



St Mary's Primary School

PARENT INFORMATION **HANDBOOK**





Welcome



Chris Bartlett
School Principal

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to St Mary's Primary School..

We are a values-centered learning community that promotes the development of each person spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically.

We believe that learning is a lifelong endeavour and that we can all empower each other to learn..

I look forward to welcoming you and your family into St Mary's Primary School community.

Mr Chris Bartlett

Our Story



Our History

St Mary's is a Catholic Parish school established 160 years ago and is administered by Brisbane Catholic Education.

Our school precinct is situated near the centre of Ipswich City, a few minutes walk from the railway station. Buses run to and from the school servicing most areas of Ipswich and its surrounds. We are situated next door to St Mary's College for girls and across the road from St Edmund's College for boys.

Our Mission

As a faith community, we strive to make Jesus real in the lives of our students, families and staff by living the Gospel values in our daily work. (Faith)

As an educational community, we recognize that each child is created in the image of God. We are committed to supporting and motivating all students to achieve their full potential. (Learning)

As a professional community of educators we are committed to ensuring every child develops the knowledge, skills and values necessary to actively engage in the world of the future. (Growth)

Our Vision

We will be a community of lifelong learners who make Jesus real by living the Gospel values of love, service and compassion.

Our Values

Blessed Edmund Rice, founder of the Christian Brothers and Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, were motivated by a Christian love of the poor and marginalized, a commitment to the development of young people, a devotion to Mary, the mother of Jesus and the establishment of communities based on Gospel Values. Following their example, St Mary's Primary School Faith Community seeks to Make Jesus Real. Our school values are summarised in the acronym WESTIE – Welcoming, Encouraging, Sorrowful, Thankful, Inclusive, Enthusiastic.

With our focus on Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L) we are balancing teaching with correction, ensuring that each individual receives the support they need to grow as life long learners and leaders.

Making Jesus Real (MJR)

Making Jesus Real is a way of life that all members of the St Mary's family teach and witness to one another in all that we do and say. It has as its foundation a positive approach to life and highlights the importance of respectful and right relationships with all those we come in contact with during the course of each day.

In summary, the MJR way of life teaches us and encourages us to be;

Welcoming (Matthew 25:34-36)

Encouraging (Philippians 4:12-14)

Saying Sorry (Proverbs 17:9-10)

Thankful (1 Thessalonians 5:17-19)

Inclusive (Romans 2:11)

Enthusiastic (Ephesians 6:7)

By adopting the W.E.S.T.I.E approach in our relationships with others, all members of the school community are responsible for making Jesus real in our midst.



Term Dates 2024



TERM 1 Term 1 Commences Term 1 Concludes	 Tuesday 23 January Thursday 28th March
TERM 2 Term 2 Commences Term 2 Concludes	 Monday 15 April Friday 21 June
TERM 3 Term 3 Commences Term 3 Concludes	 Monday 8 July Friday 13 September
TERM 4 Term 4 Commences Term 4 Concludes	 Monday 30 October Friday 6 December

Administration / Prayer	8.15 - 8.25
Morning Session	8.25 - 10.30
Lunch	10.30 - 11.00
Middle Session	11.15 - 1.15
Afternoon Tea	1.15 - 1.45
Afternoon Session	1.45 - 2.40
School concludes	2.40

Supervision before and after school

No supervision of children in the school grounds is provided before 8:00am. Students arriving before 8.00am must go to the Tuckshop Area in the centre of the school. Parents should be aware of the dangers of allowing children to arrive at school before adult supervision is available. After school, children who are waiting for buses are supervised inside the school grounds at the front of the Senior school. Our Pick-Up and Drop-Off Zone operates in the Parish car park. Staff supervise this area and assist students moving in and out of cars.

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

Parents interested in having their children supervised before or after school can contact the OSHC co-ordinator. OSHC is situated in the Senior School Building and operates 5 days a week and on school holidays. Children engage in organised activities and supervised study. A vacation Care program is also provided. For further information please contact the OSHC office on 3281 9381.



Student Behaviour Support

The way we behave at school is one of the most important considerations for parents, staff, school leadership and students. We believe that we all need to develop the skills of living and learning together in productivity and harmony and, when we run into problems, be able to work it out together.

At St Mary's we acknowledge that student behaviour occurs along a continuum, much like that of academic achievement. The majority of students will require minimal support or assistance to achieve academic success, while some students require additional instruction to achieve set goals, and a few students will require more intensive levels of support to make academic progress.

Similarly, in behavioural development, most students will require minimal support or instruction to demonstrate high standards of socially appropriate behaviour, while others will require additional support and instruction and a few will require intense levels of support to achieve desired behavioural outcomes.

We believe that behaviour can be taught and learned.

We believe that behaviour is a form of communication.

The purpose of our behaviour development and management system is:

- To develop commitment and ownership of our community's behaviour by involving all stakeholders in the development of our expectations of learning
- To enable all students to extend their skills of living and learning together in productivity and harmony by being taught appropriate behaviours
- To create needs-satisfying environments for all students
- To allow mistakes to be platforms of learning for all members of the school community and not destructive failure paths.

