project Compassion, all families have received a Project Compassion money box to use for money collection at home. As a school community we are hosting two fundraising events. Last week the students wore "Crazy Socks" and coming up on **Friday 4th April** the students will have a casual clothes day, where they are asked to make a dollar donation. All donations will be passed on to Caritas Australia, the organisers of the Project Compassion initiative.



HARMONY WEEK

Harmony Week, which is celebrated next week, is a time to celebrate multiculturalism here at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. The message of Harmony Week is 'everyone belongs'. It is about inclusiveness, respect and belonging. As part of our celebration students are encouraged to wear the Harmony Week colour, "a touch of orange", on **Friday 21st March**.



EVERYONE BELONGS
www.harmony.gov.au



PARENT AND FRIENDS FUNDRAISERS

Our fantastic Parents and Friends are conducting our annual Easter Raffle fundraiser. The proceeds are going towards the purchase of uniforms for interschool sport for senior students and sporting equipment for the students to use at break times. Online Easter raffle tickets are now available for purchase via the following link: <https://rafflelink.com.au/stmcpseaster2025>. The raffle will be drawn at school on **Friday 4th April at 10:45am**



PARENT AND FRIENDS HOT DOG FUNDRAISER

On Monday, **24th March**, students will be able to order a hot dog for lunch as a fundraiser for the Parents and Friends. Hot Dogs will be \$5.50 each, with \$1.50 per hot dog going towards the P and F. Orders can be placed through QuickCliQ (our normal school canteen order company).



JUNIOR ATHLETICS CARNIVAL

Our Junior Athletic Carnival will be held on the school oval on **Friday 28th March**. This event is for students in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2. Students in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 can wear their house colours for the day i.e. Red T-Shirt or Green shorts etc. The event will run from 1.15pm – 3.15pm. Parents are welcome to join us from 1.15pm. If time permits, we will conclude the day with relay races for Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 students as time did not permit these to occur at the Senior athletics carnival.

Events	1.20pm – 1.35pm	1.35pm – 1.50pm	1.50pm- 2.05pm	2.05pm – 2.20pm	2.20pm – 2.35pm	2.35pm- 2.50pm
100m race	Foundation Girls	Year 2 Boys	Year 2 Girls	Year 1 Boys	Year 1 Girls	Foundation Boys
Over and Under	Foundation Boys	Foundation Girls	Year 2 Boys	Year 2 Girls	Year 1 Boys	Year 1 Girls
Hurdles	Year 1 Girls	Foundation Boys	Foundation Girls	Year 2 Boys	Year 2 Girls	Year 1 Boys
Basketball toss	Year 1 Boys	Year 1 Girls	Foundation Boys	Foundation Girls	Year 2 Boys	Year 2 Girls
Long lap	Year 2 Girls	Year 1 Boys	Year 1 Girls	Foundation Boys	Foundation Girls	Year 2 Boys
Vortex	Year 2 Boys	Year 2 Girls	Year 1 Boys	Year 1 Girls	Foundation Boys	Foundation Girls

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Our annual school photos are scheduled for **Thursday, 27th March**. On this day all students are required to wear their full summer academic uniform (no sports uniforms please). Photos can be ordered through the MSP website link that was sent to all families last week.



NAPLAN 2025

Students in Year 3 and Year 5 are involved in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) this week and next week. The assessments are completed online (except for Year 3 Writing which is completed on paper), which allows them to be adaptive and give a more accurate measure of student progress.

The dates and assessments are as follows:

Wednesday 12th March - Writing

Thursday 13th March - Reading

Friday 15th March – Catch-Up

Monday 17th March – Conventions of Language, Numeracy.

Tuesday 18th March - Catch-Up

We have included opportunities for students to catch-up on assessments that are missed due to absence. The online assessments will be completed on the student's Chromebook and all students require a set of headphones. Students who have adjustments to their usual assessments, that fit under the NAPLAN guidelines, will have these same adjustments available when completing the assessments. We encourage all students to view NAPLAN tests as an opportunity to show what they know and not to allow these assessments to cause any stress or concern.



FOUNDATION (PREP) 2026

All Ballarat Catholic Primary Schools have begun the 2026 Foundation (Prep) enrolment process. Please see details attached below regarding this process. Please note that current families will need to also complete the enrolment process, even if they have siblings currently attending the school.

School TV: Week 7, 2025: HARMONY WEEK

'Harmony Week is a celebration held annually in March across Australia. It's aimed at promoting diversity, respect and inclusiveness. This event is an excellent opportunity for parents to teach their children about different cultures, traditions and customs. The goal is to encourage everyone to appreciate and celebrate differences and promote a sense of community and belonging for everyone.

