

Keeping In Touch



21 February 2025



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News from Scott

Dear Parents and Carers

***Our school constantly strives to be:
A Christ centered community which challenges students to develop their unique gifts and talents through a supportive partnership of school, parents and parish.***

We need your help to shape our school for the future:

The Enhancing Catholic Identity Survey

This year, all of the students in Years 5 and 6, staff and parents of St Mary MacKillop Primary School will embark on a new chapter of growing Catholic identity in all areas of our work and ministry. This identity will be shaped through dialogue with all community members.

This term we are asking all families to complete a survey that will provide insights for teachers and leaders regarding how the Catholic identity of our community is experienced and expressed. This will enable our school to tailor formation and teaching opportunities for the students and community. In doing so our school will join a number of other schools throughout the Diocese of Parramatta to guide the next steps in areas of Catholic Identity.

Please note that these surveys are anonymous respecting the privacy of all participants.

Whilst we know that time is precious and there is always lots to do, to enable us to get the best possible picture of our community we would like to invite you to share your thoughts, views, hopes and aspirations

If you also have a child attend a CSPD High School, they may also be collecting survey data for this year. As each school data is unique and only available to the one school, we ask for your understanding in completing a separate survey for each school (perhaps one parent can do the primary school survey and the other parent can do the high school survey).

Supervision and Dismissal Procedure

Supervision of children commences at 8:15am. There is no supervision provided for children before that time unless they attend Ambrose Before and After School Care. No responsibility is taken for children arriving at school before 8:15am.

Children are dismissed at 3:00pm and supervision is provided only until 3:30pm. A classroom teacher will escort students to 'walkers' and supervise students crossing the street, riding bikes and going to cars as part of afternoon dismissal.

After school, staff will supervise children waiting for school buses or on 'waiters' (collected after 3:10pm) up on our playground. **Please note that children on waiters are collected after 3:10pm from the playground.**

Ambrose staff will collect children enrolled for after school care from the playground and take them to the hall.

If, due to extraordinary circumstances, eg: when a parent is detained, please notify the school and your child will be informed that you are delayed. Parents are reminded that all care will be given to the children but there is no formal supervision after 3:30pm when the last bus leaves the school.

News from Scott - Continued

NAPLAN 2025

Each year the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is sat by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Students will participate in tests for writing, reading, conventions of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. NAPLAN 2025 will take place from Wednesday 12 March to Monday 24 March. NAPLAN is just one part of our school's learning assessment program. The tests assess literacy and numeracy skills your child is already learning at school, so the best preparation is their everyday classroom learning. Our school will also undertake activities to help students become familiar with the types of questions and tools available in the online tests.

The public demonstration site is:

(<https://www.nap.edu.au/online-assessment/publicdemonstration-site>) is available for you to see the format of the online tests. Further information about NAPLAN is available on the NESA website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/naplan>) and the NAP website (<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/for-parents-carers>). If you have any questions about NAPLAN, please contact your child's teacher.

Together We Grow

Mr Scott Buchan

Principal

Religious Education News

Opening School Liturgy and Year Six Leadership Ceremony - 9:15am Thursday 27th February

Please join us for our Opening School Liturgy on Thursday 27th February at 9:15am. At our liturgy we will gather as a school community to pray for God's blessing on the school year and welcome Kindergarten and the new students across the grades to St Mary MacKillop Primary School. We will also induct the Year 6 students into their 2025 leadership roles.

We look forward to seeing you as we celebrate our Catholic Faith together.

2025 Sacramental Program - Confirmation

Enrolments for the Sacrament of Confirmation will open on the stnicholasofmyra.org.au website on **Wednesday 19th February 2025** and will close on **Wednesday 5th March 2025**. The website contains the requirements and commitments for parents and children.

To be eligible for Confirmation, **children must be in Year 5 or above, must be baptised, have made their First Reconciliation, and received First Holy Communion.** The Parent Information Session will be Tuesday 11th March at 7pm in the church. At least one parent/carer must attend.