Supportive School Environment



Behaviour Matrix

St Mary's Behaviour Expectations Matrix

BE RESPONSIBLE St. Mary's: improving learning through responsible behaviours



	School Wide	Learning Spaces	Transitions	Playgrounds & Toilets	Online and Using ICT	Church and Gatherings
Be Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow instructions given. Move and sit safely. Be sun safe. Be in the right place at the right time. Respond appropriately to safety procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move safely. Use equipment as it should be used. Safe hands and feet. Sit appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on the left on stairs and in corridors. Safe hands and feet. Move quietly and carefully. Cross road only at crossing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play in the correct areas. Use playground equipment correctly. Hands and feet to yourself. Wear a hat and sunscreen. Use soap and water appropriately to wash hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know who you are communicating with. Keep log on details and passwords private. Turn off and report to an adult inappropriate words or images. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk carefully on kneeler as you enter the seat. Rest your feet gently on the kneeler. Walk only in the Church.
Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care for the environment. Use respectful words and actions. Wear uniform with pride. Include and encourage others. Care for property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-operate with, encourage and include others. Care for personal and school property. Listen to others and share your ideas appropriately. Put items away in their right place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move quietly. Be calm and patient. Be on time. Maintain personal space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put rubbish in the correct bins. Include others in games. Share equipment. Agree to rules of the game before starting and play by the rules. Respect others' privacy. Sit in designated area during eating times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care for equipment. Ask before you take a photo. Only use devices and resources for learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bless yourself with holy water as you enter the Church. Use quiet voices when entering the Church. Sit quietly in the Church. Look at the speaker and actively listen to what they are saying.
Be a Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set goals, know your goals and work towards goals. Listen and use feedback for improvement. Apply best effort. Be persistent and keep trying. Be resilient, have a go. Be on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask clarifying questions. Be engaged by sharing, talking and listening. Be reflective and learn from your mistakes. Practise skills independently and collaboratively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be ready to learn. Return all equipment to the right place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn the rules of games and play by the rules. Learn from your mistakes. Teach others the rules when they are unsure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share your knowledge and skills. Teach others and learn from others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate fully in liturgical celebrations. Sing the hymns. Learn the prayer responses.

A Brisbane Catholic Education School



Being Safe & Feeling Safe

At St Mary's Primary School every person has the right to feel safe. Any person who disregards the safety of another is denying them that right. The school will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, and it will take whatever steps are necessary to stop such behaviour.

What is Bullying Behaviour?

- It is behaviour from a child or group of children that deliberately upsets or hurts another child
- It is behaviour that happens more than once
- It can include hitting, name-calling and spreading rumours
- It is not an argument between children when both children are upset

For behaviour to be considered bullying, it must be both:

- Repeated
- Targeted
- There must be evidence of a power imbalance

At St Mary's we will talk openly about bullying behaviour and what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.

For more information please refer to our Bullying Information Pamphlets for Staff, students and parents which can be found on the website and Parent Portal

Staff Responsibilities

As part of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support system at St Mary's we address behaviours, including bullying, in two ways.

1. Proactive/preventative approach

We are working hard to develop and maintain a school-wide culture that does not tolerate bullying behaviours. As part of this, we are giving students tools to reduce bullying behaviour by teaching and promoting school-wide rules and explicitly teaching strategies to put in place if a student is subject to bullying.

Supportive School Environment



Staff responsibilities include:

- To model appropriate behaviour
- To be aware of the potential for bullying in specific areas during lunch break. Seek out and check in with children at risk during these times and remind students of behavioural expectations
- To practice and reward the use of the 3 step response - **Stop, Walk, Talk**
- To teach and reinforce expected behaviour in all areas of the school and through all aspects of school life

Proactive Approach

- Consistently respond to problem behaviours and reports of bullying according to the school guidelines
- Close monitoring
- Targeted teaching
- Addressing individual behaviours

Parent Responsibilities

Parents have a significant role to play in addressing bullying and unacceptable behaviour. Parent responsibilities include:

- To model appropriate behaviour and not accept bullying at home
- To encourage children to use the 3 step response - **Stop, Walk, Talk**
- To discuss and describe the actual behaviour concern rather than just calling it "bullying"
- Do not encourage retaliation, name-calling name calling.
- To encourage children to intervene proactively when they witness bullying rather than being a 'bystander'
- To watch for signs that their child may be being bullied
- To report concerns to the child's teacher

Student Responsibilities

Students play a vital role in addressing bullying and unacceptable behaviour at school. Student responsibilities include:

- To use the **Stop, Walk, Talk** steps when they experience problem behaviour or when they see another student experiencing problem behaviour
- To help someone who is being bullied
- To reject bullying
- To report incidents or suspected incidents of bullying

Administrative Matters



Accidents & Illnesses

In case of an accident or sudden illness at school, staff will attempt to contact parents. In serious cases, if parents cannot be contacted, appropriate action will be taken.

