



NEWSLETTER

Dear Families,

In the upcoming Advent season, as a school community, we are encouraging students to think of others in our Ballarat community who are less fortunate than ourselves and in need of assistance. With this in mind, we have commenced a Christmas food appeal to donate to St Vincent de Paul. Beginning next week each family is encouraged to bring along non-perishable food items and leave them at the school office. We will be taking donations up until **Tuesday 16th December**, after which we will pass them on to St Vincent de Paul to distribute. Thanks in advance for your support. Please see the end of this newsletter for a list of recommend items to donate.



FAREWELLS

This year we farewell a few staff members - **Mrs. Sue Larkin** (Performing Arts and classroom teacher- currently on Long Service Leave), **Ms. Brigid Brady** (Classroom teacher- currently on Long Service Leave), **Ms. Tess Harris** (Classroom teacher), **Ms. Tayla Hobbs** (currently working part time as Performing Arts and Classroom teacher) and **Ms. Katie McAloon** (Learning Support Officer) from our school community. Sue, Brigid, Tess and Katie will all be farewelled at our Thanksgiving Mass at the end of the year.

PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

Click below to enjoy our school promotional video:

[Welcome to St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Alfredton](#)



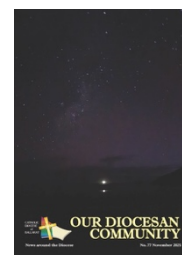
STATE BASKETBALL TEAM



St Thomas More had seven boys represent our school on Monday 17th November at the State Basketball Championships. The boys played well and showed great sportsmanship in the tournament making it all the way through to the grand final. The boys finished runners up on the day. We congratulate Paddy, Marcus, Will, Hunter, Jax, Henry and Jordan on their efforts. A big thank you to Karen Ashby and Tim Piatkov who coached the team so well throughout the competitions that boys participated in.

DIOCESAN COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

Please find below the link to the November 2025 edition of "Our Diocesan Community"
<https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/ODC-November-2025-web.pdf> This magazine is a great publication to share and read about the good news stories of our schools, parishes and agencies across the diocese.



LEARNING SUPPORT OFFICER POSITION IN 2026

We are currently advertising for a Learning Support Officer to work fulltime (8.45am – 3.15pm) five days a week in 2026. If you or someone you know is suitably qualified for this position and may be interested, please see the Employment page on our school website for details regarding the role. Click [here](#)

SCHOOL UNIFORM



Our school uniform is stocked exclusively by Noone and is available from Crockers Menswear and Schoolwear, located at 4 Armstrong St North, Ballarat. For the month of November Crockers are offering 10% discount on all uniform items, including our School Bag (\$59.95) and School Hat (\$18.50). This coming Saturday is the final day that the discount will be applied.



LIBRARY BORROWING

A reminder that the last date for children to borrow books for this year is **Friday 28th November** (Week 8). All books then need to be returned to the library by **Friday 5th December** (Week 9). Can children be encouraged to have a good look at home to find any lost or missing school library books.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS AT SCHOOL

Our Parents & Friends group are in the process of organising our annual school Christmas Carols for **Thursday 4th December**, starting at **5pm**. This will take place on the school oval and all students will be involved in performing various Christmas carols. This is a free event where families are invited to bring along their dinner and a rug or chairs to sit on. Students and parents are encouraged to dress with a Christmas theme. See additional details at end of newsletter.



THANKSGIVING MASS AND YEAR 6 GRADUATION

Our End of Year Thanksgiving Mass will be held on **Monday 15th December** at **9.15am** at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, to which all families are most welcome to attend. At this mass we will acknowledge our Year 6 graduating students and departing staff while sharing a final celebration as a school community for 2025. The Year 6 parents have organised a special Year 6 Graduation Dinner to be held at the Ballarat Golf Club on the evening of **Wednesday 17th December**.

