



Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2025



## SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2025

Dear Parents & Carers,

As a Catholic school, parents of children, who have Baptised their child/ren in the Catholic Rite, are invited to formally enrol their children in this year's Sacramental Program.

Year 3 students – Reconciliation

Year 4 Students – Eucharist

Year 6 Students – Confirmation.

As parents, you hold the key to the spiritual growth of your child. Regular family prayers and participation at Mass on the weekend, is a sure way of opening the door for God's grace to support his/her spiritual growth.

Parents and children must make a commitment to prepare well for the reception of Sacraments

including participation during the formal preparation process in the following:

- Sacrament Enrolment Evening
- Parent/Child Reflection Evening
- Commitment Mass
- Classroom Religious Education Program

This year, an **Enrolment Evening for all Sacraments will be held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February at 7.00pm** in St Catherine of Siena School Hall. The purpose of this is to provide information & details regarding parent & student involvement in the sacraments, what you as a parent can do to support your child, and to formally enrol into the Sacramental course.

All students enrolling in any of the Sacraments must complete the **enrolment form**. This form has been sent home to students who are eligible to receive one of the Sacraments this year. **Proof of baptism must be provided with the enrolment form.**

If you had provided a **Baptismal certificate**, as part of your enrolment at St Catherine of Siena, we have taken the opportunity to make a copy and have attached it to the letter and enrolment form sent home with students who are eligible to receive their next Sacrament.

We are aware that sometimes finding certificates can be a challenge so we hope that this action will simplify the enrolment process for those parents enrolling their children in the sacramental program this year. If no certificate was attached, it means that we do not have the certificate, or that the certificate is that of a different faith. In this case, you will need to speak directly with Fr Alex or Fr Wilford, by contacting the parish office, as to your child's sacramental enrolment.

While thinking about your child's Baptism, have you asked yourself what Baptism means to you? For myself, Baptism is something not done to you but something that is lived out in our daily interaction with others, in how we speak, act and care for others and ourselves. Baptism is a daily invitation to be Christ to others, something we as staff try to model to our students each day here at St Catherine's. The same can be said for each Sacrament as they are applied to each stage of our life.

Just a reminder that our first **Parent/ Child Reflection Evening for the Sacrament of Reconciliation** will occur on **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February** commencing at **6.30pm** (1hr duration).

With kindest regards,

Des Noack  
Principal

# FAMILY Learning Night

## Information nights: Reading and Maths

St Catherine of Siena Primary School will be hosting Family Learning and Information nights to discuss how Reading and Numeracy are taught at our school, the specific goals we have set for school improvement in these learning areas and to support parents with ways their child/ren can be supported at home.

The Learning and Information nights will be held in the upstairs area of the school (above admin).

**As there are limited places available you will be required to book your spot. This will be done in the same way you are booking parent teacher interviews. Please note that there are limited spaces.**

**Our Learning and Teaching Leader, Lisa McCallin will provide an update in next week's newsletter.**

Below are the nights that the information sessions will run to pre-mark them in your calendar:

### Family Learning and Information Night:

#### READING

**Prep Families: Reading with your child at home** – Thursday, 20th February from 7pm-8pm

**Year 1 & 2 Families: Reading with your child at home** – Thursday, 27th February from 7pm-8pm



<https://www.schoolinterviews.com.au/code/vkgqg>

Event code: **vkgqg**

### Family Learning and Information Night:

#### Maths

**Year 3 & 4 Families: Math's Learning Night** – Thursday, 6th March from 7pm-8pm

**Year 5 & 6 Families Math's Learning Night** – Thursday, 13th March from 7pm-8pm



<https://www.schoolinterviews.com.au/code/vkgqg>

Event code: **9z2rv**



## Welcome To Our New Macleay River Turtles

Late last week, our two Macleay River turtles arrived. They have been a source of curiosity and several searches throughout this week due to their miniature size and the water being stained by tree tanins. (Something we hope to resolve as soon as possible.)

The Macleay River Turtle (*Emydura macquarii dharra*) is found in the clear, sandy bottomed Macleay and Hasting Rivers on the south eastern coast of Australia between Brisbane and Sydney. It was given the name "Dharra" by the Aboriginal people who inhabit this species' range. 'Dharra' meaning stand (upright) be (in water). Like many Australian turtles, *Emydura macquarii* is an excellent swimmer, doing much of its hunting and feeding in or under water.