Health

It is important that the health information supplied upon enrolment is kept up to date. Please notify the school of changes in address, phone numbers, or emergency contacts.

Health Plans

Students with specific health conditions such as asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, and diabetes, must have an Individual Health Plan (IHP). This plan will be developed at the beginning of the school year in consultation with parents/caregivers. For anaphylaxis, the IHP will be an Anaphylaxis Action Plan. Most doctors work with parents in the development of this Plan.

Infectious Diseases

At the time of enrolment, parents will be given information regarding the exclusion time for infectious diseases most common to school children. The school follows the information available from the State Department of Health.

Medication

Brisbane Catholic Education guidelines are to be followed in relation to the administering of medication. All medication for students is administered at the Office. Before accepting responsibility for administering medication parents must supply:

- The medication packaged in the original packaging with the name of the medicine clearly marked, and pharmacist label attached
- Written instructions from the doctor or pharmacist indicating the specific times at which the medication is to be administered, as well as the dosage
- Parents are to fill out the Student Medication request for each medication administered. This can be found on the Parent Portal.

The school is not expected to take responsibility for non-prescribed medication, e.g. analgesics or headache tablets, nor for medication that is not taken orally.

According to Brisbane Catholic Education guidelines, all medication should be stored in the First Aid room in the Office area, not in students' bags.

Administrative Matters



Absenteeism

Pupils' absences are recorded daily. Parents are expected to log an absence via the Parent Portal or the BCE Connect App: Click on Absence and complete the form. Please notify the school before 8.45 am. Absences can also be logged on the App in advance.

The first bell rings at 8:15 am. Students are to be settled into their classrooms and prepared for work by 8:25 am.

Students who arrive at school at 8:30 am or later are considered to be late for school and it is recorded. Parents of students in Prep to Year 3 must sign their children in at the Office if they arrive late. Students in Years 4-6 may sign themselves in at the Office if they arrive late.

Students who leave the school before 2:40 pm must be signed out by an adult.

If a child is absent at the time of the morning roll call, and the school has not been notified, office staff will attempt to make contact with the parent.

Home/School Communication

We recognise the crucial importance of parent-teacher contact. Parents who wish to speak with teachers should make an appointment so that teachers are free of other commitments and may give their full attention to the parents.

Email can be used for administrative matters but all matters regarding academic progress or behaviour should be discussed face-to-face with a teacher.

The Parent Portal is a vital means of communication in our school. All information regarding school activities can be accessed via the portal. Report cards will also be published on the portal.

Students will also be issued with a School Diary (Year 1 – 6) and parents are asked to regularly check that diary for notes and information.

Please take time to check the school newsletter. The school publishes a school newsletter fortnightly. This is an important means of communication. You are encouraged to read it and keep informed about activities that involve you and your child. The newsletter can be found on the BCE Connect App or Parent Portal.

A parent update will be sent weekly to parents. This communication is sent from our school leadership team and contains information about the week ahead. A weekly snapshot is also posted on Facebook on a Sunday evening.

Parent Portal/BCE Connect



Overview

The Parent Portal is a website consisting of key parent information, school documents, important dates, and announcements from St Mary's Primary School. It is closely integrated with the BCE Connect Mobile application, which provides this information in a free, downloadable app.

Features

- **Announcements** - Short messages are displayed here, and also sent directly to BCE connect users' mobile phones
- **My Students** - Allows parents and guardians to access information about their students, including academic records
- **My Details** - Allows parents to see and update their personal details online to ensure the school has accurate records
- **Absence Reporting** - With a few simple clicks, parents can notify the school of an upcoming absence
- **Calendar** - Users stay up to date on all the key dates in the school's Calendar
- **Policies and Procedures** can also be viewed here

All Parents and legal guardians of students at St Mary's Primary School can access the Parent Portal and BCE Connect App.

The following pages provide instructions on how to access the Parent Portal and how to download the BCE Connect App. The BCE Connect App is tightly integrated with the Parent Portal and makes it easier to access the Parent Portal from a mobile device.

Parent Portal



A guide to getting started with your BCE Connect and Parent Portal account.

1. Download BCE Connect



2. Favourite your school



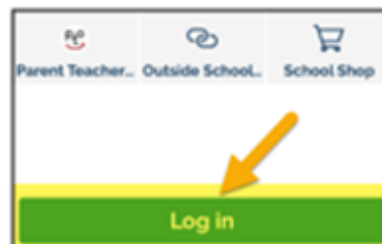
Favouriting your school in BCE Connect enables you to receive Push Notifications from the school and makes it easier to navigate back to the school by adding a shortcut on the home screen of the app.

3. Create an account



Select the first-time logging in option and enter the e-mail address you have supplied the school. A security code will be sent to your email. Return to the page and follow the prompts to **create your password**.

4. Log in



Log in to the BCE Connect App using your email address as your username and enter your newly created password.

Logging in will unlock all the features of BCE Connect. You can also access the Parent Portal from the Parent Portal link on the BCE Connect App.

5. Visit the Parent Portal



The **Parent Portal** offers a more feature rich experience for Parents.

