

St. Monica's Newsletter



2024 Term 1 - Welcome back edition



St. Monica's acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, the Wurunjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders both past, present and emerging.



Principal's Message

Dear students and families,

I hope this message finds you well and you are full of anticipation for our 2024 school year. As we embark on this journey together, I want to extend a warm welcome to both new and returning families. The beginning of a new school year is always a time filled with excitement, possibilities, and fresh opportunities for growth. Our dedicated team of educators and staff have been hard at work preparing for a successful and enriching academic year for your child.

At St Monica's we believe in fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment that encourages curiosity, creativity, and collaboration. We are committed to providing a well-rounded education that not only focuses on academic achievement but also on the development of essential life skills and character traits. This year, we have some exciting initiatives and programs planned to enhance the overall educational experience for our students. From engaging classroom learning, a whole school concert at the end of Term 3, school choir opportunities, our inaugural SMF Science Fair and musical instrument tuition. We aim to create an environment where every student feels valued, supported, and inspired to be the best they can be.

Communication and clarity are key to a successful partnership between the school and families. We encourage open and transparent communication throughout the school year. Please feel free to reach out to our dedicated educators and office staff if you have any questions, concerns, or if you would like to be more involved in your child's education. Additionally, stay tuned for regular updates through our newsletters, website, and our active Facebook page. We believe in keeping our school community informed and engaged in the various events and achievements that make each school year memorable.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, let us work hand in hand to create a positive and nurturing learning environment for our students. I look forward to getting to know each of you and working together to make this school year a remarkable and successful one.

Thank you for entrusting us with the education and well-being of your child. Here's to a fantastic school year filled with growth, learning, and memorable experiences!

In Partnership,
Nathan

Flourishing Learners



On our closure day list you will see we have **three days titled** "Flourishing Learners." Melbourne Archdiocesan Catholic Schools are releasing The Flourishing Learners position statement, Vision for Instruction which will detail the MACS strategy to support the Science of Learning.

<https://www.macs.vic.edu.au/Our-Schools/Curriculum-Learning-Programs/Vision-for-Instruction.aspx>

This year we are part of the Western Region Flourishing Learners Project which involves 25-30 schools in the Western Region. Thus our teachers are about to receive extensive training to support student learning. Flourishing Learners will focus on schools using evidence based practices that support learning within our Literacy and Mathematics curriculum.

We continue our work with our MACS Maths Consultants this year to improve our teaching of Maths and we are also training our teachers how to use the Dibels assessment (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). This year some of our Foundation students will also complete t students will also complete the he **Maths** and **English** Online Interviews. This is now mandated across Government and Catholic Schools so we have more system data.

Class Structures and Staff for 2024

2024 Staff

Principal	Nathan Owen
Deputy Principal: Learning Diversity/ Mental Health in Primary Schools Leader	Andrea Wilberger
Learning and Teacher Leader Mathematics	Amy Horan
Literacy Coach	Melissa Cumming
Student Wellbeing / PBL Leader	Helen Power
Religious Education Leader	Anna Scarmozzino

School Secretary	Anna Trainor
Office Administration	Ha Le (Tuesday & Thursday)

Foundation/ Year 1	Anna Scarmozzino
Year 1/2	Helen Power & Sandra DiVita (Fri)
Year 3/4	Melissa Cumming (new)
Year 5/6	Sami Tighe
Year 5/6	Anya Berliad (new)

STEM	Amy Horan
Visual Arts	Maryanne Phelan (new)
Physical Education / Health & Sports Coordinator	Liz Clements
Kitchen Garden / Science	Jodie Donaghey (new)
Daily Languages Assistant (TCL)	Danni Scarmozzino
Library Assistant	Mary Skidmore (Thurs)

Learning Support Officers	Danni Scarmozzino Ash Marshall Tobee Bugeja
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Speech Pathologist	Cecilia Pham
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ICT / Technology support (Fri)	Joey Santos
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We look forward to 2024 with great enthusiasm and optimism. Together, as a school community, we can achieve remarkable things. We're here to learn and we're here to make a difference.

Term Dates 2024

School Dates for 2024 Preps

Term 1	31st January	28th March
Term 2	15th April	28th June
Term 3	15th July	20th September
Term 4	7th October	Last day of school for 2024 TBC

Date	Time	What you need to know
Wednesday 31st January Foundation 8:50 am-12:30 pm	8:50 am-12:30 pm	Students will need to bring brain food and their lunch.
Thursday 1st February Foundation 8:50 am-12:30 pm	8:50 am-12:30 pm	Students will need to bring brain food and their lunch.
Friday 2nd February Foundation 8:50 am - 3:15 pm	8:50 am - 3:15 pm	Students will need to bring brain food and their lunch.
Full days at school from Monday 5th February (except for Wednesday)	8:50am - 3:15pm	Students will need to bring brain food, lunch and snacks.
Rest day for Foundation students on the following Wednesdays :		
7th February 14th February 21st February 28th February 6th March		
Foundation students do not attend school on these dates.		
Please note Monday 11th March is a Public Holiday (NO SCHOOL).		