This very rare turtle readily eats anything it can catch, from small crustaceans and terrestrial insects to some water plants. The largest recorded size was an 18.5cm female, but in captivity around 15cm is the average maximum size and can live for up to seventy-five years of age if well cared for.

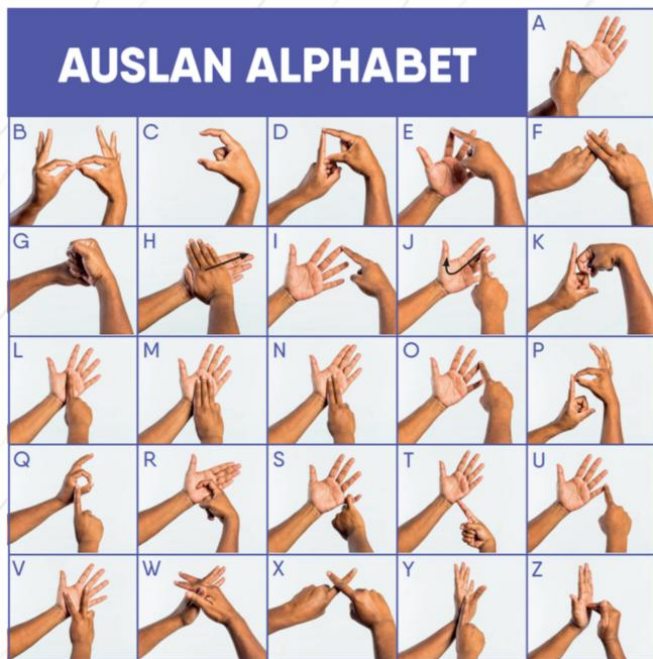
Next week we will commence a **naming competition** for our turtles and four (4) green frogs. Our green tree frogs arrived today.





# AUSLAN HUB

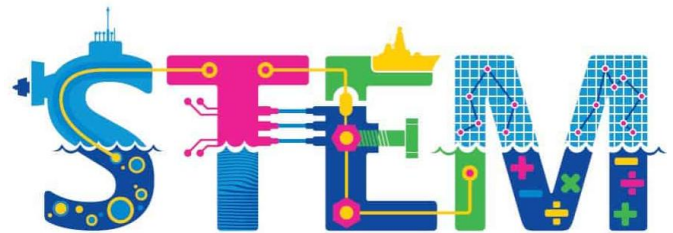
Exploring the Alphabet This Week



Students began learning the AUSLAN alphabet this week! Using their fingers and hands, they practiced forming letters and spelling their names. Alphabet games helped make the learning fun and interactive.

Encourage your child to teach you how to sign their name or try an Alphabet Circle game together!

The QR code will take you to the YouTube channel "Auslan Time with Geo!"



SCIENCE | TECHNOLOGY | ENGINEERING | MATHS

In our first week of S.T.E.M., the students of St. Catherine of Siena kicked off their first STEM Specialist lesson with an exciting hands-on experiment—Coke and Mentos! Their faces lit up as they eagerly watched the explosive reaction, with soda shooting into the air in a spectacular display.

Each student had the chance to participate, making the experience even more thrilling. The excitement was contagious, with everyone buzzing about the fun and learning they had. With such an engaging start, the students can't wait to dive into more STEM projects and discover even more scientific wonders in the coming lessons.



# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

As part of the Victorian Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's background and their outcomes, the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.

## CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is:

- \$154 for primary school students
- \$256 for secondary school students

## HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments:** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances:** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure.



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools

## St Catherine of Siena Concessional Fee Policy

St Catherine of Siena is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

### Purpose

The purpose is to set out the policy and procedures for the provision of fee concessions in St Catherine of Siena.

### Policy

#### 1. Eligibility for Concessional School Fees

- 1.1. Concessional school fees are available to any family that meets any of the below eligibility criteria:
  - 1.1.1. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage
  - 1.1.2. Hold a Health Care Card and eligible for Camps, Sports, Excursion Fund (CSEF)
  - 1.1.3. experiencing genuine financial hardship
  - 1.1.4. holding a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold Card
  - 1.1.5. identified as refugees and holding an ImmiCard is strongly encouraged to apply for concessional school fees.
- 1.2. Any family at the school required to relocate their (Australian resident) child to St Michael's Catholic Primary School, North Melbourne, due to the child requiring long term medical treatment at The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne will be eligible for concessional student fees. Pro-rata concession is provided for part-year attendance. An annual statutory declaration is required to confirm eligibility.
- 1.3. Home schooled students (HSS) who attend St Catherine of Siena on a part time basis, who meet any of the criteria detailed in Policy points 1.1 or 1.2 are eligible for concessional student fees.

