



St. Mary's School Newsletter

Always faithful to God, ourselves and others in the spirit of the Presentation tradition.

St. Mary's is committed to Child Safety and the inclusion of all children.

Respect Ourselves - Respect Others - Respect our Environment

Term 4 - Week 3 - Friday 22nd October, 2021

IMPORTANT DATES

Monday 1 November
Report Writing Day -
Student Free day

Tuesday 2 November
Melbourne Cup Day
Holiday

Thursday 2 December
PD for Staff
(Maths Conference)

Friday 3 December
PD for Staff
(Maths Conference)

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday 6pm
Chiltern

Sunday 9am
Rutherglen

Sunday 10.30am
Wahgunyah

PBIS Expectations: Etiquette when eating

Dear Parents/ Carers,

This Sunday is Mission Sunday

We as a school and Catholic Mission Australia respond to a call from Pope Francis, inspired by Acts 4:20.

"For we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard."



We share in God's mission, to reach out, give life by sharing our personal and financial resources to: - proclaim the Gospel, - serve people in need, - act for peace, justice and creation; In partnership with local churches, so that all may have life in Christ.

At school, our Yr 6 Catholic Identity Team organises small fundraisers throughout the year where the proceeds raised are sent off to the missions and to our sponsor child in the Phillipines, Prince Yang Sencil. Our students understand that a small donation goes a long way in a mission country.

This term all the money raised from Frosty Friday's will go to the missions.

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Office Hours -
8.00am—4.00pm

Pupil Free Days This term

There are a few pupil free days this term in our important dates so please make sure you mark these on your calendar.

Monday 1st November Report Writing Day
Thursday 2nd December & Friday the 3rd December for a virtual Maths Conference.

WE ARE ALL Back!!!!

Today was a great day because everyone in our school community is back together. You don't need me to tell you that it has been a long haul with many bumps along the way. Thank-you to all families who worked so wonderfully, in partnership with all the staff, to get us through this journey.



Today we participated in lots of fun activities to celebrate being a whole onsite school community today!!



Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

I'm sure you are aware that there are a number of schools in our Albury/Wodonga/Wangaratta areas that are currently being impacted by positive COVID-19 cases in their school communities.

Below is an excerpt from the current School Operations Guide that outlines that if any staff member or student is at home unwell that they should get tested.

Getting tested would also apply to any student or staff member who becomes unwell and has to go home during the school day.

As the State gathering restrictions are set to ease this weekend means we all need to be vigilant in this area. We all have our part to play.

Excerpt from Guidelines:

"Stay home when unwell and get tested:

The most important action school communities can take to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19, is to ensure that any unwell staff and students remain at home and get tested, even with the mildest of symptoms.

Everyone should consider their health before they start work or attend school and ensure that they are free from coronavirus symptoms and have not had contact in the past 14 days with a person confirmed to have coronavirus or a person suspected to have coronavirus."

COVID Restrictions and Updates:

Face masks

Please see coronavirus.vic.gov.au for the latest face mask requirements.

For all school settings, the Victorian Chief Health Officer:

- Directs school staff and secondary school students aged 12 or older must always wear a face mask indoors and outdoors at school, including when attending an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) program, unless a lawful exception applies.
- Directs school staff and secondary school students aged 12 or older must always wear a face mask when travelling to and from school on public transport, taxis or ride share vehicles.
- Directs school staff must wear face masks while teaching wherever practicable, except where removal of a face mask is necessary for effective communication.
- **Directs students in Year 3 to Year 6 to wear face masks when indoors on school premises, unless an exception applies.**
- **Recommends that all other children wear face masks when at school**, attending an OSHC program, or when travelling to and from school on public transport, taxis or rideshare vehicles.

Masks & QR Check In:

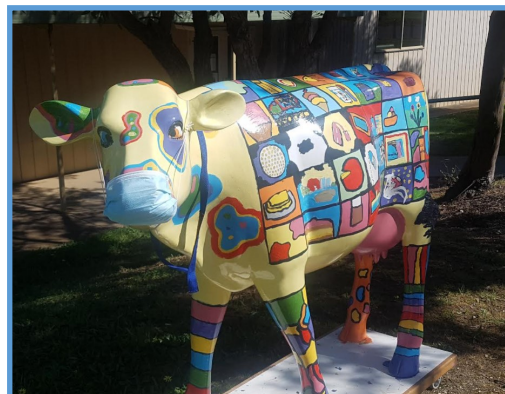
All parents, unless you have a medical exemption, are required to wear a mask on school grounds.

You have to QR code check in if you enter any room of the school. Every door has a QR code sign.

Buttercup sets and example wearing a face mask.

Drop Off & Pick:

All parents and carers have been great in this area. Please just drop off and pick up your child from the rear car park. This system is working well. Only enter the school grounds if absolutely necessary.



Sick Children:

A reminder students, even with the mildest symptoms, of a cold, running nose, cough etc are not to be at school.

If a student does present to school with these symptoms we will have to send them home.

Thanks to all families who have been vigilant in this area.