Remember!

Please note that these dates are subject to change.

Proposed School Closure Days 2024 - advanced notice subject to alteration

Start of 2024	Monday 29th January (Staff professional Learning) Tuesday 30th January (Staff PBL Expectations and Start Up Day) Students Start Wednesday 31st January
Flourishing Learners Whole Staff PL (Day 1)	Friday 26th April
Flourishing Learners Whole Staff PL (Day 2)	Friday 16th August
Flourishing Learners Whole Staff PL (Day 3)	Monday 21st October
Professional Practice Day	Monday 4th November
End of 2024 Planning Preparation day for 2025	Last student Day - Tuesday 17th Dec Wednesday 18th Dec - Staff
Time in Lieu Days	Thursday 19th Dec & Friday 20th Dec



ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL IMPORTANT DATES FOR TERM 1 2024

8th Feb: Science Fair Information Session

9th Feb: District Swimming Carnival



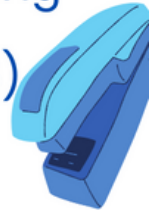
9th Feb: Vietnamese New Year celebrations

12th Feb: Get to know you chats 3/4 Melissa (only)

13th Feb: Shrove Tuesday - Pancake morning

13th Feb: Get to know you chats (F-2 & 5/6)

14th Feb: Ash Wednesday and Opening
School Mass



15th Feb: Get to know you chats (F-2 & 5/6)



16th Feb: Whole School Cross Country

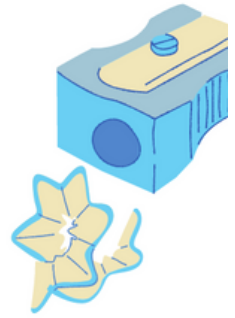
22nd Feb: Inform and Empower Parent webinar



23rd Feb: PBL Launch Day & Family Picnic

27th Feb: Family Information Sessions





ST MONICA'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

IMPORTANT DATES FOR TERM 1 2024



1st March: District Cross Country Year 3-6



6th March: AFL X Day Year 3-6

11th March: Public Holiday NO SCHOOL



13th - 25th March: Year 3 & 5 NAPLAN

14th March: Athletics Carnival (ALL students)

15th March: St Patrick's Day activities

28th March: Holy Week gathering

28th March: End of Term - 1pm finish



Operoo provides a simple way for parents/guardians to sign forms and safely share emergency and medical information with St Monica's school Footscray.

Now that our 2024 school year has commenced it is essential that all student Operoo profiles have been updated. New families to our community should've received an email from Operoo with instructions of how to create a child's profile. If you require any assistance with your child's profile please reach out to Nathan or Amy via the school office.

Operoo



We use this platform to send out alerts, newsletters and reminders to our school community. We also use this platform to send our excursion permission forms and additional documents to parents. You will be notified that a form for your child has been posted, via email.

It is important that your details are up to date on Operoo. This includes your child/s medical needs.

- **Please note:** St Monica's Footscray requires completed (hard copy) of all students who are on an Asthma Action Plan (**Blue**), Allergic Reactions Action Plan (**Green**) and Anaphylaxis Action Plan (**Red**).
- These Action Plans can be collected from the school office if required.

Important

Research consistently shows that when parents actively engage in their child's education, students are more likely to excel academically and develop positive attitudes towards learning, behaviour and wellbeing. As is the case in all **MACS** schools, one essential aspect of this involvement is understanding and adhering to school policies and important communication procedures. As partners in education, your involvement is invaluable. By reading and acknowledging school policies, you are actively contributing to the success of our school community.

Please be on the look for an important **Operoo** regarding the following important school policies:

- Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct
- ICT Agreement
- Mobile Phone /Smart watch policy
- Communications at St Monica's Footscray

St Monica's School Advisory Council provides a crucial point of connection between the wider school community and school leaders. St Monica's is seeking expressions of interest for **2** new keen and eager parents to join our School Advisory Council (**SAC**). Our meetings are scheduled twice a term, both in person and online. If this is for you, please send a short email to Nathan principal@smfootscray.catholic.edu.au expressing your interest

Current Advisory Council - parent representatives:

Steven Laughlin, Lisa Cammarano, Persis Gerrard-Parrington, David Sandall, Rebecca Thompson

Current Advisory Council - Staff representatives

Nathan Owen, Andrea Wilberger, Amy Horan

- **For more information regarding the purpose of the (SAC) please visit school website under the 'Our School' Tab. <https://www.smfootscray.catholic.edu.au>**

Learning and Teaching

We are pleased to welcome Inform and Empower back to the St Monica's learning community in 2024. All classes will be engaging with Marty and Carley from Inform and Empower throughout the year to support with their learning around Digital Literacy.