#### 2. Ineligibility for Concessional School Fees

- 2.1. Full Fee Paying Overseas Students (FFPOS) or full-time HSS are ineligible for concessional school fees as government



funding is not available for FFPOS or full-time HSS.

### 3. Concessional School Fees for Eligible Students

- 3.1. Students of eligible families are entitled to concessional school fees.
- 3.2. The school fees for eligible students are:
  - 3.2.1. One child: \$15 per child per week, direct debit (\$780 per annum or \$195 per term)
  - 3.2.2. Two children: \$23 for the family per week, direct debit (\$1,196 per annum, or \$299 per term)
  - 3.2.3. Three or more children: \$30 for the family per week, direct debit (\$1,560 per annum, or \$390 per term)
  - 3.2.4. The above fees cover both tuition fees and levies.

### 4. Operationalisation of Concessional Fee Policy

- 4.1. The principal may apply this policy and procedures from the date of approval of this policy.
- 4.2. St Catherine of Siena is required to comply with this policy prior to setting fees.

## School Saving Bonus (SSB) – MACS Primary

### Summary and FAQs

#### School Saving Bonus (SSB) Background

- For Non-government schools, the SSB is a \$400 bonus for students receiving the means- tested Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).
- SSB funding was provided to non-government schools based on their full cohort of students receiving CSEF in 2024. This funding was distributed late November 2024.
- To ensure the SSB benefit applies to eligible students for the 2025 school year, the Department of Education has recommended that the bonus is allocated to eligible students once the CSEF process has been completed for 2025.
- Non-government schools are required to apply the benefit for eligible families in a manner that is consistent with the intent of the bonus.

#### SSB can be applied to the following programs / expenditure:

- camps, trips, excursions and incursions
- swimming and sporting programs
- outdoor education programs
- graduations
- school uniforms

- textbooks.

SSB **cannot be applied** to tuition charges.

SSB **cannot be applied** to other non-school charges that may be billed through schools such as Before and After school care and faith related charges, e.g. sacraments and confirmation, social activities (deb ball, prom). The bonus cannot be used for activities required for the school's delivery of the curriculum such as stationery, locker hire, classroom and homework materials.

- The school is not required to provide the family with the cash equivalent of the bonus.
- Schools should ensure that the benefit is applied to the eligible students and is visible to parents,
- e.g. through a family statement or similar.

#### Additional Information

- Schools are expected to manage movements in CSEF eligibility within the total funding provided. For example, if Student A exits the school, and a Student B is enrolled, the \$400 from Student A is available to support Student B.
- If the bonus is unable to be managed with the available funding due to a net increase in CSEF eligible students, the Department will provide additional funding in 2025.
- Any additional funds held by the school following student movement must be used to support students as per the intent of the SSB. Schools are required to retain evidence of how any funding was applied.

#### Frequently Asked Questions

##### How should schools prioritise the application of SSB?

It is recommended that schools prioritise the highest value item. This will be as follows:

- Camp
- Sports/Outdoor Educational programs
- Uniforms (if new student, prioritise above sports/outdoor educational programs) The aim is to use \$400 SSB within the 2025 year, if possible.

##### Can SSB be applied to non-school charges?

SSB can only be applied to additional charges related to educational activities and programs. Please refer to the above list of applicable programs/expenditure.

If there are additional charges that is not covered by MACS Concessional Fee policy, then SSB would be applicable, if within the program/expenditure listed above.

### Can the \$400 SSB be applied directly as a credit to the family account who are already offered MACS Concessional fees?

No, the \$400 cannot be directly applied as an automatic credit against the family account. Credit can only be applied to the family account if it can be allocated towards programs/expenditures as stated above. It must be a justified applicable item(s) and evidence of how SSB funding was applied needs to be retained.

### Can the SSB be shared within a family?

Yes, families can apply the SSB to another child within their family.

### Can SSB be applied at any stage throughout 2025?

Yes, SSB can be applied at any stage throughout 2025. Ideally the full SSB is utilised within 2025.

### If a parent claims SSB throughout the year, then how will it impact their direct debit?

It will be at the school's discretion if they wish to adjust direct debit payment amounts. SSB is not cash transferrable and it is not advised that school's reimburse parents directly.