Troubleshooting



Parent Portal troubleshooting

- Confirm the web address you have been given is correct. Navigate to the Parent Portal and retry opening your school's link
- Clear the cache and close the browser, retry. If you are still unable to log on after clearing cache and cookies, please confirm you have enabled cookies to be stored on your device. If you continue to experience difficulties with logging in via the browser, attempt to use another browser or device or log in directly via the BCE Connect App
- Reset your password. Navigate to the password reset tool to step through resetting your password, Once you have reset your password, visit the Parent Portal and try your new password
- Check your browser's autofill settings. Your browser can offer to save passwords for websites you visit and the password associated with the Parent Portal may be incorrect. Check the browser's autofill password to confirm they are correct or turn off this feature
- Check the email address the school has listed is correct. Sometimes the email address you are trying to use may be different from the one recorded in the school system. Ensure that the email address you are using is exactly what the school has recorded and that this email address is not associated with any other accounts.

BCE Connect troubleshooting

- Update to the latest version of BCE Connect. Open your device's app store and search BCE Connect. If an update is available, please update the app to get the latest changes.
- Log out and Log in on the BCE Connect home screen, scroll to the bottom of the page and select Log out. Open your desired school and log in again.
- Uninstall and reinstall the application. Remove the BCE Connect app from your device. Open your devices app store and search BCE Connect. Install and open the BCE Connect mobile application
- Turn off your device's autofill option. Your device can offer to save passwords for websites and apps and these may be incorrect. Check your device's saved passwords to confirm they are correct turn off this feature using the following steps:

iOS – Open the Settings app and scroll down to Passwords. Select AutoFill Passwords and turn off the AutoFill Passwords slider.

Android—Open the Settings app and scroll down to General Management. Open Autofill Service and change the setting to None

Administrative Matters



Visitors Policy

All visitors to the school must first report the nature of their business to the school office, complete the sign-in register and obtain a visitor tag. Visitors must sign out at the school office at the end of their visit.

Volunteers

All parents/carers who volunteer in the school community in any capacity need to ensure that they have completed the Brisbane Catholic Education's Student Protection Volunteers' Training. This training needs to be completed annually, each calendar year. Please contact the office for more information.

Any other volunteers (i.e. not parents) in the school community are required, by legislation, to obtain a Blue Card. The above conditions need to be completed before any volunteer work can commence. All Volunteers must sign in at the school office upon arrival, and again when leaving the school. Volunteers (other than parents) must bring their Blue Card to school for the office to make a copy.

Parental Involvement

We encourage support from parents - often as classroom helpers. Teachers will send home information about how parents can help. We value your assistance and we are grateful for any help given.

School Uniforms

At all times St Mary's Primary School students should present a positive image to the community where they are in regular contact with future parents as well as students and members of the general public. A student's standard of grooming is a reflection of a student's willingness to be a responsible member of the school community.

All students are expected to wear full, correct school uniforms and do so in a way that is consistent with school uniform requirements. Acceptable hairstyles are part of the school uniform code. Please check this carefully before sending your child to school.

As part of establishing a school dress code, we are bound by a range of hygiene and Workplace Health and Safety considerations.

Administrative Matters



SunSmart Policy Statement

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will develop some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. Research suggests that at least two-thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the sun during their first 15 years.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as sunspots, blemishes, and premature ageing. Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that children are at school. With this in mind, St. Mary's Primary School realises the need to protect children's skin and educate them about SunSmart behaviour.

The policy aims to:

- Provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility.
- Provide environments that support SunSmart practices.
- Create awareness of the need to reschedule outdoor sports activities and commitments to support SunSmart practices.

Procedures

Our school recognises that the winter sun also contributes to skin damage. The implementation of this policy will therefore be conducted throughout the year. The purpose of the SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending our school are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

Our commitment

St. Mary's Primary School will:

- Inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child & include the policy in the parent handbook
- Increase the amount of shade in the school grounds where possible, by building shelters and planting trees.
- Incorporate programs that focus on skin cancer prevention into the school curriculum
- Encourage all staff members to act as positive role models in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- Seek ongoing support from parents and the school community for the SunSmart policy
- Ensure all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck, and ears.
- Ensure all students and staff wear SPF 30 or higher water-resistant sunscreen when involved in outdoor activities
- Encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at lunchtime and recess
- Review the school uniform policy to conform with the QLD SunSmart clothing guidelines and policy annually
- Ensure that, when practical, outdoor activities take place before 10 am or after 2 pm
- Ensure that adequate shade and sunscreen are provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events.

