



Dear Families,

Welcome back to Term 3. This term is action packed with lots of fantastic learning opportunities for the students ranging from badminton clinics, excursions, celebrating 100 Days of school for Foundation students, the intensive swimming program, Father's Day activities, Book Week activities and parade, Parent/Teacher/Student Learning Conferences, assemblies, whole school prayers, interschool athletics and Footy Colours Day - just to name a few! We look forward, as a school community, to celebrating these events together.

FULLNESS OF LIFE FOR ALL

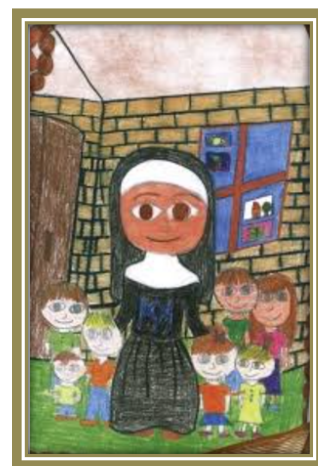
The *Fullness of Life for All* program, that covers Relationships and Sexuality Education, has commenced. It was fantastic to have some families join us at the end of Term 2 for the parent information session where the content of the program was outlined. We hope this program will allow you to begin discussions about Relationships and Sexuality Education with your children at home.

PARENT AND FRIENDS HOT DOG FUNDRAISER

Next **Monday, 4th August**, 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 school's P and F. Orders can be placed through QuickCliQ (our normal school canteen order company) up until 8am on that morning.

SAINT MARY MACKILLOP'S FEAST DAY

Next Thursday we will celebrate Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop's Feast Day. Students from across the Years 3/4 classes will lead our school community in prayer, commencing at **2.45pm**, to which parents are most welcome to attend. Mary MacKillop was an Australian religious sister who was declared Australia's first saint by the Catholic Church in 2010. She is honoured each year on her feast day, August 8th, where she is referred to as St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. Mary MacKillop founded Australia's first order of nuns, the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart and she also established St. Joseph's School in a converted stable in Penola. She was an important Australian who spent her life helping people, especially children. She is Australia's first Saint and a great role model to all for her commitment to the poor, by helping those who needed it in any way she could.



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Mr Haydn Smith, (who teaches one of our Year 5/6 classes), his wife Elke and daughter Remy on the safe arrival of their daughter Tillie on 23rd June. We wish them all the best as they settle into life as a family of four.



VISUAL ART RESOURCES REQUEST

To assist in supporting students in their Visual Art lessons next term, we are asking for donations of egg cartons (no egg residue), magazines, plastic bottle tops and old CDs/DVDs.

If you have any of these items and no longer have a use for them, could you please send them to the art room. Thank you in advance for your support.