## MACS Concessional Fee

### How should SSB be applied for families that are offered MACS Concessional Fee policy?

Schools are recommended to apply the SSB after the MACS Concessional Fee Policy.

For students with approved MACS Concessional Fee Policy (CFP), apply CFP first (includes CSEF application) and then SSB.

For students without approved CFP but receive CSEF, apply CSEF and then SSB. For example, if the student has an applicable camp levy:

Apply the MACS Concessional Fee first and then reduce camp with SSB.

If the student does not have an applicable camp levy:

Apply the MACS Concessional Fee first and then reduce overall amount payable with SSB only for applicable items.

### Example Scenarios

All examples below assume approved MACS Concessional Fee is applied.

#### Scenario 1: 1-Child Family with Camp Levy

- Family pays \$780 (MACS concession) + camp levy.
- Camp levy is \$500. SSB of \$400 is applied to the camp levy.
- Total payable by the family: \$780 + \$100 (remaining camp levy) = \$880

#### Scenario 2: 1-Child Family without Camp Levy or other applicable charges/levies

- Family pays \$780 (MACS concession) + no camp levy.
- If no other applicable charges/levies arise such as graduation, sports programs and/or outdoor education programs for SSB to be applied, the total unused value can be carried over to 2026.
- Total payable by the family: \$780

#### Scenario 3: 1-Child Family without Camp Levy + Additional \$100 Sports Program Charge

- Family pays \$780 (MACS concession) + \$100 sports program.
- SSB applied to \$100 sports program.
- Total payable by the family: \$780 (carry forward unused \$300 SSB)
- The school will carry forward the remaining \$300 SSB to the 2026 school year if it cannot be utilised in 2025.

#### Scenario 4: 1-Child Family without Camp Levy + purchase uniforms for \$500

- Family pays \$780 (MACS concession)
- \$400 SSB applied to \$500 uniform purchase if tax receipt is provided.
- Total payable by the family: \$780 - \$400 = \$380
- Family covers cost of remaining \$100 from uniform spend.

#### Scenario 5: 2-Child Family with Camp Levy for one child

- Family pays \$1,196 (MACS concession) + camp levy for one child.
- Camp levy is \$1,000. SSB of \$800 is applied to the camp levy for the 2x \$400 SSB received for the two children.
- Total payable by the family: \$1,196 + \$200 (remaining camp levy) = \$1,396

## Uniforms

### Can the school process a credit to the family account if the family provides proof of purchase for uniform or books? i.e. parent buys upfront the uniform/books and provides receipts/tax invoices to school for processing as a credit in Accounts Receivable system.

Yes, provided that schools can obtain evidence and track the transaction and are able to explain that the credit on fees is in lieu of an eligible cost already paid by the family.

It is not advised to reimburse parents directly.

### Can SSB be applied to secondhand uniforms?

Yes, if a tax invoice can be issued from approved uniform supplier.

The school bonus cannot be used to support transactions between individuals or marketplace sales (i.e. a family selling their child's uniform to another child).

### **What 'proof' is required when claiming SSB for uniform purchases?**

Tax receipt/invoice listing uniform items.

### **What if tax receipts are lost? Can parents provide bank statements as proof of purchase for uniforms?**

No. Parents are required to retain tax receipts to apply SSB. If a parent has lost their receipt, they can attempt to contact the uniform provider.

### **What is the cut off for claiming uniform?**

Parents can claim SSB for uniforms from November 2024 onwards provided they have tax receipts/invoices. The uniform items will need to relate to the 2025 school year.

### **Can generic brands from Kmart or Target uniforms be claimed?**

No. SSB cannot be used for purchases at general retailers.

### **Can SSB be applied towards school sports rugby tops or Year 6 jumpers that are charged separately from fees/levies? If so, how should this be recorded or applied?**

Yes, a school sports rugby top or Year 6 jumper is considered uniform and is an additional charge to families, therefore SSB can be applied.

Please note that schools are required to retain a copy of the tax invoice if the school purchases the additional uniform item on behalf of the students (i.e. Year 6 jumper).

For uniform items purchased in 2024, please refer above.

## **Carry Forwards and Unused Funds**

### **My school has additional funds due to student movement. When does this need to be allocated against other students, i.e. within 2025 or can this carry over to 2026? Also, does this have to be applied to only CSEF students?**

Additional funds held due to student movements can be spent at the school's discretion and additional funds can be shown to support disadvantaged students. It does not need to be spent exclusively on CSEF eligible students. Additional funds can be allocated in 2025 and carried over into 2026.