During Harmony Week, there are several events and activities held to bring people from different cultures together. These activities include multicultural food festivals, cultural performances, art exhibitions and workshops. Participating in these events helps children to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the diverse communities that make up Australia.

As a parent, you can engage your children in discussions about multiculturalism and encourage them to ask questions. Promoting a more harmonious and inclusive society, can help children grow up with a greater appreciation for the richness and diversity of Australia's cultural landscape.' (School TV, 2025)

Here is the link to your special report: [HARMONY WEEK](#)

School TV is offering a free online webinar "*Digital Media Literacy and Safety*" featuring Dr Michael Carr-Gregg and Susan McLean, two of Australia's leading experts, in youth wellbeing and cybersafety. Topics addressed through the session include new social media regulations, cyberbullying, exposure to hate speech and online safety and fraud. The webinar will take place on **Wednesday 19th March at 7pm**. Further details are included later in this newsletter.



SPECIAL REPORT

Celebrating
Harmony Week



FAMILY ASSISTANCE SCHEME, CAMP, SPORT AND EXCURSION FUND (CSEF) REBATES AND SCHOOL SAVER BONUS 2025

For those families who are current holders of a valid Health Care Card there are three rebates available to assist families with school fees. The Family Fee Assistance Scheme is offered by the Diocese of Ballarat, the Camps, Sports and Excursion Funds (CSEF) rebate is offered by the State Government along with the School Saver Bonus. Families who are eligible are asked to complete the attached forms, accompanied by a copy of their current Health Care Card and return them to the school office before the end of Term 1. The application forms are available from the office and are attached to the end of today's newsletter for your convenience.

FOUNDATION – YEAR 2 NEW CLASSROOM HELPERS

Helping in a junior classroom is such a fantastic and rewarding opportunity where helpers get to see how their child learns and ways they might support them at home. In addition to parents, we welcome grandparents or special friends to become helpers as well. All 'helpers' need to complete the informative training course held over two sessions. The location of these sessions will be advised as you arrive at school for the course.

Session 1: Monday 24th March 9:00-11am

Session 2: Monday 31st March 9:00-11am

If you would like to participate in this course, please complete the Google form by clicking on the following link: [2025 New Classroom Helpers Registration Form](#)

To be a volunteer at our school you will need:

- a current 'Working with Children' check which you can apply for online.
- to complete an induction process online that can be found on our website under 'Volunteers'.
- to read, sign and return to the school office, the DOBCEL Child Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct policy that is also available on our website.

FOUNDATION – YEAR 2 Trained Classroom Helpers

We will resume having volunteers in our junior classes from the start of Term 2. If you would like to assist, and have previously undertaken the course, please email Jo Wheelahan with a preference of days of the week and frequency (weekly or fortnightly), and your child's name and classroom teacher jwheelahan@stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au

School Closure days in 2025 (Student free)

Date	Purpose
Tuesday 22nd April	Diocesan 2035 Strategic Plan launch
Wednesday 23 rd April	Religious Education Professional Development
Thursday 24th April	Staff compliance training
Friday 19 th September	FLARE Literacy staff training
Monday 3rd November	Curriculum planning and reporting

May God bless you all and keep you safe,



Mr Simon Duffy,
Principal

Term 1 Calendar, 2025

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7 March	10 <i>Public Holiday - Labour Day</i>	11	12 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	13 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2Calleija</i>	14 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5
8 March	17 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	18 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	19 <i>Foundation 2026- Parent Information Session & Tour 9:15-10:00</i>	20 <i>Foundation 2026- Parent Information Session & Tour 9:15-10:00</i> <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 5/6Baker</i>	21 <i>Harmony Day – students invited to wear a touch of orange</i>
9 March/ April	24 <i>Classroom Helper Training session 9-11am (Part 1)</i>	25 <i>Foundation 2026- Parent Information Session & Tour 9:15-10:00</i>	26	27 School Photos <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 1/2Stacey</i>	28 <i>Junior School Athletics Carnival for Years F- 2 students to be held at school 1:15-3:15pm</i>
10	31 <i>Classroom Helper Training session 9-11am (Part 2)</i>	1	2	3 <i>Whole School Prayer -Stations of the Cross- focusing on Holy Week and Easter @ 2:30pm led by Year 5/6 classes</i>	4 <i>Casual Clothes Day – gold coin donation</i> <i>Easter Raffle Drawn @ 10:45am</i> <i>K's for Caritas – gold coin donation</i> <i>Last day of Term 1 - 1.45pm dismissal</i>

