

NEWSLETTER

Dear Families,

As I reflect on the year that has passed, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of gratitude and appreciation. It has been a privilege to serve another year as principal of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. Once again, our school community has demonstrated remarkable unity, commitment and generosity of spirit. The celebrations and achievements throughout the year have been many and varied, and I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to lead such a vibrant and faith-filled community.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our exceptional St Thomas More staff, who consistently strive to work in true partnership with families. Their dedication to providing personalised care, alongside rich, engaging, and challenging learning opportunities, is at the heart of our students' growth. I feel truly blessed to work with colleagues who are so enthusiastic, professional and passionate about their vocation.

I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to Fr. Ed Moloney and our School Advisory Council. Their wisdom, support, and unwavering commitment to excellence have been invaluable. Together, they have helped strengthen our mission of nurturing a strong, faith-filled Catholic community. Their guidance and advocacy have been a tremendous asset to our school and have made my role as principal both meaningful and joyful.

To our wonderful Year Six students, thank you for all you have contributed during your primary school years. We are so proud of the leaders, learners and friends you have become. As you move on to your secondary schools, I pray that the memories you take from your time at St Thomas More remain special and cherished for many years. May your future be filled with success, curiosity and courage.

I am also deeply grateful for the dedication and support of our parents. The strong partnerships between families and the school have a profound impact on student learning and wellbeing. Thank you for the trust you place in us and for the many ways you contribute to the life of our community.

Finally, to all our students: I am immensely proud of you. Your achievements this year—academic, social, emotional and spiritual—are a testament to your hard work, resilience and the love and guidance that surround you. It is a privilege to be entrusted with your care and education, and I delight in watching each one of you grow in faith, knowledge and character.



YEARS 3/4 CAMP

The Year 3/4 students thoroughly enjoyed their overnight camp to Log Cabin in Creswick, last week. I would like to thank the staff for all their efforts in making this camp possible and for providing such wonderful experiences for the students.



LOST PROPERTY

A large amount of un-named school uniform items (jumpers, jackets, vests etc) have accumulated in lost property. If your child has 'misplaced' an item, please visit the office to possibly source a replacement.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School ~ Cnr Cuthberts Rd & Elaine Ave, Alfredton 3350.

P: 03 5334 2244 E: admin@stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au I: www.stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au ABN: 77 131 997 830

DONATIONS

The school has been overwhelmed with the generosity shown by families for the Christmas food appeal for St Vincent de Paul this year. Donations are still being accepted up until **Tuesday 16th December**.



CHRISTMAS CAROLS

A big thank you to all involved with our school Christmas Carols last week. Particular thanks to Mrs. Libby Jerram and Ms. Tayla Hobbs, our school Performing Arts teachers, for preparing all the students.



LIBRARY BOOK RETURN

A reminder that all library books should now be returned to the school library. We would appreciate families having a good look around for books that are "hiding" as we are still awaiting over 150 books to be returned.

KARUTA TOURNAMENT

Twelve of our Gr 5/6 students attended the annual Japanese Karuta Tournament with seven other primary schools on November 27. They enjoyed a taiko drum demonstration, sushi and engaging with Japanese language and culture. Congratulations on a wonderful effort from all our participating students.

Willow Sharkey	Pavleen Makol	Imogen Burley
Sebastian Hogan	Max Richter	Michael Elksnis
Roman McKenzie	Archie Martin	Chelsea Chauhan
Will Neale	Isabelle Grime	Andrew Kajo



WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS

We are delighted to extend our warmest congratulations to Year 1/2 teacher Susan Calleija (now known as Mrs Susan Allan) and Brayden Allan on their recent marriage. This wonderful milestone was a joyous occasion and we wish them a lifetime filled with love, happiness and blessings. On behalf of the entire staff community, we offer our heartfelt best wishes as they begin this new chapter together. Congratulations!



SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2026

Attached to today's newsletter is a document with all dates for the 2026 St Patrick's Cathedral Parish Sacramental program.

- Reconciliation (Year 4 and above) for baptised Catholics will take place in Term 1,
- First Communion (Year 4 and above) for baptised Catholics will take place in Term 2 ,and
- Confirmation (Year 3 and above) for baptised Catholics will take place in Term 3.

Please read the required dates specific o the sacrament on the attached document. If you require any further information, please call the St Patrick's Parish presbytery on 53312933.

SCHOOL UNIFORM



Our school uniform is stocked exclusively by Noone and is available from Noone Crockers, located at 4 Armstrong St North, Ballarat. To begin the 2026 school year all students in Foundation to Year 4 are required to use the blue school logo bags. Students in Year 5 and 6 may continue with their original brown school bag (Our preference is to have all students use official school bags as opposed to other bags i.e. Nike, Roxy, Rip Curl etc.). Also, a reminder that the "old" blue school bucket hats have now been phased out. The School Bag (\$59.95) and School Hat (\$18.50) are available for purchase from Crockers.