Pupil Free Days This term

There are a few pupil free days this term in our important dates so please make sure you mark these on your calendar.

Monday 1st November Report Writing Day

Thursday 2nd December & Friday the 3rd December for a virtual Maths Conference.

Sports this term

This term we will be doing hockey and cricket clinics with visiting coaches which should be great fun for the children.



Thanks to Libby

Again a big thanks to Libby for looking after the school and school community so well whilst I was on LSL.

Face Masks Delivery:

As students in Yr3-6 are now required to wear a mask in side classrooms all Victorian Primary Schools will shortly receive a delivery of smaller sized face masks designed and manufactured for primary school aged students.

Confirmation Date Change: Sunday 14th November at 10.30am Mass

Confirmation now will be celebrated on Sunday 14th of November at 10.30am in the church.

Under the projected Victorian COVID roadmap this date will allow for many more family members, friends & staff to attend to celebrate this occasion with our 16 Confirmation candidates.

JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

Prizes for participation and Certificates of Appreciation were presented at this morning's assembly.

Both Patty and Zoe raised over \$500 which will help heart disease and help people with sick hearts.



Happy Birthday

We send our best wishes to those students who are celebrating their birthdays this week.



Kasey



Ella



Congratulations to this week's class room award winners

Back row: Cody, Antonio and Connie

Middle row: Charlee, Lilly and Zoe

Front row: Henry, Angus and Jackson





safe on social

Group Chats

Please, for just a moment, picture yourself in one of our school presentations to students. From Year 3 to Year 12, we ask the same questions around group chats.

They are:

1. *Who uses group chats to communicate with their friends? – The majority of the room raises their hand.*
2. *Who sleeps with their device in their room? – at least 80% of the room will raise their hand.*
3. *Who has received messages in a group chat after 9pm? – almost the whole room raises their hand.*
4. *Who has woken up to more than 200 messages in the group chat? – all of them raise their hands and talk about it amongst themselves, nodding in agreement. There is also the occasional "more like 1000" comment.*
5. *Who has attempted to read all of the messages? – the resounding response is constantly "checking to see if I was mentioned."*
6. *Who has seen bullying or any other kind of inappropriate behaviour in the group chats? – all of them raise their hands. Who reported it? 99% of the hands go down.*
7. *Who has been read added to a group chat after they have left? Most raise their hands and eye-roll and comment on how annoying it is.*
8. *Who gets a little anxious if their friends don't respond to a message within a couple of minutes? – again, the majority raises their hands.*

So let's break these down into nice little bite-size pieces on what you should do.

Group chats can be an excellent way for many people to participate in an online conversation together. They can also be a place where drama, nasty behaviours, exclusion, and bullying can thrive. The most commonly used group chat apps are WhatsApp, Snap Chat, Instagram, Discord, Messenger, and Facebook Messenger. They can be both helpful and harmful. We recommend that children in Primary School only use Facebook Messenger for Kids, so parents have some control over what is going on in the group chat. You don't have as much power on the other apps.

We have real concerns about the number of young people (as young as eight in most cases) that sleep with devices in their room and under their pillow. They are responding to messages at 11, 12 even 1am. From "friends" all over the world that they are connected to.

Please make sure you put a healthy boundary in place and keep phones and devices out of the bedroom from an early age. Remember, you are the parent, and you need to guide your children on how to be safe, and managing their mental health is a massive part of that. They need a break. They are connected 24/7, and some of those communications can get toxic in Group Chats. They need sleep. Good uninterrupted sleep. Rolling over in the middle of the night and checking messages is a significant health issue. You can read about that here: <https://growingupinaustralia.gov.au/research-findings/annual-statistical-reports-2018/are-children-and-adolescents-getting-enough-sleep>

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There have also been many times when young people have engaged in nasty behaviour about another person in a group chat, then deliberately invited that person into the chat to see those comments. The deliberate nature of this abuse makes it cyberbullying. Re-adding someone once they have left a chat can also be bullying or harassment in some cases.

When they are tired, they are more emotional and less resilient. Things can and may be taken out of context. No one has the right to choose what other people find offensive. There have been countless times when this has resulted in schools being contacted because of the nasty, bullying or inappropriate things happening in the chat. If this is happening in the home after hours between students, please think about how, as a parent, you can do more to support the school by setting healthier boundaries for device use in your home.

Schools have a duty of care to minimise the risk of bullying and other dangers to a child, but it is challenging for them to police when the device is at home, under your roof, in your child's bedroom.

Help kids develop the skills to know how to leave a group chat that is not helpful or is harmful in any way, including the actual words they may use should they need to leave. With younger kids, teach them how to come up with statements that may help like "sorry guys, this is getting pretty nasty, I'm outta here" as a way to remove themselves, also point out to the other people in the chat that the behaviours may be getting out of hand. Being in charge of their online interactions and knowing how to leave a conversation that makes them uncomfortable online or off is a vital life skill.

Kids need to realise that they may be "guilty by association", even if they aren't saying the nasty stuff; they may be considered a bystander if they do not report it and speak up about what is happening in a group chat.