Administrative Matters



Our expectations

Parents & Carers

- Provide a SunSmart hat for their child and ensure that it is worn to and from school. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends the following hats; 8-10cm broad-brimmed, legionairestyle
- Ensure that their child applies SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, 20 minutes before leaving for school
- Provide sunscreen appropriate to their child's skin type and allergies for use at school
- Ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends the following clothing features; dark-coloured, collars and sleeves, natural fibre
- Act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- Support the school SunSmart policy and help to regularly update the policy

Students

- Be aware of the school SunSmart policy
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart
- Comply with SunSmart rules and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses
- Apply SPF 30 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before coming to school and before going outdoors for afternoon activities
- Act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- Help to design and regularly update the SunSmart policy
- Participate in SunSmart education programs

Lunches

Lunchboxes are an important part of your child's school day, as they provide them with the energy and nutrients they need to learn and play. We encourage you to pack a healthy lunchbox for your child,

At our school, we care about the health and safety of our students. We are a nut aware school, which means we take precautions to minimise the risk of exposure to nuts and nut products on our premises.

Administrative Matters

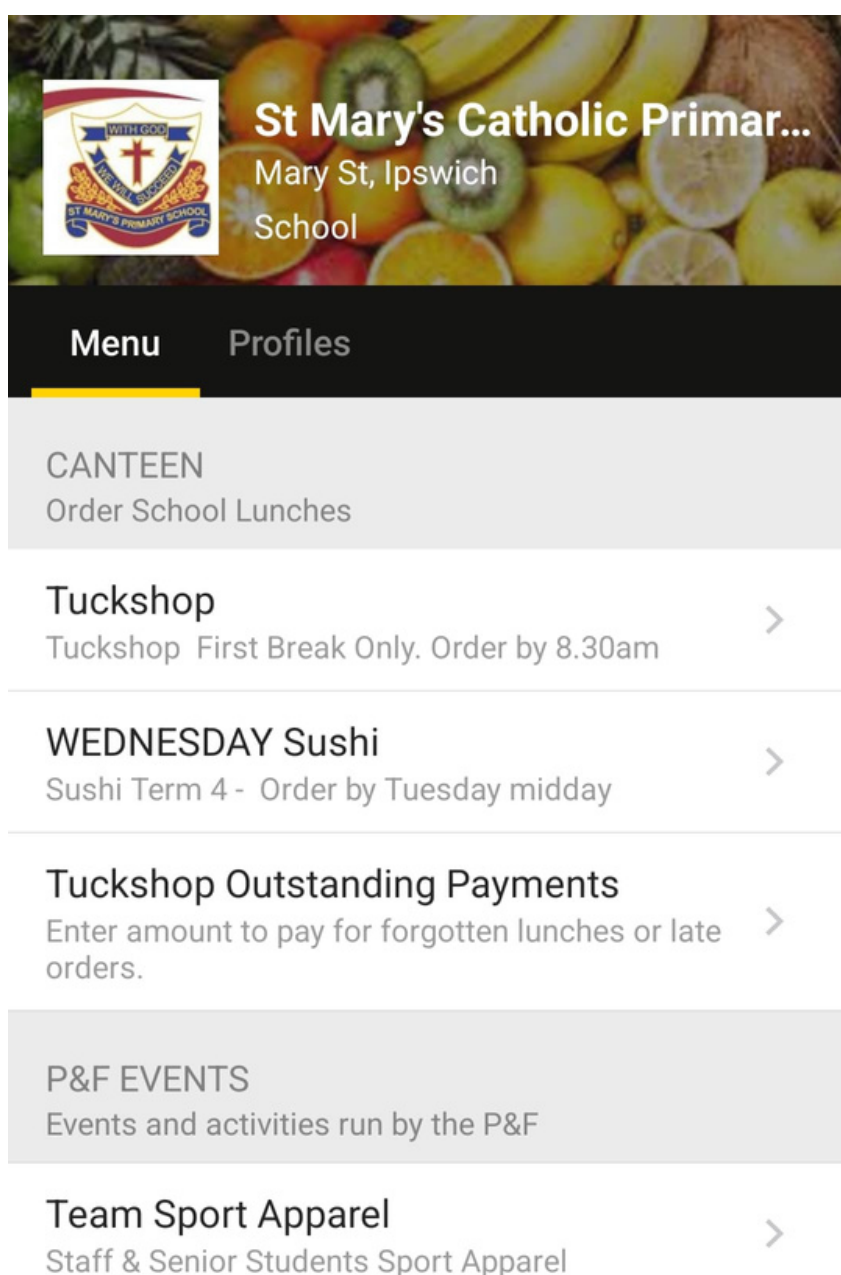


Tuckshop

The St Mary's Primary School Tuckshop operates daily for lunch (10.30 – 11.05 am).

Students must put in a lunch order if they wish to buy lunch from the tuckshop.

Orders may be placed online using the Smartphone App "Qkr!". Orders can be taken up to 8.30 am. on the day the food is required. They can also be placed in advance. Payment is made at the time of order from your nominated card.





Finance

Fees and Levies are charged at the beginning of each term. Fees are due to be paid within 14 days of the issue of the Account Statement. The due date will be noted on the statement.