Term 2 Calendar

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 April	21 Easter Monday – Public Holiday	22 Staff professional development – Student-free day	23 Staff professional development – Student-free day	24 Staff professional development – Student-free day	25 ANZAC DAY - Public Holiday
2 April/May	28	29	30	1 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 3/4 Hare	2
3 May	5	6	7 Year 5/6 Interschool football	8 Mother's Day stall Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 1/2 Classes	9 Mother's Day Breakfast
4 May	12 Interschool Cross Country	13 Admin Appreciation Day	14	15 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 5/6 Smith	16
5 May	19 School Advisory Council Meeting 5pm	20	21	22 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Brady	23 Special Person Day
6 May	26 Catholic Education Week	27	28 Year 5/6 interschool Soccer	29 Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 3/4 Classes	30 Year 3/4 Mass 9.15am
7 May/June	2	3	4	5 Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 5/6 Dodd	6 Interschool netball
8 June	9 King's Birthday Holiday	10 Year 5/6 Camp	11 Year 5/6 Camp	12 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by Foundation Cudia	13 Yr 5/6 Interschool sport
9 June	16	17	18	19	20 Mass celebrating St Thomas More Feast Day @ 9.15am and Talent Show @ 12.30pm
10 June	23	24	25	26 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Harris	27
11 June/July	30	1	2	3 Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by Foundation Gannon	4 Last Day of Term 1.45pm finish



A FREE WEBINAR

Digital media literacy & safety

Supporting Primary & Secondary students

Join us for an exclusive webinar featuring two of Australia's leading experts in youth wellbeing and cybersafety as they provide invaluable insights into how to support young people navigate the online world safely and responsibly.

This webinar is **Part I of a two-part series**. In this session, topics include:

- New Social Media Regulations
- Cyberbullying
- Exposure to Hate Speech
- Online Safety and Fraud

Suitable for: Parents, grandparents, carers, educators, school leaders.



Online, Wednesday
19 March, 2025
7.00 pm



Dr Michael Carr-Gregg

Renowned child and adolescent psychologist, Michael has years of experience working with young people and families and was Chair for the Cybersafety Committee.



Susan McLean

As Australia's foremost cybersafety expert and founder of Cyber Safety Solutions, Susan will offer proactive strategies to help keep young people safe.



Don't miss out.
FREE event.
Scan to register.

EASTCO190325



Enrolment Information for Prospective 2026 Foundation (Prep) Students

at Catholic Primary Schools in the City of Ballarat

A single enrolment application process is in place for all families seeking Foundation (Prep) enrolment for the 2026 school year at a Catholic primary school within the City of Ballarat (see school list contained in this document), including families with children already in one of the eleven schools. Note that information collected through the enrolment process is collated on a common database shared by the eleven schools.

Families seeking enrolment should follow the steps below to apply by **Thursday 22 May 2025**.

Application Process

1. Contact/visit the website of the school/s you are interested in enrolling your child at – see school list.
2. Engage with the school's process for conducting information sessions or school tours
3. Complete the online Expression of Interest - Application for Enrolment form by 4.00pm on Thursday 22 May 2025 by visiting the [DOBCEL website](#) (click link). Note that this link will not be live until Monday 10 February 2025 at 9.00am.

Important:

- You will be asked to indicate your first, second and third preference schools.
- You will be required to upload your child's Birth Certificate and Baptism Certificate (if applicable).
- If you are unable to access the online form, contact Danielle at enrollments@dobcel.catholic.edu.au for assistance. Your query will be attended to as soon as possible.

Key 2025 Dates

Foundation (Prep) enrolment applications open	Monday 10 February at 9.00am
Expression of interest period closes	Thursday 22 May at 4.00pm
School principals meet to determine allocation of placements	Wednesday 4 June
Placement offers sent	Friday 13 June at 12.00pm
List of schools with vacancies published	Friday 13 June at 12.00pm
Placement acceptance closes	Friday 20 June at 4.00pm

Important:

- Each Catholic Primary School will make offers of enrolment in line with the [Diocese of Ballarat Enrolment Policy](#) which takes into consideration a variety of factors.
- Completing this expression of interest process does not guarantee an offer of enrolment in a City of Ballarat Catholic primary school.