2026 FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENTS

A reminder please that families should have returned their 2026 Fee Payment Agreement. If you are yet to do so, we ask that you return the form ASAP. If you have any questions or queries, please contact the office.

THANKSGIVING MASS AND YEAR 6 GRADUATION

Our 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 **Wednesday 17th December**.

GOING UP DAY FOR 2026 AND SCHOOL REPORTS

Students will have a "Going Up" session on **Monday 15th December** where they will meet their 2026 teacher and classmates. Your child's Semester Two school report will also be available through the Parent Access Module (PAM) on this day from 2pm.

FINAL SCHOOL DAY FOR STUDENTS 2025

This year the final school day for students will be **Thursday 18th December**. To celebrate the end of the school year the students and staff from St Thomas More Catholic Primary School will participate in a picnic and playtime at Victoria Park. Students will need a packed snack, lunch and refillable drink bottle. Alternatively, parents may wish to bring lunch to share with their child/ren for a 12pm picnic. Following lunch parents are able to take their child/ren home from the park providing they notify the classroom teacher/s before leaving. All other students will return to school for 1.45pm dismissal. We ask that you approve the parental permission (via PAM) for your child/ren to participate in this whole school activity. If, on the day, the weather is not favourable parents will be notified of an updated plan.

School TV: A Special Report: Surviving Christmas

https://stmalfredton.catholic.schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/surviving-christmas-au

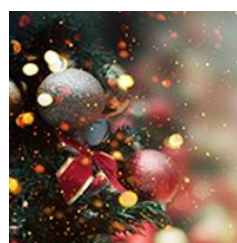
'Many people see Christmas as a wonderful time of celebration and an opportunity to spend time with family and friends. However, there are some that view it as a time of stress and hardship. This may be due to a combination of things: financial pressures, relationship issues and, quite often, loneliness, making it a very challenging time. Often the true meaning of Christmas can be lost due to commercial exploitation, but there are a number of things you can do to create a magical Christmas, without the financial burden. Creating or maintaining traditions can contribute to a sense of comfort and belonging.

Unfortunately for some, there is also an ugly side to Christmas. Support organisations often report an increase in the number of calls from people seeking help due to their inability to cope during this time. If you, or a loved one, is finding that it is all too much, then it is important to reach out to a trusted friend, family member or medical professional.

In this Special Report, parents and care givers will be presented with a number of ideas on how to achieve a stress-free Christmas and where to seek help should you need it. (School TV, 2025)

As this is the final newsletter for 2025, may God bless you all and keep you safe this Christmas season. We look forward to seeing you all next year with all students starting back on **Wednesday 28th January 2026**.

Mr. Simon Duffy,
Principal



SPECIAL REPORT

Surviving
Christmas



Term 4 Calendar, 2025

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10 Dec	8 Classroom Helpers Thank You Afternoon Tea	9 Yr 6 Transition Day @ Ballarat High School	10	11 Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 5/6 Smith	12
11 Dec	15 End of Year Thanksgiving Mass & Year 6 Graduation 9.15am at STMCPs 'Going up day' session for 2026 classes REPORTS AVAILABLE via PAM from 2:00PM	16	17 Nativity - Whole School Prayer @ 2:30pm led by Foundation classes Yr 6 Graduation Dinner at Ballarat Golf Club @ 6pm	18 Students' final day - Fun activity day & picnic at Victoria Park Dismissal @ 1.45pm	19 Staff Day - final day.

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 students (Foundation to Year 6) resume school P and F Morning Tea 9am	29 Literacy Learning – Parent information Session 5:00-6.30 pm	30
2 Feb	2	3	4 Foundation rest day	5 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 3/4 Calleija	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 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 5/6 Dodd Sacrament of Reconciliation parent meeting 9am	13
4 Feb	16 School closure Day Staff Literacy training	17 Shrove Tuesday	18 Ash Wednesday Foundation rest day Whole school prayer -led by 5/6 Davis	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 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Stacey	27 Student wear crazy socks as a Caritas fundraiser -gold coin donation
6 March	2 School Advisory Council (SAC) Meeting 5:00pm	3	4 Foundation rest day	5 Whole school prayer @ 2:55pm led by 3/4 Woodhart	6 School Closure Day - Staff Cultural Awareness Day
7 March	9 Public Holiday -Labour Day	10	11 NAPLAN testing	12 NAPLAN testing Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Allan	13 NAPLAN testing. K's for Caritas as a fundraiser gold coin donation
8 March	16 NAPLAN testing	17 NAPLAN testing	18 Foundation 2027 Parent Information session 9.15am- 10.15am	19 Whole school prayer @ 2:55pm led by 1/2 Edmonds Foundation 2027 Parent Information session 9.15am- 10.15am	20
9 March	23	24 Foundation 2027 Parent Information session 9.15am- 10.15am	25 School Photos Sacrament of Reconciliation 5.30pm	26 Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 3/4 Hawkes/DeBono	27
10	30	31 Easter raffle drawn 2.50pm	1 Stations of the Cross	2 Whole school prayer @ 1:15pm led by 5/6 Baker Last day of Term 1 1.45pm finish	3 Good Friday -Public holiday



SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2026

RECONCILIATION - Term 1

Grade 4 & Above

Parent Information Session @ STM - Thursday, 12th February 9am
 Parent Information Session @ St Patrick's Cathedral - Thursday, 12th February 5.30pm
 Presentation of Candidates at Masses - St Patrick's Cathedral
 Saturday, 28th February @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 1st March @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Saturday, 14th March @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 15th March @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Saturday, 21st March 5.30pm / Sunday, 22nd March @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Sacrament of Reconciliation - St Patrick's Cathedral
 Tuesday, 24th March @ 5.30pm - St Patrick's and Siena Co-ordinating
 Wednesday, 25th March @ 5.30pm - St Thomas More Co-ordinating

EUCCHARIST - Term 2

Grade 4 & Above



Parent Information Session @ STM - Wednesday, 29th April @ 9am
 Parent Information Session @ St Patrick's Cathedral - Thursday, 30th April @ 5.30pm @
 Presentation of Candidates at Masses - St Patrick's Cathedral
 Commitment Weekend - Saturday, 2nd May @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 3rd May @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Prayer Weekend - Saturday, 9th May @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 10th May @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Presentation Weekend - Saturday, 16th May @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 17th May @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Sacrament of First Communion Celebrations - St Patrick's Cathedral
 Saturday, 30th May @ 5.30pm (St Thomas More Co-ordinating)/ Sunday, 31st May @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Saturday, 13th June @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 14th June @ 10.30am or 5.00pm



CONFIRMATION - Term 3

Grade 3 & Above

Parent Information Session @ STM - Tuesday, 21st July @ 9am
 Parent Information Session @ St Patrick's Cathedral - Thursday, 23rd July @ 5.30pm
 Presentation of Candidates at Masses - St Patrick's Cathedral
 Commitment Weekend - Saturday, 25th July @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 26th July @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Prayer Weekend - Saturday, 1st August @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 2nd August @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Presentation Weekend - Saturday, 8th August @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 9th August @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Sacrament of Confirmation Celebrations - St Patrick's Cathedral
 Saturday, 15th Aug @ 5.30pm (St Thomas More Co-ordinating)/ Sunday, 16th Aug @ 10.30am or 5.00pm
 Saturday, 22nd August @ 5.30pm / Sunday, 23rd August @ 10.30am or 5.00pm

Please contact St Patrick's Cathedral Office for further information: 03 53312933



Aspire Early Education Lucas
Now Open!

BOOK A TOUR TODAY!

 **aspire**
EARLY EDUCATION
AND KINDERGARTEN

1800 978 429
aspireearlyeducation.vic.edu.au



KRYAL CASTLE
vacation care

Register now for fun

Join us for a fun-filled January vacation care program at Kryal Castle. Perfect for busy parents and adventurous kids, we provide engaging activities in a safe, magical environment.

What they'll do

- Knight School basics, archery coaching, potion making
- Outdoor education and orienteering quests
- Inclusion workshops on kindness and anti-bullying
- Pizza-making masterclass (on one day)
- Arena features and castle experiences throughout the day

At a glance

- Program hours: 9:00am–5:00pm
- Drop-off / pick-up: 8:30am–5:30pm
- Ages: Years 4–6 (approx. 8–12 years)
- Dates: Tue 20 – Thu 22 January 2026
- Location: Kryal Castle, Ballarat
- Capacity: approximately 50 places per day

Optional add-on: Young Leaders of the Future (Years 5–6)

Kids learn practical leadership habits, how to call out bullying safely, listening skills, time and task planning, and team leadership. Includes certificate, pledge card, one-page action plan.

Book now  Learn more 

First 50 bookings:
\$89 per child, per day

Special: buy 2 days, get the 3rd day for \$50
Leadership add-on: \$39 per child (limited places)

121 Forbes Rd,
Leigh Creek VIC 3352

education@kryalcastle.com.au

www.kryalcastle.com.au





 **the Brinary**
EDUCATE CREATE INNOVATE

CITY OF BALLARAT 

Free for youth ages 12-18!

TRANSFORM, INNOVATE AND CREATE WITH THE NEWEST TECH

ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES!

Session 1 Virtual Reality & 3D Game Design

Meet and work with STEM experts to Explore the exciting world of Virtual Reality within ClassVR®, even Create your own 3D interactive gaming environment in Co-Spaces® (now Delightex.com).



Session 2 Computer Aided 3D Architecture & the Arkit Building System

Design a 3D sustainable house of the future with TinkerCAD®, then bring it into reality with the Arkit® building studio.



Session 3 Make Digital Systems Work to Solve Problems & Review Industry 5.0 Careers

Identify local sustainability issues, construct and program your solution with the Climate Action Kit® and the Micro:BIT®! Introduction to Industry 5.0 Career Pathways.



Scan the QR code for library locations and dates!



 Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources

This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.





thebinary.com/stem-maker-project-2025/ info@thebinary.com (03) 5229 2260