Methods of Payment include:

- BPay
- Online via Mastercard/Visa card through the BCE Connect app by clicking the BPoint tile or via the Parent Portal
- Agreed Payment Plan by Direct Debit
- Eftpos – Debit and Credit Cards at the Finance Office
- Cash at the Finance Office
- Credit and Debit Card (Mastercard/Visa) via telephone contact with the Finance Office

Where a parent/guardian believes financial circumstances have arisen that will prevent or delay the payment of the Account Statement, a variety of options are available:

- Extension of Time
- Payment Plan
- Fee Concession

In fairness to families who pay their school fees regularly and on time, St Mary's Primary will follow up all overdue school fee accounts.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the finance office between 8am-4pm Monday-Friday. All matters are treated confidentially.



Religious Education



We believe that a Catholic School is essentially a community of faith, based upon a belief in God and a Christian way of life. Therefore, we encourage and support faith development in all aspects of school life.

Basic to our school philosophy is the centrality of Jesus Christ, and we encourage our students to be followers of Jesus by the way that they interact with all members of the school community in all facets of school life. We use the Making Jesus Real program in our school as a means of promoting a Christian way of life.

Our Religion program always remains faithful to the Catholic Church and its living traditions. Celebrations of prayer, liturgy, and sacraments are integral to our public expression of our faith and form part of the core life of our school. Staff and students gather often for whole school prayer liturgies to celebrate important liturgical feasts or significant events in our school or Parish life. Formal and informal prayer is a feature of daily classroom life.

At times we join with the Parish community in liturgical celebrations. Classes attend Mass with the Parish community throughout the year on a rostered basis. We support the Parish Priest, Father Peter Casey, as our Pastor in the faith development of our students. We encourage the students to respect the priests as the representatives of the Church in our Parish.

Our school's Religious Education Program provides for the full participation of students and teachers in the religious life of the school. The Assistant Principal of Religious Education is the co-ordinator of our school Religion program. We follow the Religion curriculum for BCE schools and teachers avail themselves of regular opportunities for professional development. The APRE is also a key member of the school Leadership Team and plays a major role in the administration of our school.

As parents are the prime educators of their children, our school respects their ongoing responsibility for the faith development of their children and welcomes their participation in the religious life of the school.

Parish Sacramental Program

At St Mary's parents, teachers, catechists and the community all share the responsibility for educating our children in the faith, and in particular for preparing them for the sacraments. The overall co-ordination of the sacramental program is the responsibility of the Parish Sacramental Team which comprises the Pastoral Associate, the Pastor, parents, and parishioners.

The Sacramental Program supports parents

- By providing opportunities for their own adult faith formation
- By suggesting activities that support the faith life of the family and the child
- By ensuring there are opportunities for additional religious instruction if necessary
- By preparing meaningful celebrations of the Sacraments for our children, families, and the community.

Families who wish to prepare to celebrate Confirmation, First Communion, and Reconciliation need to enrol the child in the Sacramental Program. Enquiries concerning the program can be made by contacting the Parish Office (during office hours) on 3281 2133.



Curriculum



Like all primary schools in Australia, we teach the Australian Curriculum under the guidance of the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority and Brisbane Catholic Education. Our school offers a curriculum that respects prior life experience and diversity and recognises that every learner is in some ways like all others, in some ways like some others, and in some ways like no other.

St Mary's provides a comprehensive curriculum that covers the key learning areas: Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Languages, Technologies, Health and Physical Education and The Arts.

The core of delivering a successful curriculum is focusing on the learner and their individual needs. Our teachers understand that each student is unique and has different abilities, interests, and learning styles. They create an engaging, safe, and supportive learning environment that fosters a love of learning and encourages students to take risks and learn from mistakes. They provide opportunities for active and hands-on learning that allows students to explore and discover new concepts and ideas.

We believe that a successful curriculum must be built on strong foundational skills that include literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking. These skills must be developed through a range of activities that cater to all learning styles. Teachers regularly assess and monitor student progress to ensure that each child is achieving their full potential. They provide feedback and support to help students overcome any challenges they may face.

At St Mary's, we view families as vital to students' learning. The school provides regular communication with families so that each student is supported in their learning journey. By working together, teachers, parents and carers help to create a positive and supportive learning environment that encourages all students to reach their full potential.

Our aim is to help our students develop as lifelong, reflective, self-directed learners who will be community contributors, quality producers, active investigators, effective communicators, designers and creators, leaders and collaborators.

English

St. Mary's recognises English as the foundation upon which all learning is built. Based on this philosophy, the school has implemented an English Block every school day. The purpose of this block is to provide teachers with a sustained amount of time to explicitly, while also giving students the opportunity to learn and practice in multiple ways. From Prep through to Year 6 our students are immersed in a wide variety of engaging literacy experiences that build their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Students will listen to, read, view, speak, write, and create and reflect on rich, relevant, and engaging spoken, written, digital and multimodal texts.

Curriculum



Reading

At St Mary's, we use a Systematic Synthetic Phonics approach, which is evidence based and proven to be effective in teaching reading. This method helps students learn the relationships between the sounds (phonemes) of spoken language and the letter symbols (graphemes) of written language. Our goal is for our students to blend and segment sounds to make words until the words are so familiar that the spelling, pronunciation, and meaning of specific words are held in their memory, and the words are recognised automatically.