Please see below for more information:

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM CONFIRMATION 2025	
Online Enrolments	Open: Wednesday 19 February Close: Wednesday 5 March
Parent Information Session	Tuesday 11 March 7.00pm in Church
Commitment Masses	Saturday 15 March 6.00pm Sunday 16 March 8.30am, 10.00am, 6.00pm
Family Sessions	Saturday 22 March, 29 March, 5 April 4.30pm Sunday 23 March, 30 March, 6 April 8.30am
2nd Rite of Reconciliation	Thursday 1 May 7.00pm
Practice	Tuesday 6 May 5.00 – 6.30pm
Confirmation Masses	Thursday 8 May 5.00pm and 7.30pm

All enquiries to Rodney Howard (Sacramental Coordinator) at St Nicholas Parish House 47212509.
Email: sacramental@stnicholasofmyra.org.au

Religious Education News

Catholic Schools Week: 3rd - 9th March

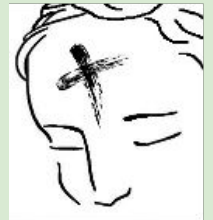
Catholic Schools Week (CSW) is an annual event and involves the communities of all 591 Catholic primary and secondary schools across NSW and the ACT. First and foremost, Catholic Schools Week is about celebration. The main aim of CSW is to raise awareness and celebrate the strength and distinctiveness of Catholic schools across the State. CSW provides an opportunity for Catholic schools to showcase what is done every day in our schools and invite the community in to experience teaching and learning at its best.

Catholic Schools Week is about strengthening relationships between all those that have a stake in our schools – students, staff, families, priests, parishioners, and members of the wider community.

This year our Catholic Schools Week activities will include an Ash Wednesday Liturgy, Catholic Identity Survey session for parents, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day Fundraiser for Project Compassion, school tour and information session for Kindergarten 2026.

Ash Wednesday – Liturgy of the Word 9:15am Wednesday 5th March

Wednesday 5th of March is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The Season of Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter (Sundays are not included in the count) and is a time of preparation for the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Lent it is a beautiful way to remember Jesus' sacrifice for us and prepare us for the Easter season.



To celebrate the beginning of Lent all students will attend an Ash Wednesday Liturgy of the Word ***on Wednesday 5th March at 9:15am in the hall. This liturgy will be lead by Year 5 and all parents and carers are warmly invited to attend.*** During the liturgy the ashes, which give Ash Wednesday its name, will be distributed. The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year.

The distribution of ashes, is a tangible reminder of our own need to focus on being better people. Our personal Lenten journey should be marked with reflection, prayer and penance. Throughout Lent we should strive to model the actions of Christ. On Ash Wednesday we begin a journey of saying yes to God and doing good things.

Catholic School Identity Survey

From 2023-2025, all of the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) learning communities have embarked on a new chapter of growing Catholic identity in all areas of their work and ministry. This identity will be shaped through dialogue with all community members.

To support this important work CSPD has partnered with the Katholieke Universiteit (KU), Leuven to introduce a survey that will provide insights for teachers and leaders regarding how the Catholic identity of their community is experienced and expressed by its members. This will enable schools to tailor formation opportunities for their communities. In doing so the Diocese of Parramatta will join a number of other dioceses throughout Australia that use these surveys to guide the next steps in areas of Catholic Identity. Please note that these surveys are anonymous respecting the privacy of all participants.

Religious Education News

Over the coming weeks, all students from Years 5 and 6 at St Mary MacKillop Primary School, along with staff and parents, will complete the Catholic Identity Survey.

To enable us to get the best possible picture of our community we would like as many of our parents as possible to complete this survey as the resulting data will help shape the Catholic identity of St Mary MacKillop Primary School moving forward.

Parents can complete the Catholic Identity Survey in either of two ways:

1. In the comfort of their own home
or
2. On-site session in the library.

More details about how and when to complete the survey will follow shortly.

Mrs Leesa Gillard

Religious Education Coordinator



Faith In Action News

As a school community we strive to “Never see a need without doing something about it”. We are blessed to have a very supportive and generous community that is always willing to help us with our initiatives.

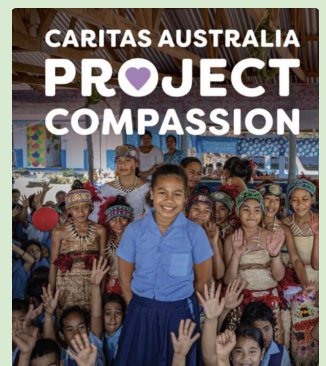
Some families have asked us how they can continue to be involved in initiatives and work together with their family to support organisations. In this section of the KIT, we will be updating you on initiatives that are run at school but also initiatives that you might like to support with your family or workplace.

Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day)

Shrove Tuesday, often referred to as Pancake Day, is a Christian tradition that marks the day before the start of Lent (Ash Wednesday). It's a day of preparation and feasting before the 40-day period of fasting and reflection leading up to Easter. Shrove Tuesday is a day of celebration, often seen as the last opportunity to indulge in rich and indulgent foods before the penitential period of fasting and abstinence during Lent. Traditionally, people indulge in pancakes as a way to use up rich and indulgent ingredients like eggs, milk, and sugar before the fasting period begins.

To celebrate Shrove Tuesday we invite students to order and enjoy pancakes, the traditional food eaten on Shrove Tuesday. To order pancakes for your child/children you will need to go onto the **QKR app (please update your child's 2025 class)** where a code has been added. Please ensure your order is in by **Monday 24th February** as we will be ordering the pancakes first thing Tuesday morning to ensure they arrive by Shrove Tuesday. Please note the no orders will be taken on Tuesday or through the office.

All money raised from the pancakes sold on Shrove Tuesday will be donated to the Caritas Australia 2025 Project Compassion Appeal.



Please see the note on Compass for more information.

Faith In Action News



Cup Rescue Program:

More than a quarter of Australians have a coffee each day. Sadly, coffee cups, while made of paper, cannot be recycled like other products and thousands of cups end up in landfill.

As a staff, we have joined the Cup Rescue program through 7-eleven and Simply Cups. This program aims to stop cups from going into landfill and being transported to facilities that can recycle them. Some of the products that they can be turned into include the 7-eleven reusable coffee cup, sustainable building materials, road surfaces, wheel stops and garden bed frames.

If you would like to support this initiative, you can recycle your coffee cups in your nearest 7-eleven store or consider joining the program with your workplace.

Click on the link for more information: <https://www.simplycups.com.au/>

Ms Stephanie Neilsen
FIA Coordinator



School Fees

Instalment 1 2025 School Fees have now been sent to your home address from our Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese.

The statement will come with options on how and when to pay your fees. If you are having difficulties in paying your school fees by the requested date, please do not hesitate in contacting Mrs Monique Kearins, Senior Finance Officer on 4724 3200.

Please note that we are a cashless school therefore we can only process EFTPOS payments between the hours of 8:15am – 3:30pm. All payments and enquiries can be made during that time.

Other payments are Bpoint, BPay, Post BillPay or by Credit Card.

Details are located on the bottom of the statement. When paying by BPay please use the current statement.

SPORT NEWS

Swimming Carnival

What an incredible and fun filled start to our Sporting journey for 2025 at St Mary MacKillop. We started off with a bang at our Twilight Swimming Carnival which was held on Wednesday 5th February at Glenbrook pools. A huge thank you to all the parents, students and staff who attended. Events like this one are so successful because of the amazing community we have at St Mary MacKillop. It was a beautiful night and we were lucky to have the lightning and thunder bypass us so we could complete the night.

Age Champions and Runner Up:

Junior Girls Age Champions: Halo D and Sophie N

Junior Boys Runner Up: Zachery S

Junior Boys Age Champion: Thomas B

11 Years Girl Runner Up: Isadora B

11 Years Girl Age Champion: Olive S

Senior Girls Runner Up: Isabelle F

Senior Girls Age Champion: McKinley C

Senior Boys Runner Up: Sabastjan P

Senior Boys Age Champion: Lincoln C

On Wednesday 19th February, 26 students attended the Nepean Zone Swimming Carnival . It was a chilly start but we were blessed with gorgeous weather as the day passed. The morning started off well with our Senior Boys, Senior Girls and Junior Boys Relay teams making it through to Diocesan level. An amazing team effort by all. Our Junior Girls Relay team swam with pride but unfortunately their competition on the day was very strong. We also have numerous children attending Diocesan for individual events.

Sophie.N - 50m Freestyle

Ariana T- 50m Freestyle

Jasper G- 50m Freestyle

Thomas B- 50m Breaststroke

Olive S- 50m Backstroke

Chase D- 50m Freestyle

Lincoln- 50m Butterfly and 50m Freestyle

Isabelle F- 50m Backstroke

Senior Boys Relay- Lincoln C, Chase D, Sam H, Xavier M

Senior Girls Relay- Tyla D, Olive S, Isabelle F, Georgia K

Junior Boys Relay- Odin G, Thomas B, Zachery S, Enzo D

I would like to wish all these students the best of luck as they head to Diocesan on Tuesday 11th March at Mt Druitt Pools.