### **Can SSB be carried forward into 2026 if there are unused funds in 2025?**

Carry forwards are permitted. If schools or families are not able to spend the bonus in a manner that will benefit the student/family in 2025, then funds can be carried forward to 2026. Schools are

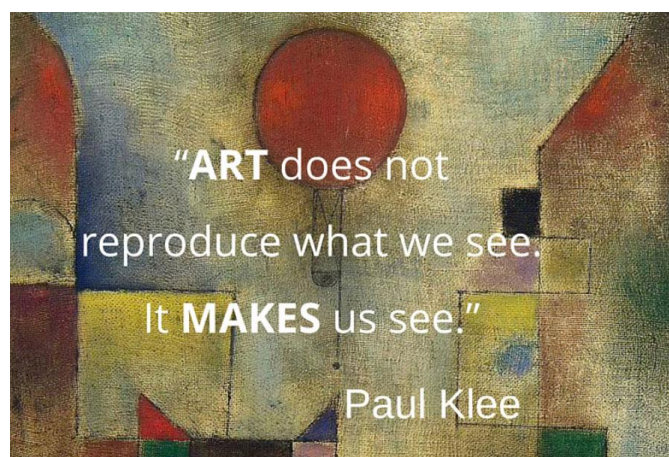
required to ensure appropriate EOY adjustments for reporting and acquittals.

### **A child is moving to another MACS school, can their unused SSB funds be carried across to another school?**

Yes, if a child is moving to another MACS primary school, unused SSB funds can be carried across. It will not be transferred if the student moves to government school.

### **What happens to surplus funds if all students from the relevant family have graduated? Are funds required to be returned?**

Schools are NOT required to return unspent funds. It is expected that funds are used for an aligned purpose, at the school's discretion to support disadvantaged students. There is no requirement for parents of these students to be HCC holders, ensuring the funds are aligned with the intent of the SSB.





# NAPLAN 2025

## Information for parents and carers

### Why do students do NAPLAN?

The National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is a literacy and numeracy assessment that students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 sit each year. It is the only national assessment all Australian students have the opportunity to undertake.

As students progress through their school years, it is important to check how well they are learning the essential skills of reading, writing and numeracy.

NAPLAN assesses the literacy and numeracy skills that students are learning through the school curriculum and allows parents/carers to see how their child is progressing against national proficiency standards.

NAPLAN is just one aspect of a school's assessment and reporting process. It does not replace ongoing assessments made by teachers about student performance, but it can provide teachers with more information about students' educational progress.

NAPLAN also provides schools, education authorities and governments with information about how education programs are working, and whether young Australians are achieving important educational outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

### Your child will do the NAPLAN tests online

Online NAPLAN tests are designed to provide precise results and are engaging for students. The tests are tailored (or adaptive), which means that each test presents questions that may be more or less difficult depending on a student's responses. This helps students remain engaged with the assessment.

Tailored testing allows a wider range of student abilities to be assessed and measures student achievement more precisely. A student's overall NAPLAN result is based on both the number and complexity of questions they answer correctly. Your child should not be concerned if they find questions challenging; they may be taking a more complex test pathway.

All Year 3 students will continue to complete the writing assessment on paper.

### What does NAPLAN assess?

NAPLAN assesses literacy and numeracy skills that students are learning through their regular school curriculum.

Students sit assessments in writing, reading, conventions of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy. The questions assess content linked to the Australian Curriculum: English and Mathematics.

All government and non-government education authorities contribute to the development of NAPLAN test materials.

To find out more about NAPLAN, visit [nap.edu.au](http://nap.edu.au).

### Participation in NAPLAN

NAPLAN is for all Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students. ACARA supports inclusive testing, so all students have the opportunity to participate in the National Assessment Program.

Information on adjustments available for students with disability who have diverse functional abilities and needs is provided in the [National protocols for test administration](#).

Schools should work with parents/carers and students to identify, on a case-by-case basis, reasonable adjustments required for individual students with disability to access NAPLAN.

To help inform these decisions, you may consult the National protocols for test administration (linked above), [NAPLAN public demonstration site](#), the [Guide for schools to assist students with disability to access NAPLAN](#), and our [series of videos](#) where parents/carers, teachers and students share their experiences in using NAPLAN adjustments.