Catholic Primary Schools

St Thomas More Primary School

Location: 100 Cuthberts Road, Alfredton
Website: www.stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5334 2244

St Patrick's Parish Primary School

Location: 119 Drummond St South, Ballarat
Website: www.spballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5332 7680

St Alipius Parish Primary School

Location: 106-108 Victoria St, Ballarat East
Website: www.saballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5331 1816

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Location: 100 Fortune Street, Ballarat East
Website: www.sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5331 6311

St Columba's Primary School

Location: 306 Howard Street, Ballarat North
Website: www.scballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5332 4894

Lumen Christi Primary School

Location: 111 Whitelaw Avenue, Delacombe
Website: www.lcdelacombe.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5336 2015

Please apply to these schools directly

St Mary's Primary School

Location: 131 Powells Road, Clarkes Hill
Website: www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5334 5280

St Patrick's Primary School

Location: 1564 Old Melbourne Road, Gordon
Website: www.spgordon.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5368 9495

St Michael's Primary School

Location: 29 Smith Street, Daylesford
Website: www.smdaylesford.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5348 1261

Siena Catholic Primary School

Location: 150 Eleanor Drive, Lucas
Website: www.slucas.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5334 3906

Emmaus Catholic Primary School

Location: 1503 Geelong Road, Mt Clear
Website: www.emtclear.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5330 2266

St Aloysius Primary School

Location: 800 Ripon Street South, Redan
Website: www.saredan.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5335 8177

St James' Primary School

Location: 260 Albert Street, Sebastopol
Website: www.sjsebastopol.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5335 8750

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Location: 480A Gillies Street, Wendouree
Website: www.olhcwendouree.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5339 4726

St Brigid's Primary School

Location: 98 Inglis Street, Ballan
Website: www.sballan.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5368 1015

St Augustine's Primary School

Location: 125 Napier Street, Creswick
Website: www.sacreswick.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5345 2106



Concession Application: Family Fee Assistance Scheme

Parents/ Guardians who hold an eligible means-tested Centrelink Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or Veteran Affairs Gold Card are eligible to apply for support under the Family Fee Assistance Scheme.

Eligible families are charged \$520 per annum (\$10 per week) for school tuition fees. The discount fee covers tuition and capital fees, but does not extend to charges for school camps, book hire or subject levies.

Family Name: _____

Student Names: _____ **Year:** _____

I/we have the following card (tick as applicable):

- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Pensioner Concession Card
- Veteran Affairs Gold Card
- A copy of the concession card is attached.

I/We wish to apply for a school fee concession under the Family Fee Assistance Scheme.
I/we understand that an annual application must be made to receive support under the scheme.
I/we confirm that we will pay the balance of school fees after the concession has been applied.

Parent 1: Name

Signature

Date

Parent 2: Name

Signature

Date

Camps, Sports and Excursions fund eligibility

Below are the criteria used to determine a student's eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

Criteria 1 – Eligibility

To be eligible* for the fund, a mature minor of sixteen years of age or over, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one; or
 - on the first day of Term two.
- a) Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder; or
 - b) Be a temporary foster parent; and
 - c) Submit an application to the school by the due date.

* A special consideration eligibility category also exists. For more information, see: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Eligibility | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/csef-eligibility)

Mature minors or parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above.

Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria

School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and seventeen years of age inclusive.

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and eighteen years inclusive.

CSEF is not payable to students' attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooling, or TAFE.

Eligibility Date

For concession card holders, CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink (see [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Policy | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/csef-policy)).

Payment amounts

CSEF payment amount

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

The CSEF is paid directly the school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child. Please refer to the policy for the current rates.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth. For more information, see: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Payment amounts | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/csef-payment-amounts)

Foundation and Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents, so please register your interest at the school.

How to complete the application form

NOTE: ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

1. Complete the PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN DETAILS section.
Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.
If you are claiming as a Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.
2. Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.
3. Sign and date the form and return it to the school office as soon as possible.

CSEF payments cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

Queries relating to CSEF eligibility and payments should be directed to the school.

Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund APPLICATION Form

School Name

School REF ID

Parent/legal guardian details

Surname _____

First name _____

Address _____

Town/suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Contact number _____

Centrelink pensioner concession **OR** Health care card number (CRN)

- - - **OR**

Foster parent* **OR** Veterans affairs pensioner (Gold Card)**

*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

**Applicants must provide a copy of the Veteran Affairs Gold card.

Student details

Child's surname	Child's first name	Student ID	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Year level

I authorise the Victorian Department of Education (DE) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry about my Centrelink customer details and concession card status to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to provide the results of any enquiry to DE regarding temporary care orders.

I understand that:

- DFFH or Centrelink will use information I have provided to DE to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DE personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.
- This consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.
- I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DFFH and provide it to my child's school so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.
- If I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DE.
- Information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to DFFH and/or State Schools Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You can request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child's school.

Signature of applicant _____ **Date** ____ / ____ / ____