

NEWSLETTER

Dear Families,

It has been fantastic to see so many families involved in our school community already this year. The Opening School Year Mass, Parent Teacher Meetings and Parent Literacy Information evening held at school have all been well attended. These events allow all of us to make new acquaintances and to re-connect with others. Parent involvement plays a vital role in the success of any school, and we are blessed, as a school, to have such a vibrant and supportive parent community helping us all to live, learn and thrive.



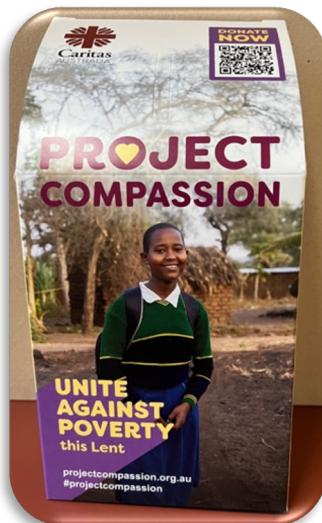
Next **Wednesday, 18th March**, we celebrate Ash Wednesday which marks the beginning of the Catholic Church's season of Lent, the six weeks of penitence before Easter. Parents are most welcome to attend our Whole School Prayer at 2.45pm, where the blessed Ashes will be distributed to all.

PROJECT COMPASSION

During the Lenten season, St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School will be supporting Caritas' Project Compassion initiative. This is Caritas Australia's annual fundraising and awareness raising appeal, bringing thousands of Australians in solidarity with the world's poor to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity. It runs throughout the six weeks of Lent each year. Project Compassion is an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of caring supporters, all in the name of justice and peace. The theme of Project Compassion for 2026 is "Unite Against Poverty"



Next week each family will receive a Project Compassion money collection box to be used to collect money during Lent. We ask that this money box and its contents be returned to school in the last week of the term so that all collected funds can be passed on to Caritas Australia to support their crucial work. To assist with our school fundraising effort for Project Compassion, we are hosting two fundraising events during Lent. On **Friday 27th February** the students are encouraged to wear "Crazy Socks" to school and on **Friday 13th March** the students will have a casual clothes day and participate in *Ks for Caritas* during the school day. On each of these days the students are encouraged to bring along a gold coin donation which will be passed on to Caritas Australia.



ZOOPER DOOPERS

Zooper Doopers will be available for purchase each Friday for Term 1. If a child would like a Zooper Dooper they are asked to bring \$1 to school on Friday. All funds raised will be passed on to Caritas Australia.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – FLARE LITERACY STRATEGY

Next **Monday, 16th February** is a school closure day as our staff are undertaking their third day of professional learning with the FLARE Literacy Strategy. Our school has joined all Catholic Primary Schools across the Ballarat Diocese in looking into literacy practices and approaches that best support the growth of our students. The DOBCEL Flare Literacy Strategy has been implemented in Ballarat 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.



PARISH RECONCILIATION SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The Sacrament of Reconciliation Parent Information meetings will be held tomorrow: the first meeting will be held here at St Thomas More School, **Thursday 12th February at 9am** and repeated later in the day at St Patrick's Cathedral, in the Glowery/MacKillop Rooms at 5.30pm. In the Ballarat diocese, children who are: in Year 4 and above, are baptised Catholic and have completed the Sacrament of Confirmation, are eligible to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. If you have any questions, please refer them to Mr Tony Beggs at the Cathedral Office on 53312933 from Tuesday to Friday weekly, between 10:00am - 3:00pm. Tony can also be contacted by email: ballarat@ballarat.catholic.org.au. To enrol your child in the program please click the following link: <https://forms.gle/zYqiR5qXuBof6TcV6>



PARENT HELPERS NEEDED FOR SHROVE TUESDAY (PANCAKE TUESDAY)

We are looking for about 10 parent helpers to assist with preparing and serving pancakes for all the students in the school on **Tuesday 17th February** between **9.30 – 11am**. If you can help, please contact Amy Donald (P&F coordinator) on adonald1905@gmail.com



SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The St Thomas More School Catholic Primary School Advisory Council (SAC) meets throughout the school year. "The SAC is the leading advisory group for the Principal and acts as an active forum for parent and community participation, providing support and advice in strategic planning, school improvement, educational outcomes and stewardship of resources". (Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited - DOBCEL). The 2026 SAC is made up of the following members: Parish Priest – *Fr. Ed Maloney*, Principal: *Simon Duffy*, Deputy Principal: *Trish Caldow*, Religious Education Leader: *Dympna Turner* and parent representatives: *Jeevan Pinto*, *Jessica Sewell*, *Ben Wilkie* and *Peta Maskell*. I would like to thank the SAC members for the fantastic work that they do in guiding and assisting our St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School community. The next SAC meeting is on **Tuesday 17th February at 5pm**.

FOUNDATION (PREP) 2027

All Ballarat Catholic Primary Schools have begun the 2027 Foundation (Prep) enrolment process. Please see details attached below regarding this process. Please note that current families will also need to complete the enrolment process, even if they have siblings currently attending the school.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Workplace safety is everybody's responsibility. We have a Work Health and Safety team that meet regularly. If you have any school health or safety concerns that you would like to raise with the committee, please contact either Mrs. Olivia Burge, our school's Compliance Officer, or myself.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE SCHEME, CAMP, SPORT AND EXCURSION FUND (CSEF) REBATES AND SCHOOL SAVER BONUS 2026

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 also attached to the end of today's newsletter for your convenience.