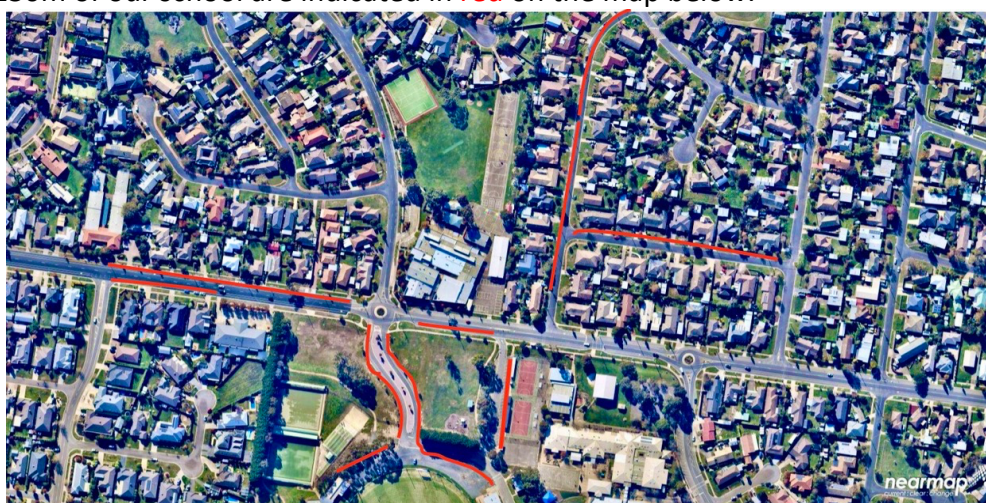
TRAFFIC CONGESTION AROUND THE SCHOOL

As all members of our school community know there is a large amount of traffic congestion around the school each afternoon when students have been dismissed. This congestion can often lead to dangerous and illegal driving around the school which endangers the safety of our students, family members, other drivers and nearby residents. The Ballarat City Council along with Victoria Police Highway Patrol have recently been monitoring this issue and have advised the school, that unless the situation improves significantly, to close off the Elaine Avenue drive through. Based on this advice and our duty of care to maintain a safe environment for all community members we ask for your assistance in reducing congestion around the school by:

- Walking to and from school
- Riding or scootering to school, and
- Dropping off and collecting your child a short distance from school.

Please only use the Elaine Avenue parent drive-through for pick up if really needed. There are over 150 carparks within 250 metres of our school that you could use to drop off and collect your child.

Please see the attached map on the following page. Areas for parents to drop off and pick up their children within 250m of our school are indicated in **red** on the map below.



The Elaine Avenue area will continue to be monitored closely in the coming weeks to inform a decision that is in the best interest of creating and maintaining a safe environment for all.

LITERACY CHANGES

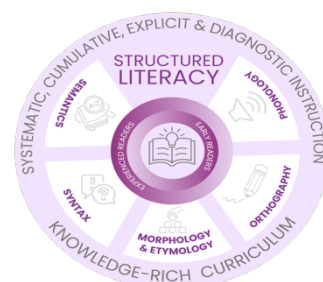
In June 2024, Education Minister and Deputy Premier, Ben Carroll, announced that all Victorian government schools will be required to implement evidence-based Literacy teaching, including the use of a systematic phonics program from F-2 and a teaching method called 'explicit instruction'.

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, along with other Catholic primary schools in the Ballarat diocese, we have been working towards meeting this requirement, and other recommendations of the Grattan Report , 'The Reading Guarantee' since 2024. This has included significant professional learning. As

a result, in line with the best-available evidence about how children learn to read and with the support of DOBCEL's Flare Primary Literacy Strategy, we are in the process of updating our approach to Literacy instruction. We are aiming to embed an effective and consistent **Structured Literacy** methodology from Foundation to Year Six.

This means that we teach all the elements of literacy, including phonics, in a more systematic and explicit way, ensuring that all our students have the foundational knowledge and understandings they need to become successful readers and writers. It also means we are de-implementing some instructional methods and resources that have been proven to be less effective or efficient than others.

You may notice some changes in the language we use to communicate student progress and you may notice some changes in practice. For example, our early readers will be making use of decodable texts in the classroom, and we will be working towards changing from the 'levelled' dot books, to taking home



'decodable books', that have been chosen specifically to align with our teaching sequence. If you have any questions or concerns about these (or any other) changes, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Please be assured that these changes have been made after much careful consideration, consultation with world-leading experts and - of course - in the best interests of our children.

A 'structured literacy' approach to teaching reading is best. It draws on decades of research evidence, including cognitive science, by explicitly and systematically teaching students the key sub-skills needed for reading and writing. (Grattan Report, February 2024)

CONGRATULATIONS TO ST THOMAS MORE SCHOOL'S STARS OF THE STAGE

We congratulate Annabelle Moran (5/6 De Bono/Edmonds) who participated in the BLOC production of *The Wizard of Oz* which premiered on 5th June 2025, at Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat. Annabelle participated in hours of rehearsals in the lead up to this incredible show. Well done!

We also extend congratulations to the young performers from STMCPs that starred in the Ballarat Centre for Music and Arts' (BCMA) productions of *Bound for Broadway* and *Guys and Dolls*.

Bound for Broadway was a 30th anniversary show for BCMA - a high-energy junior revue that took audiences through some of the BCMA's favourite musicals over the past 30 years, journeying through bold jungles, deep oceans, fantastical courtrooms and faraway kingdoms. The classic musical *Guys and Dolls* played 2 shows from BCMA's intermediate level featuring gamblers, hot box girls and the fantastic mission band! In lead roles or dancing and singing up a storm in the ensemble cast, our students shone on stage.