FINAL DAY FOR STUDENTS 2025

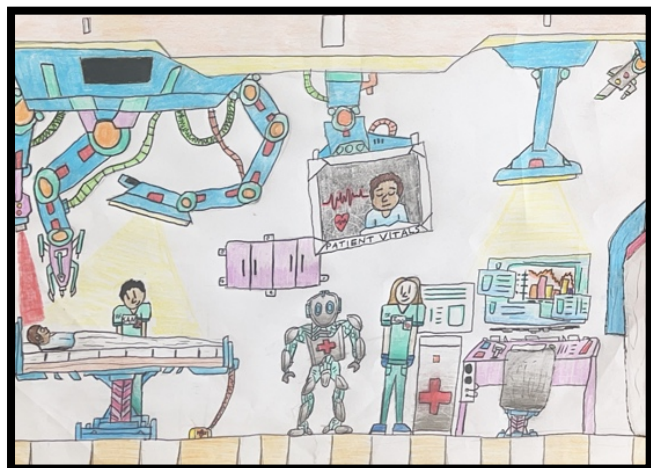
This year the final day for students will be **Thursday 18th December**. We have planned a picnic at the Victoria Park playground for the students, staff and families. More details will be sent out in the next newsletter.

BALLARTA BASE HOSPITAL ART COMPETITION.

This term students in grades 2-4 had the opportunity to take part in a competition to have their artworks displayed at the newly developed Ballarat Base Hospital.

Two students from St Thomas More have had their artworks selected for display. Congratulations to Sebastian Mulcair (3/4 Woodhart) and Jacob De Bono (1/2 Stacey) for their outstanding 'Hospital of the Future' designs.

Thank you to all students who participated in this extracurricular activity. All artworks are currently being displayed within the school.



LITERACY LEARNING AT ST THOMAS MORE 2026 AND BEYOND.

In 2025, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School joined all Catholic Primary Schools across the Ballarat Diocese looking into research and evidence-based literacy practices and approaches that best support the growth of our students. The DOBCEL Flare Literacy Strategy has been implemented in the Ballarat Diocese and is an approach to literacy instruction that applies a systematic, cumulative, explicit and diagnostic methodology to teaching phonology (the system of sounds within our language), sound-symbol relationships, syllables, morphology (the study of words and their parts), syntax (the arrangement of words within sentences) and semantics (the study of meaning in language) from Foundation to Year 6.

As we ready ourselves and our students to move into 2026, we will implement the structures and strategies to support this approach to literacy instruction. This change in our approach means that we will not require classroom helpers during literacy time. Rigorous professional learning was provided throughout 2025 and will continue to be provided for all teachers throughout 2026. In Foundation to Yr 2 classrooms, we will be using a systematic synthetic phonics program (SSPP) as part of literacy learning. After careful deliberation and research, we have chosen UFLI Foundations as our SSPP.

An information session for parents will be held on **Thursday, January 29th, 2026, 5.00pm-6.30pm**. The focus of the session will be on what literacy learning at St Thomas More looks like, with a particular focus on the F-2 classrooms.

TO OUR FABULOUS F-2 CLASSROOM HELPERS.....



As the end of the year approaches, the F-2 students and teachers would like to thank the wonderful parents and grandparents from our school community who have assisted us this year. You have all been absolutely fantastic and we have really appreciated your time, energy and help.

We will be hosting an afternoon tea on Monday, 8th December, at 2:30pm in the staff room to thank you.

Week 8 (this week) will also be the last week that classes will need helpers.

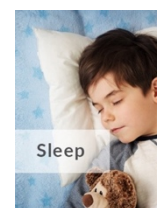
Thank you again to those fabulous volunteers who have assisted us with literacy sessions this year.