The *Camps, Sports and Excursions Funds (CSEF)* form can be accessed via this link: [CSEF Application Form](#)

School TV: FRIENDSHIP & BELONGING

Here is the link to the **Friendship & Belonging**: [Friendship & Belonging](#)

'Learning how to make new friends and keep them involves a number of skills every young person needs to understand and develop. For some these skills will come very naturally, allowing them to easily move between different friendship groups, sharing their experiences and opening up to new people. For others, this can be much harder to navigate. Belonging to a group that is like-minded with similar interests is highly beneficial to a young person's wellbeing. It gives them a sense of security, helping them feel valued which in turn builds their confidence.

Positive friendships are an important part of the journey to adulthood. Adult carers can support their child or teenager by providing guidance in the many social and emotional skills required for a healthy relationship. This will help them to obtain, retain and maintain friendships. However, not all friendships are regarded as positive. Sometimes young people develop negative or toxic friendships. Therefore, it is also important for them to learn how to identify, avoid or deal with such a friendship.

May God bless you all and keep you safe,



Mr. Simon Duffy,
Principal

Term 1 Calendar, 2026

| Week | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| 3 Feb | 9 <i>Parent/Teacher meeting 3.30 – 6pm</i> | 10 <i>Parent/Teacher meeting 3.30 – 6pm</i> | 11 <i>Foundation rest day</i> | 12 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 5/6 Dodd Sacrament of Reconciliation Parent Meeting 9am at STMCPs</i> | 13 |
| 4 Feb | 16 <i>School closure Day - Staff Literacy training</i> | 17 <i>Shrove Tuesday</i> <i>School Advisory Council (SAC) Meeting 5:00pm</i> | 18 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> <i>Foundation rest day</i> <i>Whole School Prayer -led by 5/6 Davis @ 2:45pm</i> | 19 <i>Swimming – Eureka Division</i> | 20 |
| 5 Feb | 23 <i>Year 5/6 Camp Cave Hill Creek</i> | 24 <i>Year 5/6 Camp Cave Hill Creek</i> | 25 <i>Foundation rest day</i> | 26 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Stacey</i> | 27 <i>Students wear 'Crazy Socks' as a Caritas fundraiser - gold coin donation</i> |
| 6 March | 2 | 3 | 4 <i>Foundation rest day</i> | 5 <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 3/4 Woodhart</i> | 6 <i>School Closure Day - Staff Cultural Awareness Day</i> |
| 7 March | 9 <i>Public Holiday -Labour Day</i> | 10 | 11 <i>NAPLAN testing</i> | 12 <i>NAPLAN testing</i> <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 1/2 Allan</i> | 13 <i>NAPLAN testing.</i> <i>K's for Caritas as a fundraiser - gold coin donation</i> |
| 8 March | 16 <i>NAPLAN testing</i> | 17 <i>NAPLAN testing</i> | 18 <i>Foundation 2027 Parent Information session 9.15am- 10.15am</i> | 19 <i>Whole School Prayer @ 2:55pm led by 1/2 Edmends</i> <i>Foundation 2027 Parent Information session 9.15am- 10.15am</i> | 20 |
| 9 March | 23 | 24 <i>Foundation 2027 Parent Information session 9.15am- 10.15am</i> | 25 <i>School Photos</i> <i>Sacrament of Reconciliation 5.30pm at St Patrick's Cathedral</i> | 26 <i>Assembly @ 2:55pm presented by 3/4 Hawkes/DeBono</i> | 27 |
| 10 | 30 | 31 <i>Easter Raffle: drawn @ 2.50pm</i> | 1 <i>Stations of the Cross: Whole School Prayer @ 2:30pm led by 5/6 Baker</i> | 2 <i>Last day of Term 1 1.45pm finish</i> | 3 <i>Good Friday -Public holiday</i> |

Enrolment Information for Prospective 2027 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 2027 school year at a Catholic primary school within the City of Ballarat (see school list contained in this document). This process includes families with children already enrolled 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 express their interest in enrolment by **Thursday 14 May 2026**.

Expression of Interest 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 form by 4.00pm on Thursday 14 May 2026 by visiting the [DOBCEL website](#) (click link). Note that this link will not be live until Monday 9 February 2026 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 2026 Dates

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Foundation (Prep) enrolment applications open | Monday 9 February at 9.00am |
| Expression of interest period closes | Thursday 14 May at 4.00pm |
| School principals meet to determine allocation of placements | Wednesday 3 June |
| Invitations to apply sent | Friday 12 June at 12.00pm |
| List of schools with vacancies published | Friday 12 June at 12.00pm |
| Placement acceptance closes | Friday 19 June at 4.00pm |

Important:

- Completing this expression of interest process does not guarantee an offer of enrolment in a City of Ballarat Catholic primary school.
- You may be required to attend an interview at your school of preference prior to receiving an invitation to apply for enrolment.
- Once completed application forms are received, along with signed Parent Code of Conduct and Enrolment Agreement, a letter of offer will be sent to successful applicants.
- 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.

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

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

Please apply to these schools directly - expressions of interest process does not apply

St Mary's Primary School

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

St Brigid's Primary School

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

St Patrick's Primary School

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

St Augustine's Primary School

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

St Michael's Primary School

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



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 _____



**KELLY
SPORTS**



STM PS

TERM 1



**8 WEEK
PROGRAM**

STARTS MON - FEB 2ND

MONDAYS

CRAZY GAMES

3:20PM - 4.20PM

\$19 + GST PER SESSION

BASKETBALL | FOOTBALL | SOCCER | HOCKEY | CRICKET

**PREP -
GRADE 6**



**9 WEEK
PROGRAM**

STARTS TUE - FEB 3RD

TUESDAYS

MULTI SPORT

3:20PM - 4.20PM

\$19 + GST PER SESSION

SIGN UP AT ANY TIME DURING THE TERM!



ENROL ONLINE

WWW.KELLYSPORTS.COM.AU/GREATER-BALLARAT

QUERIES: TEXT SEAN 0411 602 204

Kwik Kopy
BALLARAT