Well done to all for their dedication and months of rehearsals to make the three-show run a great success!



Annabelle Moran
- Year 6



Max Richter
- Year 6



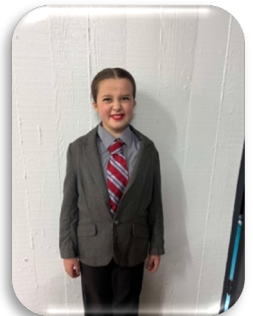
Honora Baker -Year 2
& Millie Coad - Year 3



Emma Flecknoe -Year 5
& Frankie Pyke - Year 2



Charlotte Evans
-Year 3

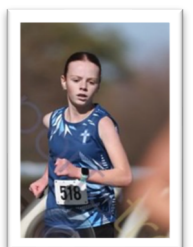


Millie Leckie
-Year 6

We also have some students currently preparing for their roles in the upcoming BCMA performance of the new Australian musical *Dot and the Kangaroo Jr.* We wish Frankie Pyke (Dot), Madeline Leckie (Joey) and Elizabeth Ryan (Ensemble) all the best as they prepare and perform later this month. Details of the family-friendly show can be found on the flyer at the end of this newsletter.

CROSS COUNTRY CHAMP

Congratulations to Year 6 student Liv McConchie, who competed in the Victorian State Cross Country Championships at Yarra Glen last Thursday. Liv finished 4th in the 3km event and in doing so has qualified for the Victorian Team. She will represent Victoria at the National Championships early September (7-11) on the Gold Coast. To contribute towards the expenses involved with Liv's trip to Queensland, the school will hold a casual clothes day on **Friday 29th August** and invite staff and students to contribute a gold coin donation to show their support for Liv representing the school at a national level.



NATIONAL CONSISTENT COLLECTION OF DATA (NCCD)

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School (and all schools across Australia) we are currently completing the National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) about students with a disability. The data counts the number of students at St Thomas More who receive additional adjustments or "help" at school due of their individual learning needs. The NCCD helps the government plan for the needs of students with disabilities.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN

We would like to remind parents that if your child has a problem at school, it is important that you communicate your concerns, in the first place, with your child's teacher as soon as possible. Dealing with the problem promptly and in a positive manner makes a huge difference to your child's resilience, self-esteem and future relationships with teachers and peers. Please be assured that the staff at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School will always deal with your concerns confidentially and sensitively to ensure concerns are resolved efficiently.

School TV: Update Week 2 , 2025: Raising Girls

Here is the link to the Raising Girls edition of SchoolTV:

<https://stmalfredton.catholic.schooltv.me/newsletter/raising-girls>

In this edition of SchoolTV - Raising Girls

'Raising girls in today's modern world can be a difficult path for parents and carers to navigate. These days, girls are transitioning to puberty a lot earlier than they used to and the physical, psychological and emotional changes they experience are challenging. As a result, by mid-adolescence, girls are twice as likely to develop mood disorders more so than boys.

Some parents and carers may feel uncertain about how best to support their daughter through the ups and downs of adolescence and how to keep the lines of communication open. With the rise of social media and technology, mental health difficulties in girls are increasing as often they are faced with online images that make it difficult to see themselves as acceptable. Ensuring a daughter's opinions are heard and her views listened to, will go a long way towards making her feel loved and supported as she tries to establish her own identity.

In this edition of SchoolTV, adult carers will attain a clearer picture of what girls are wanting from their adult carers and how best to support them through adolescence.