Learning to read is an important part of every child's development. It helps build essential lifelong skills in areas such as language, concentration, critical thinking, and memory. We focus on the six components of effective reading: oral language, phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. We strive to create a nurturing and stimulating environment that fosters your child's love for learning and their development in literacy.

Mathematics

At St Mary's, we place great importance on Mathematics, and we ensure that our students engage daily in a Numeracy Block. Our goal is to enable our students to become confident, creative, and effective users and communicators of mathematics. We want them to have the skills to investigate, represent, and interpret situations.

To support our students' learning, we use digital technologies to enhance their mathematical reasoning and communication skills. Our aim is to provide an environment that fosters an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and processes, and to build fluency over time.

Individual Differences

We value and appreciate the uniqueness and individuality of each student and endeavour to provide opportunities through which each student may experience achievement and success. We endeavour to stimulate children to advance at their own rate. We provide special assistance to those children who will benefit from it, and endeavour to give to those children who are identified as advanced learners opportunities that will both challenge and affirm them. We encourage students to participate in extracurricular events.

Digital Literacy Skills

At St Mary's, we help our students develop the digital literacy skills they need to thrive in the modern world. We teach them how to use devices and platforms in a safe and responsible way, and how to apply their learning to real-world situations. Our students have access to a range of digital resources, such as laptops for Year 3-6 students, and iPads for Prep to Year 2 students.

Learning and Teaching



Library

Our school library is a flexible resource space that provides materials to meet the learning needs of our students. Our library provides children with opportunities to develop the ability to cooperate with others by working in an area where reading, listening, viewing, and studying can be shared with other children. Through literature, children can also acquire a love of reading which will give them pleasure and enrichment, enlarge and extend their world, stir their imagination and provide an understanding of themselves and others.

Sport and Physical Education

We have a specialist teacher who plans and implements our Physical Education program. Sport is a component of our Physical Education program, but we attempt to maintain a balance between the teaching of skills for the major games and the competitive playing of these games. Our membership of district and regional school sports associations provides an avenue for children to compete in a variety of sports. Our class Physical Education program runs throughout the year.

Languages Other Than English

Students in Years 3 – 6 engage in Japanese lessons. The program aims to give children a basic knowledge of another language and to develop in them an appreciation of, and respect for, the cultural experiences of others. Year 2 students are exposed to languages other than English on a rotational basis.

Design and Digital Technologies

Students in Prep - Year 6 attend Design and digital technology lesson where students create and innovate with various technologies. Students are taught to use these technologies safely, responsibly, and ethically, and how to apply their skills to solve problems and express their ideas.

The Arts (Music, Drama, Dance, Media Arts)

At St Mary's, we value the arts as a way of engaging, inspiring, and enriching our students. The Arts specialist teaches 4 of the 5 subjects within the arts curriculum including: Dance, Drama, Media Arts and Music. Visual Arts is taught by classroom teachers. Our students will learn how to create, design, represent, communicate, and share their imagined and conceptual ideas, emotions, observations, and experiences. We also participate in various arts events and competition.

Instrumental Program

Children in Years 2 - 6 are eligible to enrol in the instrumental program run at the school by Musicorp. Lessons are given in woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The child's commitment is to one 30-minute lesson in school time and practices at home during the week. Children must supply their own instruments, which may be bought or hired through Musicorp or elsewhere. Accounts are payable directly to Musicorp.

Learning and Teaching



Personal and Social Learning

Personal and Social Learning supports students in becoming creative and confident individuals with a sense of self-worth, self-awareness, and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical well-being, with a sense of hope and 'optimism about their lives and the future.

We believe that the development of personal and social learning is foundational for success in academic learning and for citizenship. Social and Emotional Learning is an integral part of the Australian Curriculum.

In many areas, personal and social learning overlaps with our school's religious education and health programs.

Class time is allocated to the teaching of different aspects of social and personal learning. We use programs such as You Can Do It and Making Jesus Real.

Excursions and Incursions

Excursions from school and incursions are a means of highlighting school studies or of stimulating interest in classroom work and, as such, all children are expected to participate.

Student Leadership

We place great emphasis on student leadership in our school especially among our Year 5 and Year 6 students. All of our Year 6 students participate in leadership by volunteering to join various service groups within the school where they get practical experience in developing their leadership skills. Year 5 and Year 6 students meet to share various aspects of student leadership.

Curriculum



Homework

Homework benefits students by complementing classroom learning, fostering good study habits, and providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning.