SPORT NEWS

Cross Country

On Friday 28th March, we will be holding our Cross Country Carnival on the grounds of the school. We will begin the day with our 12 year old boy and girls and make our way down to our 8 year olds. After lunch, we will have our Year 6 students run with their Kindergarten buddies for a fun run opportunity. More details about the Cross Country will be released over the coming weeks.

If you would like to assist on the day, please contact the school office or complete the Google Form below. We always appreciate any offer of assistance and days like the Cross Country Carnival can't be successful without all the support and help. I thank you in advance for your support and offer of assistance.

Google Form Link for Cross Country Parent Helpers:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScfX64DIGvo-aobVB-jkLQUEzjy8zkrTwEcCQTZIX3erMEMBA/viewform?usp=dialog>

Diocesan Cross Country will be on Tuesday 13th May.

Gala Days

We are in the process of allocating days for the 2025 Gala Days. As soon as we have finalised these dates, a timetable will be shared with the community. Gala Days begin in Term 2.



P & F NEWS

What an awesome start to the year it's been! Huge thanks to Kirrily for organising the welcome signs for the start of school, and our awesome volunteers that helped on the first day of Kindy with the P&F little gifts for parents and students.

Lots happening behind the scenes in the P&F, prepping for another big year ahead. Prep for welcome bbq is in full swing. Lots of planning has begun for this years events.

Our major goal from last year continues on this year in raising money to completely rebuild new play equipment for the kids. The current playground equipment has done its time, and hopefully will be demolished to make way for a new, safer and modern update. The P&F hopes to continue to raise a good portion of the funds needed for this project in 2025.

We've already made progress in planning some event ideas for some great events to come this year. It's been an extremely productive start to the year and we've been able to lock in lots of dates already. A calendar has been set up thanks to our amazing VP Sam Snow.

To view the calendar anytime simply head to:

<https://sites.google.com/view/smmpff/upcoming-events>

**Please be aware that some of these dates may be subject to change. Check dates as events get closer. All dates will also be published through the year via the school newsletter as usual and reminders via our P&F facebook page.



Our first gold coin zooper dooper day will be held on the 28th of February at recess time, if you would like to volunteer register on our website or email us at smppandf@gmail.com.

Our first P&F meeting will be held on the 12th of March, all welcome.

Chanelle Vella
P&F President

High School Tours & Open Days

Step into a place where your educational journey is as dynamic as the world around you - Xavier College, shaping tomorrow's leaders today!

To register for a College tour or to find out more information, use the QR Code below



XAVIER COLLEGE
FOR THE GREATER GOOD



OPEN DAY
TUESDAY 4TH MARCH 2025, 4-6PM

Join us at Xavier College, where education transcends the traditional boundaries of learning!

Our vibrant academic environment is designed not only to bolster intellectual growth but also to arm our students with the cutting-edge skills needed to steer the course of an ever-evolving world.

To register for a college tour or to find out more information, contact us on:

- xavierlandilo.catholic.edu.au
- 4777 0900
- xavierlandilo

Highest performing school in the local area



PENOLA CATHOLIC COLLEGE
OPEN NIGHT
Monday 10 March 2025
4pm - 7pm

www.penolaemuplains.catholic.edu.au P: 4728 8100

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ACCEPTING ENROLMENTS FOR 2026 & 2027

2026 APPLICATIONS DUE - 28TH MARCH 2025

BOOK NOW

For More Information
www.carolinechisholmcollege.com.au
Contact Us
(02) 47375500



COLLECTING CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL

If parents wish their children to be collected from school early, please send a note to the teacher. If there is a doctor's/dentist appointment or some other very important reason why your child needs to leave the school at lunch (10:45 am - 11:30 am) or break time (1:30pm- 2:00 pm), we would ask you to take your child either before or after lunch or break, not during the break, as bags are kept inside the classrooms and classrooms are locked during break times.

****From our parent handbook**** Read our Parent Handbook here:

<https://www.mackilloppenrith.catholic.edu.au/Enrol/Handbook>



ST DOMINIC'S COLLEGE 2025 OPEN DAY

WELCOMING FAMILIES LOOKING TO SECURE 2026 ENROLMENTS AND BEYOND, INCLUDING YEAR 7 2026 AND 2027

TUESDAY, 11 MARCH | SESSION 1 - 4.30PM TO 6.00 PM | SESSION 2 - 6.30 PM TO 8.00 PM

Leaving Students

A term's notice (10 school weeks) in writing must be given to the Principal before the removal of a student or a full term's fees will be payable. The notice can be given any time during term for the next term. Where appropriate notice has been received a pro-rata credit can be calculated based on a pro-rata 40 week year. **One exception is that notice in writing will be accepted at any time during Term 4 in relation to the following years' enrolment i.e. the notice period of 10 school weeks will be waived in this circumstance.**

Planning a Holiday?