Please help them to develop the skills to put boundaries around their friendships. We don't have to be accessible all the time just because technology allows that. They need to know that they won't lose friends if they are not available in the group to chat for 30 minutes while they have dinner. Young people need to be in charge and confident in their relationships. They need to know that their friends will understand that their refusal to engage at every moment of the day and night has nothing to do with the state of their relationship, but rather the management of their time, their devices and their life priorities.

If your child is getting constantly re-added to a group chat that they have left, that can be considered harassment. If your child is re-adding people that have left the group chat remind them that they need consent. They need to ask the permission of the person first "do you want to be re-added to the group chat" for example.

Parenting in this space is very difficult at times, we totally understand that. But please set boundaries and rules. These are required from a very early age. The earlier the better. A school should not be blamed every time something happens online as it is often something that they can't 100% control if you have given your child a device and have different rules at home to what is at school. Schools educate students on cyber safety. Most schools offer parent education, in all aspects of online safety, and often only a few parents turn up to parent-focused talks. Please attend, I guarantee you will learn something new every time!

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Things to remember:

Keep group chats positive, helpful and supportive. These are not the places we have a whinge about someone else, reveal our intimate secrets or create drama, gossip or spread rumours or share images of others without consent.

Make sure they know not to feel compelled to respond straight away or be a part of every single interaction in the group chat.

Remember, there are plenty of ways these chats can become very public if someone takes a screenshot, so they need to be kind, respectful, and responsible at all times.

Avoid using late at night and keep devices out of the bedroom.

Turn off notifications, so they are less anxious about response times.

Value this information? Want more? Our Safe on Social Toolkit for Schools is now available. To find out more click here www.safeonsocialtoolkit.com



This year the Indigo Youth Ambassador Program is running virtually this year and two students from St Mary's have been selected. Our representatives for 2021 are Holly and Elijah.

These students will join a variety of Grade 5 students from the Indigo Shire who are passionate about creating positive change in their local community.

From Wahgunyah to Rutherglen, Chiltern, Beechworth, Stanley, Wooragee, Indigo Valley, Barnawartha, Yackandandah, Osbornes Flat, Tangambalanga, Kiewa, Kergunyah and all the places in between.

Youth ambassadors are given the opportunity to become the youth voice for their community and school. They will gain skills and mentoring in leadership and effective communication, discuss and explore youth and community issues, have a say about the future of their community and create actions for positive change. Youth Ambassadors this year will attend a range of virtual leadership days and will have the chance to fundraise over the next few weeks.

PBIS Focus this week

Etiquette when eating

Etiquette when eating	Respect Ourselves	Respect Others	Respect our Environment
	<p>Clean up after our selves.</p> <p>Stay seated for eating time.</p> <p>Make good food choices.</p> <p>Sanitise before and after eating.</p>	<p>Talk quietly to the people around you.</p> <p>Eat with your mouth closed.</p> <p>Keep your lunch boxes and drink bottle in your own space.</p> <p>Only eat your own food.</p>	<p>Put lunch boxes in bags when finished.</p> <p>Put rubbish in the correct bins but even better take your lunch box rubbish home.</p> <p>Leave a clean space.</p>

Congratulations to this week's PBIS Winners

Harper, Codie, Lilly, Harper and Isabel



Have a great weekend

Matt



Important Calendar Dates - 2021

Term 4

Kinder Transition days to be confirmed

Monday 1 November	Report Writing Day - Student Free day
Tuesday 2 November	Melbourne Cup Day Holiday
Sunday 14 November	Confirmation Mass 10.30am (date change)
Thursday 2 December	PD for Staff (Maths Conference)
Friday 3 December	PD for Staff (Maths Conference)
Tuesday 7 December	State Transition Day (TBC)
Wednesday 8 December	Nativity Play & Awards
Friday 10 December	End of Year School Mass/ Graduation
Tuesday 14 December	Fun Pool Day (TBC)
Wednesday 15 December	Last Day Term 4 for Students (Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donation) 3.30pm finish

Important Calendar Dates - 2022

Term 1

Monday 31 January	1st day Term 1 Students Return
Friday 8 April	Last Day Term 1 for Students (Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donation) 3.30pm finish
Friday 15 April	Good Friday

Term 2

Tuesday 26 April	1st day Term 2
Monday 13 June	Queen's Birthday Holiday
Friday 24 June	Last Day Term 2 for Students

Staff email addresses

Matt Attwater (Principal) - mattwater@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Libby Dickinson (Junior Classroom teacher) - edickinson@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Taylor Dickinson (Junior Classroom teacher) - tdickinson@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Shannon Terlich (Senior Classroom teacher) - sterlich@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Jodie Smith (Senior Classroom teacher) - jsmith@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Bert Cheeseman (Senior Classroom teacher) - bcheeseman@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Nicole O'Mahony (Learning Diversity Leader) - nomahony@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au
Jane van Zanten (Art Teacher) - jvanzanten@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au (Tuesday)
Gina Nero (Italian teacher) - gnero@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au (Tuesday)
Amanda Arnot (Administration Officer) - aarnot@smrutherglen.catholic.edu.au