As educators, we often get questions from families about how they can best support their child/ren to use technology in a safe and responsible way. To support our families with this challenging space, we are pleased to announce St Monica's participation in the 'Raising Kids in a Digital World' webinar on Thursday Feb 22nd.

Please note this is a webinar (not onsite) and requires you to register using the following link bit.ly/22feb2024. See below for more details.

RAISING KIDS IN A DIGITAL WORLD **WEBINAR FOR PARENTS & CARERS**

Social Media
Impacts of Screen Time
Online Gaming
Cyber Bullying
Child & Tween Online Trends
Managing Devices in the Home
Explicit/Adult Content
Strengthening Family Communication

St Monica's Catholic Primary School
Thursday 22 February | 7.30pm

- 90 minute presentation
- Parents/carers only
- Exclusive access to resources

Register to attend the webinar:
bit.ly/22feb2024

Martin McGauran
Primary School Teacher & Digital Safety Educator

Carley McGauran
Psychologist & Mum to 3 primary and secondary aged kids

"Marty and Carley were simply sensational. Their presentation was relevant, honest and informative. A MUST for each school, every year."
Principal

"An evening that provided some reality checks! A few new changes in our home this week!"
Parent of 9yo & 11yo

Learning and Teaching

Our staff and student are extremely excited to announce that we will be hosting our inaugural St Monica's Science Fair this year. All students are encouraged to participate. More details are to come but we encourage any interested students to attend our Science Fair Family Information Session with their families. Details below.



St Monica's

Science Fair

Family Information Session

Come and find out more at our Family Information Session

Thursday 8th February 3.20pm

Library



Hosted by Ms Jodie (our Kitchen Garden teacher)

We welcome all families and students to attend



Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday. The word 'shrove' comes from 'shrive', meaning 'to impose penance'. This was a day where people would go to Church to confess all the things they had done wrong during the year and to find out what they should do to receive forgiveness. Shrove Tuesday is a day to prepare for Lent and Easter.

In our world today, Shrove Tuesday is known as the day you eat pancakes. The ingredients that are used to make pancakes are made up of all the things you couldn't eat during Lent, such as butter and milk.

SHROVE TUESDAY



PANCAKE BREAKFAST

IN THE SCHOOL YARD
ALL FAMILIES INVITED
PANCAKES WITH TOPPINGS AND JUICE
PROVIDED

8:30AM
13 MARCH,
2024

Positive Behaviour for Learning - PBL

In each newsletter information about the schools Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) approach is promoted so that our parent community enhances their understanding of PBL.



PBL OVERVIEW

- Preventative strategies to promote positive behaviours
- A common language for all, across all areas
- The explicit teaching of social skills and routines
- A focus on positive acknowledgement
- Clear procedures for behaviour support
- Data drives decision making
- Supports needs of individual students

PBL promotes the use of evidence-based behavioural strategies for all students to prevent academic and behavioural difficulties and increase the likelihood of success (Nese et al., 2021)

SAVE THE DATE FRIDAY 23RD FEBRAURY

**Family Picnic
3:30 - 5:30pm**



SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES



2024 TERM 1

Week 2

Date: Monday 5/02 2:45pm

Location: Hall

Led by: Nathan, Andrea & Captains

Week 4

Date: Monday 19/02 2:45pm

Location: Hall

Led by: Seniors

Week 6

Date: Monday 4/03 2:45pm

Location: Hall

Led by: Middles

Week 8

Date: Monday 18/03 2:45pm

Location: Hall

Led by: Juniors - F/I A & I/2H

Week 9 Last Day

Date: Thursday 28/03 TBC

Location: Hall

Holy Week - Stations of the Cross



In 2024, the Vietnamese New Year will be celebrated on Saturday 10th February. As a school community with strong links to the Vietnamese community, we have planned some special activities to mark this significant date. Vietnamese New Year, known as Tết Nguyen Dan or simply Tết, is the most important and widely celebrated festival in Vietnam. It marks the beginning of the lunar new year.

On **Friday 9th February** we are inviting all students to wear casual clothes and if they can, wear **red** clothing. Red is considered to be a colour that symbolises good things in Vietnamese culture. A special lunch order will be offered from **Thanh Vinh** restaurant. This restaurant is owned by one of our families (Vinh Year 1 & Khang Foundation). An envelope with an order form will be sent home with each student on Friday (2nd February). If your child would like to place an order, please select the item and place \$10 in the envelope. Please ensure your child's envelope is returned by Thursday 8th February. Please note there will be **no** School Lunch Online orders on Friday 9th February.

We are looking forward to a wonderful day marking this significant date for many members of our school community.