Implementation

- Classroom teachers will set homework appropriate to each child's skill level and age
- Each set task must be purposeful, meaningful, and relevant to the current classroom curriculum

Early Years (Prep - Year 3)

Homework tasks are designed to be completed under parent supervision and will generally not exceed 15 minutes. Homework will consist of:

- Daily reading activities from a fluency folder to be completed with parents
- Systemic learning of sounds, words, spellings, and number facts
- Simple tasks associated with classroom activities
- Gathering of additional information or materials

Middle- Upper Primary (Years 4-6)

Homework will generally not exceed 30 minutes and will include the use of their laptop. Homework will consist of:

- Reading to and with parents or independent reading on a daily basis
- Gathering of additional information or materials
- Drill and practice - number facts and mathematical concepts
- Reading and response tasks
- Word study
- Research tasks

Organisations and Services



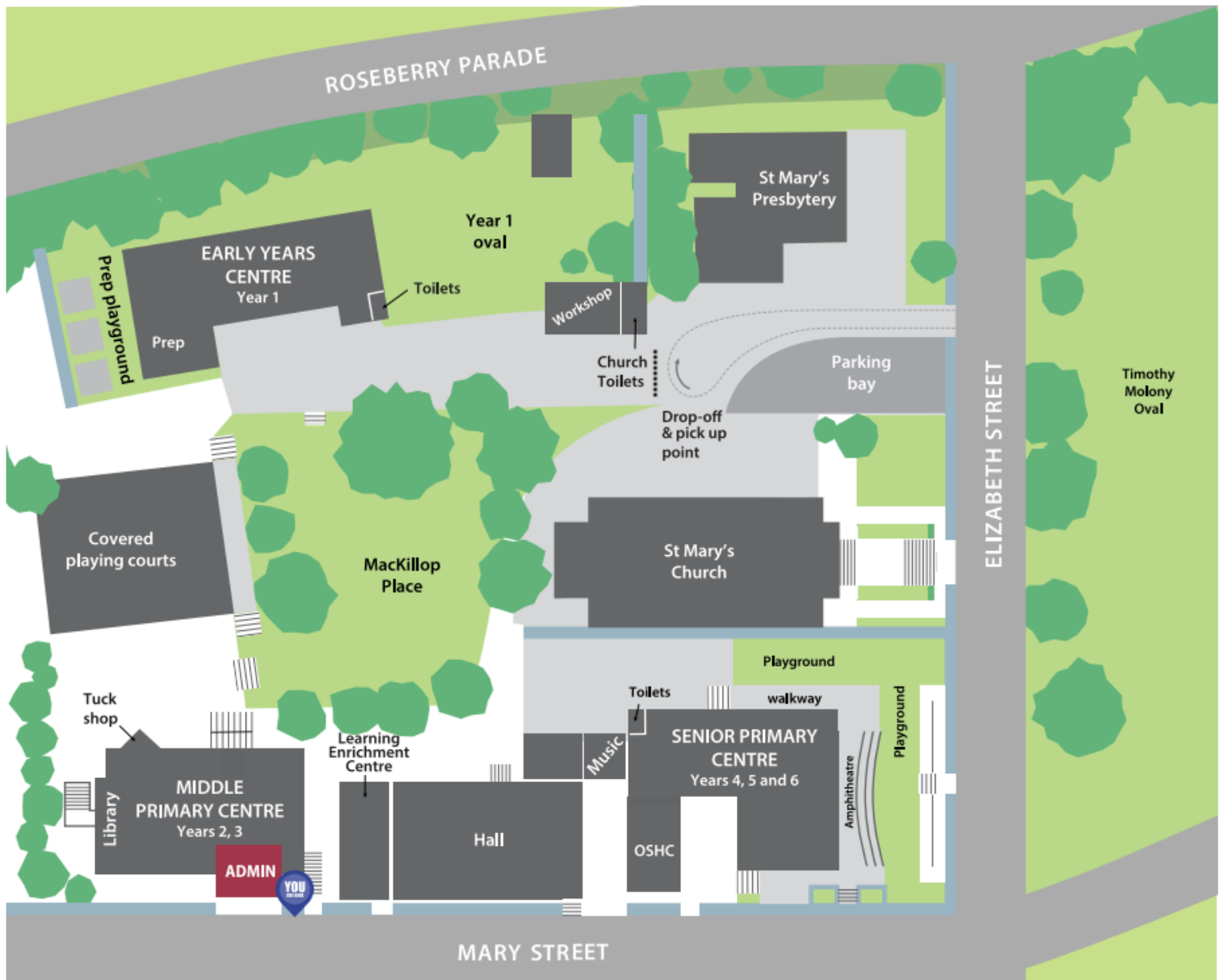
The Parents and Friends Association

Parents are recognised as partners with professional teachers in the education of their children, with the parents being the first educators. The Association exists for the benefit of the school, and as part of its structure, not as something separate. Its primary role is to build community and provide educational opportunities for families. It represents all the parents of the school, not just those who are able to attend meetings, and acts on their behalf.

The aims of the Parents & Friends Association:

- To work closely with the school leadership team to achieve the goals of the school
- To achieve a high level of social interaction between parents and teachers
- To encourage participation by parents in the educational experience of their children
- To provide a healthy forum of ideas and discussions on relevant issues regarding education, communications, and the future welfare of the school
- To become a communication network for the school, parents, and the wider community
- To contribute towards the provision of additional resources and facilities to improve students' educational opportunities
- To support the religious and curriculum objectives of the school

School Map





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