In exceptional circumstances, a student with a disability that severely limits their capacity to participate in the assessment, or a student who has recently arrived in Australia and has a non-English speaking background, may be granted a formal exemption.

Your school principal and your local test administration authority can give you more information on adjustments for students with disability or the process required to gain a formal exemption.

### What if my child is absent from school on NAPLAN test days?

Where possible, schools may arrange for individual students who are absent at the time of testing to complete missed tests at another time during the school's test schedule.

### What can I do to support my child?

Students are not expected to study for NAPLAN. You can support your child by letting them know that NAPLAN is a part of their school program and reminding them to simply do their best. Some explanation of



## NAPLAN timetable

The NAPLAN test window is 9 days. This is to accommodate schools that may not have the capacity to complete the tests in a shorter time frame. The NAPLAN test window starts on Wednesday 12 March 2025 and finishes on Monday 24 March 2025. Schools will schedule the tests as soon as possible within the testing window, prioritising the first week.

Test	Scheduling requirements	Duration	Test description
<b>Writing</b>	Year 3 students do the writing test on paper on day 1 only. Years 5, 7 and 9 writing must start on day 1 (schools must prioritise completion of writing on day 1, with day 2 only used where there are technical/logistical limitations).	Year 3: 40 min Year 5: 42 min Year 7: 42 min Year 9: 42 min	Students are provided with an idea or topic called a writing stimulus (or prompt) and asked to write a response in a particular genre (narrative or persuasive writing).
<b>Reading</b>	To be completed after the writing test.	Year 3: 45 min Year 5: 50 min Year 7: 65 min Year 9: 65 min	Students read a range of informative, imaginative and persuasive texts, and then answer related questions.
<b>Conventions of language</b>	To be completed after the reading test.	Year 3: 45 min Year 5: 45 min Year 7: 45 min Year 9: 45 min	Students are assessed on spelling, grammar and punctuation.
<b>Numeracy</b>	To be completed after the conventions of language test.	Year 3: 45 min Year 5: 50 min Year 7: 65 min Year 9: 65 min	Students are assessed on number and algebra, measurement and geometry, and statistics and probability.

NAPLAN is useful to help students understand and be comfortable with the format of the tests; however, it is not necessary for parents/carers to do this. Teachers will ensure students are familiar with the types of questions in the tests and will provide appropriate support and guidance.

ACARA does not recommend excessive preparation for NAPLAN or the use of services by coaching providers.

See the types of questions and tools available in the online NAPLAN assessments at [NAP – Public demonstration site](#).

### How is my child's performance reported?

From 2023, NAPLAN results are reported against proficiency standards. There is a standard for each assessment area at each year level. Proficiency standards provide clear information on student achievement. They are set at a challenging but reasonable level expected of the child at the time of NAPLAN testing, based mainly on what has been taught in previous years of schooling. Student achievement is shown against 4 levels of proficiency: Exceeding, Strong, Developing and Needs additional support.

A NAPLAN individual student report will be provided by your child's school later in the year. If you do not receive a report, you should contact your child's school.

### How are NAPLAN results used?

- Students and parents/carers use individual results to discuss progress with teachers.
- Teachers use results to help identify students who need greater challenges or extra support.
- Schools use results to identify strengths and areas of need to improve teaching programs, and to set goals in literacy and numeracy.
- School systems use results to review the effectiveness of programs and support offered to schools.
- The community can see information about the performance of schools over time at [myschool.edu.au](https://myschool.edu.au).

### Where can I get more information?

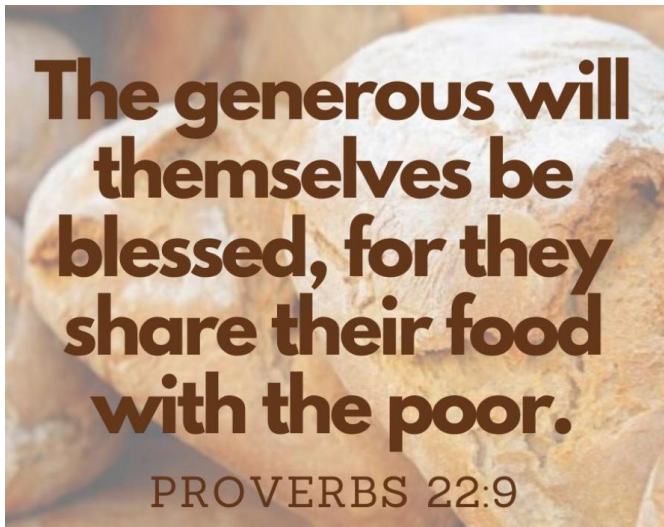
For more information about NAPLAN:

- Contact your child's school
- contact your local test administration authority at [nap.edu.au/TAA](https://nap.edu.au/TAA)
- visit [nap.edu.au](https://nap.edu.au)

To learn how ACARA manages personal information for NAPLAN, visit [nap.edu.au/naplan/privacy](https://nap.edu.au/naplan/privacy).