There are new Government guidelines for schools to follow when marking the school rolls. These guidelines require parents who are taking their children on holidays, during the school year, to complete a request of 'Exemption from School Attendance' form. This is required if you are taking your child on leave for **more than 5 school days**. A copy of your travel itinerary. The application form is available from the school office and are to be completed **prior** to your holiday.

Longer periods require the approval of the Director of Schools and the Catholic Education Commission.

Mobile Phones

If a child needs to bring a mobile phone to school they must be clearly labelled with the child's name, switched off and checked into the office on arrival and collected after the 3:00pm bell.

Medication

If your child takes long term medication, you must fill out the relevant form from the office. Medication will not be administered to any child unless authorised by a parent/guardian. All medication prescribed by a medical practitioner must be authorised by the doctor and all paperwork needs to be updated every year or when medication is changed. All relevant forms are available from the school office.

For short term medication, forms are also available from the school office. No child will be given medication unless it is recorded, prescribed by a doctor and in its original packaging. Many doctors will agree that medication to be given three times a day can be administered: morning, after school and before bed at night. Please check with your doctor.

Dates for your Diary

TERM 1 2025 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 21 February	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly	School Hall
Thursday 27 February	9:15am	Opening School Mass & Year 6 Leadership Ceremony	School Hall
Friday 28 February	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly P & F Zooper Dooper Day	School Hall
Monday 3 March	9:30am-10:30am	School Tour - Kindergarten 2026	
Tuesday 4 March		Shrove Tuesday - Pancake Orders Year 2 Excursion to Pioneer Village	
Wednesday 5 March	9:15am 6:30pm	Ash Wednesday Liturgy Kindergarten 2026 Parent Information Session	School Hall School Hall
Friday 7 March	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly	School Hall
Tuesday 11 March		Diocesan Swimming Carnival	Mt Druitt Pools
Wednesday 12 March	6:30pm	Naplan commences for Years 3 & 5 P & F Meeting	School Hall
Friday 14 March	2:20pm	Year 6 Encounter Day Whole School Assembly	Penrith Panthers School Hall
Friday 21 March	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly	School Hall
Tuesday 25 March		Year 4 Excursion to Hyde Park Barracks	
Friday 28 March	2:20pm	Whole School Cross Country Whole School Assembly	School Oval School Hall
Friday 4 April	2:20pm	Whole School Assembly	School Hall
Friday 11 April	2:20pm	2025 School Photos Whole School Assembly	School Hall

St Mary MacKillop, South Penrith

150 Fragar Road, South Penrith NSW 2750

Ambrose School Age Care provides fun, engaging programs before and after school. Our programs include games, sport, art, craft, and free-time facilitated by Ambrose educators experienced in the nationally approved learning framework, My Time Our Place. Children love Ambrose as the programs are developed around their interests and ideas

They're also a great way to make friends, develop social skills, and most importantly – have fun!



Our Opening Hours

Before School Care: 6.30am – 8.45am

After School Care: 2:30pm – 6.00pm

Pupil Free Day: 6.30am – 6.00pm

Our fees Government subsidy (CCS) available depending on each family's eligibility.

Session	Time	After 85% Child Care Subsidy*	After 50% Child Care Subsidy*	Advertised Fee No Child Care Subsidy
Morning	6.30am – 8.45am	\$4.23	\$11.55	\$22 per session
Afternoon	2.30pm – 6.00pm	\$6.06	\$16.54	\$31.50 per session
Pupil Free Day - Standard Fee - Early 'Bee' Special	6.30am – 6.00pm	\$14.43 \$ 12.51	\$39.37 \$34.12	\$75 \$65

*Child Care Subsidy (CCS) can provide up to 85% of the cost of your childcare fees. External party charges for in-service workshops and excursions may apply.

All educators working directly with the children hold a valid working with children check and there is always an educator rostered who is qualified in first aid, asthma, anaphylaxis and CPR.

To enrol now - please complete the enrolment form [here](#)

Or contact the service on

Email: stmarymackillop@ambrose.org.au Phone: 0492 367 298



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