The Junior School staff and students

School TV: Update Week 8, 2025: Sleep

<https://stmalfredton.catholic.schooltv.me/newsletter/sleep>

'Students today have extremely busy schedules, with ever increasing responsibilities at school and at home. Many kids, especially adolescents, are going to bed later and later and are at risk of sleep deprivation. This affects three areas of a child's development: psychological, physiological and psychosocial. All three are essential to a child's growth, learning ability and overall wellbeing. Sleep is vital to a child's overall development and is as important as diet and exercise. Sleep also strengthens a child's immune systems and supports their ability to function properly on a daily basis. Children who do not get enough sleep show increased levels of aggressive behaviour, are less attentive and are much less active. Trying to catch up on sleep on weekends is not the answer and can still lead to severe sleep deprivation. In this edition of SchoolTV, parents will learn about the importance of sleep and how sleep deprivation can have adverse effects on a child's health and wellbeing. (School TV, 2025)

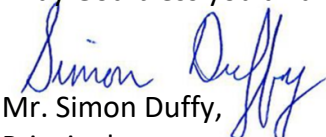


Does sleep deprivation negatively affect a child's development?



2026 Term 1 Calendar is attached – please see below.

May God bless you all and keep you safe,


Mr. Simon Duffy,
Principal

Suggested Items to donate for St Vincent de Paul Giving Tree

No glass jars please.

Item name	Weight/Size	Item name	Weight/Size
Canned Fruit	Up to 825g	Tomato sauce	Plastic bottles
Canned Baked Beans	Up to 420g	Tomato paste (plastic / sachets)	Packet
Canned Spaghetti	Up to 420g	Ready to eat non-perishable meals (e.g. Flavoured rice/ pasta/noodles and sauce)	Sachets / pouches
Canned Soup	Up to 420g	Coffee (cans or sachets – no glass)	100 or 200g
Packet Soup (e.g. Cuppa Soup)	60gm	Black Tea (no flavoured varieties please)	Asstd. sizes
2 Min Noodles	360gm	Sweet biscuits	200-250g
Pasta Sauce (plastic/cans/pouches)	350 – 500 g	Savoury biscuits	200-250g
Pasta (any dry variety)	500g	Jelly crystals	packet
Sugar	1 kg	Toothbrushes	Single or multi-pack
SR Flour	1 kg	Toothpaste	Up to 200g
Plain Flour	1 kg	Vegemite (plastic jars / tubes)	150g
Rice	1 kg	Breakfast Cereal – Weetbix or similar	350g
Cake Mix	Packet	Peanut Butter (plastic jars / tubes)	500g

When is it...

**Thursday 4th
December**

Elaine Avenue gates will
be opened at 5:00pm
(entry is FREE!!)

Santa will be joining us
from 5:00pm until
5:45pm



**Concert will run from 5:45 to 7:15pm
(approximately)**

What to bring...

BYO...chairs or rugs to be set up on the
oval. (Those who bring chairs will be asked to set
up behind the families who bring picnic rugs!)



BYO...Picnic Tea! (food, drink and
snacks)

**Grandparents, friends and family
are all invited to join us!**

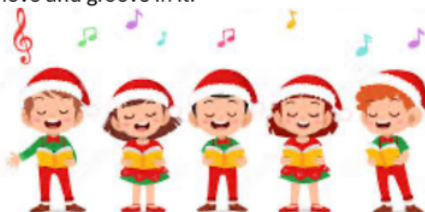
CHRISTMAS CONCERT, 2025

What to wear...

The students are encouraged to wear
* a **Christmas themed t-shirt or top...**red,
white or green, plain or decorated.

***denim bottoms;** jeans, shorts or skirt etc.
(school sports shorts will work too!)

*Anything "Christmassy" as long as you can
move and groove in it!



What else?



☺ Each class will be given instruction as to
when and where to gather prior to their
'act.'

☺ Families are reminded to supervise their
children when they are not required on
stage!