**In God we trust; all others must bring data.**

William Edwards Deming



## This Weekend's Gospel

The Gospel according to Luke 6:17. 20-26

*Happy are the poor. Woe to the rich!*

Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece of level ground where there was a large gathering of his disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be cured of their diseases.

Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

'How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom of God.

Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.

'Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out, abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the prophets.

'But alas for you who are rich: you are having your consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep.

'Alas for you when the world speaks well of you! This was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.'



## Gospel Reflection

What you see is often not what you get.

The Pope had just finished a tour of the USA and was taking a limousine to San Francisco. Having never driven a limo, he asked the chauffeur if he could drive for a while.

Well, the chauffeur didn't have much choice, so he climbs in the back and the Pope takes the wheel.

The Pope starts accelerating to see what the limo could do. He gets to 130 kph and suddenly sees the lights of the highway patrol in his rear vision mirror. He pulls over, but the policeman, seeing who it is, says, 'Just a minute your Holiness, I'm going to have to call in about this one'.

The trooper asks for the chief. He tells the chief he's got someone really important pulled over.

It's not Ted Kennedy again, is it?

No Chief, it's more important.

Is it the Governor?

No sir, it's more important.

Good God man, you haven't pulled over the President?

No sir, even more important.

Who the heck is more important than the President of the USA?

I don't know sir, but he's got the Pope as his chauffeur.

What you see is often not what you get.

What we have just heard in Luke's Gospel falls into this category.



When we hear the phrase 'Blessed are you' it can sound rather patronising. It can seem that Jesus glosses over all sorts of tough human realities with, 'Well done, keep it up, be happy and we'll fix it all up in heaven'.

But reading the beatitudes in this light is a direct contradiction of what Jesus says in this text and certainly how he lived it out.

The Hebrew concept of a blessing isn't about Divine pats on bowed human heads; it is about where the presence of God is to be found. In the Hebrew Scriptures, a blessing is the discovery that God is present and active in one's experience, right here and right now.

So the beatitudes are saying that we do not need to go past our own daily struggles to find the presence of God. Jesus tells us that when we see the poor, the compassionate, the mournful, those who campaign for a just society and suffer because of it, the gentle, the innocent, the peacemakers and the martyrs; we are encountering, in a special way, the presence of God.

Jesus teaches us that God is not impervious to our pain and happiness, or a great manipulator desiring terrible things to punish us or teach us something. No. The God of the beatitudes is a companion with us in every experience we go through either personally or as a community.

Luke goes on to give us the 'woes and warnings' and these are as important as the beatitudes. Luke highlights for us that every blessing carries with it a call, every gift contains a duty to share it, and every right houses within it a responsibility.

This is particularly true of our nation where the vast majority of our citizens are housed, educated, have clean drinking water, a long life span, a job and enjoy a stable democracy. This places us in the top fifteen percent of the world's population. We should discover God's presence in the midst of these blessings, but we must face up to the responsibilities they give us.

It is not good enough to be simply appalled at the widening gap between rich and poor in our own country and around the world. Today's Gospel places at our feet the challenge to do something about it, in our prayer, in our careful use of resources, in what we spend our money on and how we vote for governments which might affect international change.

The Beatitudes and warnings call us to become so transparently attentive to justice, development and peace for all people that what others see in the followers of Christ is precisely what they get.