We hope you take time to reflect on the information offered in this edition of SchoolTV and we always welcome your feedback. If you have any concerns about your child, please contact the school counsellor for further information or seek medical or professional help.' (SchoolTV, 2025)

May God bless you all and keep you safe,

Trish Caldwell

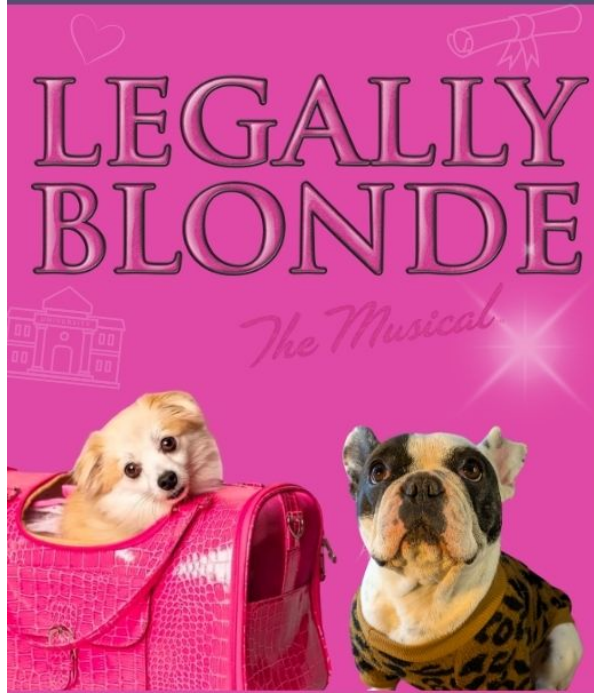
Trish Caldwell
Acting Principal



Term 3 Calendar, 2025

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 July	28	29	30	31 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Turkenburg/Blachon</i>	1 <i>Foundation 100 days of school celebration</i>
3 July	4 <i>P&F Hot Dog Fundraiser - Order through QuickCliQ</i>	5	6	7 <i>Feast of St Mary Mackillop Whole School Prayer @ 2:45pm led by students from Year 3/4 classes</i>	8
4 Aug	11	12 LSO Appreciation Day	13	14 <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 5/6 De Bono/Edmends</i>	15 Catholic School Athletics
5 Aug	18	19	20 <i>Year 3/4 Excursion to Werribee Zoo</i>	21 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 3/4 Woodhart</i>	22 Yr 5/6 Interschool Basketball
	Swimming Program <i>Foundation Gannon, 1/2Hammill, Foundation Edwards, 1/2Stacey, Foundation Cudia, 1/2Turkenburg/Blachon</i>				
6 Aug	25	26	27	28 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by Foundation Edwards</i>	29 <i>Year 1/2 Mass 9.15am Casual Clothes Day – Gold coin donation</i>
	Swimming Program <i>1/2Calleija, 1/2Harris, 3/4Hawkes/Larkin, 5/6Dodd, 3/4Hare, 5/6Baker</i>				
7 Sept	1	2	3	4 <i>Father's Day stall</i> <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:45pm led by 5/6 Baker</i>	5 <i>Father's Day breakfast -</i>
	Swimming Program <i>3/4Calleija, 5/6Davis, 3/4Woodhart, 5/6De Bono/Edmends, 3/4Gittings/Hobbs, 5/6Smith</i>				
8 Sept	8 <i>Parent/ Teacher/Student learning conferences 3.00 – 6.45pm</i>	9 <i>Parent/ Teacher/ Student learning conferences 3.00 – 6.45pm</i>	10	11 District Athletics Day <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 5/6 Dodd</i>	12 <i>Book Week Parade</i>
9 Sept	15	16	17 <i>Whole School Prayer@ 2:55pm led by Foundation Cudia</i>	18 <i>Last Day of Term 3 1.45pm finish</i>	19 <i>School Professional Development Day</i>

Ballarat Centre of Music and the Arts present



23rd and 24th August
Gay E. Gough Theatre



Tickets for both shows on sale now!



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The show Dot and the Kangaroo runs for approximately one hour, perfect for kids and families to enjoy together!

When: Saturday 23rd August 1pm & 3pm (2 shows)
Sunday 24th August 12.30pm

Where: Gay Gough Theatre Mt Clear

Tickets \$20 - \$40: <https://ticketing.humanitix.com/tours/2025-bcma-productions-tickets>

Young, rambunctious Dot longs for an adventure exploring everything the country has to offer. When she finds herself lost and afraid in the darkening Australian bush, Dot befriends a wise mother Kangaroo who enlists the help of Australia's favourite bush creatures to help Dot find her way back home.

Come along and enjoy magical new Australian musical adventure for the whole family, tickets selling fast. Don't miss out.