Term 4 Calendar, 2025

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8 Nov	24	25	26 <i>Foundation 2026 Transition session 9.15 – 1pm.</i>	27 Year 3/4 Camp <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 1/2 Harris</i>	28 Year 3/4 Camp
9 Nov/ Dec	1	2 <i>Yr 6 Orientation Day @ Loreto, Damascus and St Patrick's Colleges</i>	3 <i>Yr. 6 Adventure Park Excursion</i>	4 <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 3/4 Woodhart</i> Christmas Carols on the oval 5-7 pm	5
10 Dec	8 <i>Classroom Helpers Thank You Afternoon Tea</i>	9 <i>Yr 6 Transition Day @ Ballarat High School</i>	10	11 <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 5/6 Smith</i>	12
11 Dec	15` <i>End of Year Thanksgiving Mass & Year 6 Graduation 9.15am at STMCPs</i> <i>Going up day session for 2026 classes</i> <i>REPORTS AVAILABLE 2:00PM</i>	16	17 <i>Nativity - Whole School Prayer @ 2:30pm led by Foundation classes</i> <i>Yr 6 Graduation Dinner at Ballarat Golf Club @ 6pm</i>	18 <i>Students' final day Fun activity day & picnic at Victoria Park</i> <i>Dismissal @ 1.45pm</i>	19 <i>Staff Day - final day.</i>

Term 1 Calendar, 2026

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Jan/Feb	26 Australia Day Holiday Public Holiday	27 Staff first day back	28 All student resume school P and F Morning tea	29 Literacy Learning – Parent information Session 5-6.30 pm	30
2 Feb	2	3	4 Foundation rest day	5 Assembly	6 School Opening Year mass 9.15 am- all welcome
3 Feb	9 Parent/Teacher meeting 3.30 – 6pm	10 Parent/Teacher meeting 3.30 – 6pm	11 Foundation rest day	12 Sacrament of Reconciliation parent meetings 9am	13
4 Feb	16 School closure Day Staff Literacy training	17 Shrove Tuesday	18 Ash Wednesday Foundation rest day Whole school prayer - ashes	19 Swimming – Eureka Division	20
5 Feb	23 Year 5/6 Camp Cave Hill Creek	24 Year 5/6 Camp Cave Hill Creek	25 Foundation rest day	26 Whole school Prayer	27 Student wear crazy socks as a fundraiser gold coin donation
6 March	2 School Advisory Council (SAC) Meeting 5:00pm	3	4 Foundation rest day	5 Assembly	6 School Closure Day Staff Cultural Awareness Day
7 March	9 Public Holiday Labour Day	10	11 NAPLAN testing	12 NAPLAN testing Whole school Prayer-	13 NAPLAN testing. K's for Caritas as a fundraiser gold coin donation
8 March	16 NAPLAN testing	17 NAPLAN testing	18 Foundation 2027 Information session 9.15am- 10.15am	19 Assembly Foundation 2027 Information session 9.15am- 10.15am	20
9 March	23	24 Foundation 2027 Information session 9.15am- 10.15am	25 School Photos Sacrament of Reconciliation 5.30pm	26	27
10	30	31 Easter raffle 2.50pm	1 Stations of the Cross	2 Last day of term 1.45pm finish	3 Good Friday Public holiday



**COME & PLAY
SUPER CLINIC**

TUES DEC 2 - 4:30PM - 5:30PM
MARS STADIUM, BALLARAT

FREE TO REGISTER
AGES 5 - 12 YEARS OLD

WESTERN BULLDOGS
AFL VICTORIA
CoinSpot



**ENTER TO WIN
ONE OF TWO
HANDCRAFTED
CUBBY HOUSES**

PRESENTED BY
Smith & Sons
RENOVATIONS & EXTENSIONS

**SCAN HERE
TO ENTER**

TICKET PRICES
\$5: 1 ticket
\$20: 5 tickets
\$50: 15 tickets
\$100: 40 tickets
TWO LUCKY WINNERS!

WITH ALL
PROCEEDS GOING
TOWARD THE
BALLARAT
CHRISTMAS APPEAL

DRAWN ON THE 10TH DECEMBER

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

Dahlsens SINCE 1977
For the Builder.

bees **Ballarat East
Community Men's Shed**

impact **GLAZIFY** **Daniel Donachie** **Goldfields
RETAIL GROUP**

**FLETCHER
PRINT** **SHOOTPIX** **FLASHINGS** **DELA
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