# TERM 1

## Week 4

### Monday 17/02

- 2026 Prep Enrolments Open
- Prep Paramedic Incursion
- Parent Support Group Meetings

### Tuesday 18/02

- **Parent Helper Training 9.00am (Legal & Classroom Support)**
- **Parent Advisory Committee 2.00pm – 3.00pm**
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm
- Parent Support Group Meetings

### Wednesday 19/02

- Whole School Assembly 2.15pm – Parents Welcome
- Prep Day Off - Scheduled testing of Prep students
- **Year 5 Attending Parish Mass @ 9:15am**
- Parent Support Group Meetings
- **Enrolment night for Sacraments @ 7pm (Hall)- St Dominics and St Catherine of Siena**

### Thursday 20/02

- WORLD SOCIAL JUSTICE DAY
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm
- Parent Support Group Meetings
- **Prep Parent Information Night – Reading with your child at home 7pm – 8pm**

### Friday 21/02

- *Saint Peter Damien (commemoration)*
- Yr 6 Summer Sports – Round 2
- Parent Support Group Meetings

### Saturday 22/02

- *The Chair of Saint Peter*

### Sunday 23/02

- *Saint Polycarp (commemoration)*
- 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday In Ordinary Time- GREEN

## Week 5

### Monday 24/02

- **Prep's Commence Full-Time**
- **Reconciliation Family Night for St Catherine of Siena and St Dominics @ 6:30pm**

### Tuesday 25/02

- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Wednesday 26/03

- Whole School Assembly 2.15pm
- **Year 4 Attending Parish Mass @ 9:15am**

### Thursday 27/03

- *Saint Gregory of Narek (commemoration)*
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm
- **Yr 1/2 Parent Night – Reading with your child at home 7pm 8pm**

### Friday 28/02

- Yr 6 Summer Sports – Round 3

## Sunday 02/03

- 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday In Ordinary Time-GREEN
- Clean Up Australia Day

## Week 6

### Monday 03/03

- **Whole School Photo Day**

### Tuesday 04/03

- **Shrove Tuesday**
- *Saint Casimir (commemoration)*
- Year 5 Excursion to Melbourne Zoo
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Wednesday 05/03

- **Ash Wednesday Mass @ 9:15am**
- Instalment 1 - Family Fee & Student Levy Payment Due
- Whole School Assembly 2.15pm

### Thursday 06/03

- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm
- **Yr 3/4 Parent Information Night – Mathematics 7pm – 8pm**

### Friday 07/03

- *Saints Perpetua and Felicity (commemoration)*
- **World Day of Prayer**

### Saturday 08/03

- *Saint John of God (commemoration)*
- International Women's Day
- **Reconciliation Presentation and Commitment MASS @ 6:00pm**

### Sunday 09/03

- *Saint Frances of Rome (commemoration)*
- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent-VIOLET

## Week 7

### Monday 10/03

- **Labour Day – Public Holiday**

### Tuesday 11/03

- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Wednesday 12/03

- **Year 2 Attending Parish Mass @ 9:15am**
- **Sacrament of Penance 7.00pm**
- **NAPLAN Commences for Year 3 & 5**
- Whole School Assembly 2.15pm

### Thursday 13/03

- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm
- **Yr 5/6 Parent Information Night – Mathematics 7pm – 8pm**

### Friday 14/03

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### Saturday 15/03

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### Sunday 16/03

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent-VIOLET

## Week 8

### Catholic Education Week

#### Monday 17/03

- *Solemnity of Saint Patrick (Dress In Green)*
- *Saint Gertrude*

#### Tuesday 18/03

- *Saint Cyril of Jerusalem*
- **Parent Advisory Committee 2.00pm – 3.00pm**
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Wednesday 19/03

- *Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary*
- **Year 3 Attending Parish Mass @ 9:15am**
- Whole School Assembly 2.15pm

### Thursday 20/03

- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Friday 21/03

- Harmony Day
- Mass of Saint Patrick for Schools

### Saturday 22/03

- *Saint Turibius de Mogrovejo (commemoration)*

### Sunday 23/03

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent-VIOLET

## Week 9

### Monday 24/03

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### Tuesday 25/03

- *The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord*
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Wednesday 26/03

- **Year 1 Attending Parish Mass @ 9:15am**
- Whole School Assembly 2.15pm

### Thursday 27/03

### Saturday 29/03

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### Sunday 30/03

- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent-VIOLET

## Week 10

### Monday 31/03

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### Tuesday 01/04

- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm

### Wednesday 02/04

- **Last day of Term 1**
- *Saint Francis of Paola*
- Staff Meeting 3.30pm - 4:30pm
- Student Dismissal 3.15pm

### Thursday 03/04

- **School Closure Day - Staff PD**

### Friday 04/04

- **School Closure Day - Staff PD**
- *Saint Isidore*

2026  
**Prep**  
Enrol now