



ST CATHERINE OF SIENA NEWSLETTER

"Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world ablaze"

Term 1, Week 7 13th March 2026

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Principal's Message

Partnerships that Strengthen Learning and Faith

At St Catherine of Siena, we are committed to building strong, respectful partnerships with families in both learning and faith. Staff and families work side by side to create a connected community where every child is supported to grow, learn and thrive.

We recognise that families are a child's first educators and that when schools and families work together, students experience the greatest success. This commitment is reflected in our everyday practice. We work to:

- Communicate clearly about the unique and important role families play in their child's learning.
- Encourage proactive, two-way communication between families and staff through a range of formal and informal channels.
- Provide regular opportunities for families to celebrate student learning, growth and progress.
- Share strategies and resources that support learning at home.

Home Learning Guide

In this week's newsletter, I have attached our 2026 Home Learning Guide. A Home Learning Guide helps families understand how they can support their child's learning outside of school. In primary school, it provides clear and practical advice so parents and carers feel confident helping their children practise and extend what they are learning in the classroom.

Creating a Welcoming and Engaged School Community

At St Catherine of Siena, we want every family to feel welcomed, valued and connected to our school community. Throughout the year, we provide many opportunities for families to engage in the life of our Catholic school, including:

- Cultural, social and liturgical events that bring our community together.
- A commitment to understanding and addressing barriers that may prevent families from engaging.
- Opportunities for families to share feedback so we can continue strengthening our community.

Another meaningful way to be involved is through our Parents and Friends group. This group supports a range of events and initiatives throughout the year and helps strengthen connections within our school community. It is an open and welcoming group and we warmly invite any parent or carer who would like to support our school in this way.

We will hold our **first Parents and Friends meeting next Wednesday 18 March from 9:00–9:30am**, and we encourage anyone who is interested to come along and be part of the conversation.

End of the Day

At the end of each day, students are dismissed from their classrooms and teachers remain available if parents wish to have a quick conversation. If you need to speak with your child's teacher about anything, big or small, we encourage you to take this opportunity. You are also welcome to message teachers through Compass if that suits your schedule better.

Strong relationships between families and teachers are the foundation of meaningful engagement in learning. When parents feel welcomed, listened to and valued as partners, children experience that same sense of belonging and support. These everyday interactions—quick conversations, shared celebrations and working together to solve challenges—are what allow learning to flourish.

NAPLAN 2026

NAPLAN 2026 took place this week and will continue into next week for our Year 3 and Year 5 students. NAPLAN is a national assessment that provides a snapshot of student learning in literacy and numeracy and allows schools to benchmark student achievement across Victoria and Australia. At St Catherine of Siena, we support our students by ensuring they approach the assessments in a calm and supportive environment and encouraging them to simply do their best. While NAPLAN provides useful information about student progress, it is only one measure of learning and does not define everything a child knows or can do. Our teachers use a range of assessments and observations throughout the year to gain a broader understanding of each student's strengths and areas for growth.



Recognising our Staff

Rebecca Fleming our 4C classroom teacher, has recently been awarded a Certificate of Acknowledgment from RMIT University in recognition of her dedication to supporting inclusive sport and creating opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in basketball. The program focuses on ensuring that individuals with diverse abilities can enjoy the benefits of sport in a supportive, welcoming and empowering environment.

Through her work with the Sunbury Basketball Club, Rebecca has played an important role in fostering inclusion, teamwork and confidence among participants.

We congratulate her on this well-deserved recognition.

OSH Club Update

Beginning Term 2, our Outside School Hours (OSH) program will no longer be run by OSH Club and will instead be managed by MACS EYE. I wish to sincerely thank OSH Club for their unwavering commitment to the St Catherine of Siena community over the past 12 years and look forward to partnering with MACS EYE.

I assure our families that we will work closely with MACS EYE to ensure the transition is seamless. While there may be some minor adjustments required, these changes are made in the best interests of our students and families.

To cater for the growing demand, the after-school program will be held in the gym, allowing us to accommodate more students. Further details will be sent to families in the coming weeks.

Warm regards,
Lisa Black
Principal



St Patrick's Day – Wear a Splash of Green

On **Tuesday, 17th March**, our school will be celebrating St Patrick's Day. Students are invited to add a splash of green to their school uniform for the day. This could be something simple such as green socks, a ribbon, a hair accessory, or another small green item worn with the regular uniform.

To make the day even more meaningful, we are asking students to bring along a gold coin donation. All funds raised will go towards supporting Caritas and Project Compassion.

St Patrick's Day is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate kindness, generosity, and community spirit. We look forward to seeing lots of green around the school and thank our families in advance for their support.



Thank you for helping make this a fun and meaningful day for everyone!

Reminder: Lenten Food Drive

As part of the Lenten season, our school community is continuing to support those in need through our Lenten Food Drive.

We warmly invite families to donate non-perishable food items, which will be collected and distributed to local families experiencing hardship. Items such as canned foods, pasta, rice, long-life milk, breakfast cereals and other pantry staples are greatly appreciated.

Donations can be sent to school with students and placed in the baskets throughout the school. This initiative is a wonderful way for our students to live out the values of compassion, generosity and service that are central to the Lenten journey.

Thank you to all families who have already contributed. Your kindness and support make a real difference in our community.

Easter Raffle

Our Easter Raffle is fast approaching and we are excited to see the wonderful hampers our community will help create!

Raffle tickets are 50 cents each, so be sure to grab your tickets for a chance to win.

Please ensure that all raffle tickets and money are returned to the school by Tuesday, 31 March 2026. **The raffle will be drawn on Wednesday, 1 April.**

We also kindly remind families to support our raffle hampers by sending in an Easter egg or Easter-themed donation on Friday, 20 March. These contributions will help us create the prize hampers for the raffle.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support. Good luck to everyone who enters!



Important Community Notice – Measles Cases in the City of Melton Area

We would like to inform the school community that there has been a recent outbreak of measles within the Melton area.

Measles is a highly contagious illness and staying up to date with immunisations is an important way to help protect yourself, your family and the wider community.

If you have visited an exposure site, please monitor for symptoms for up to 18 days. Early symptoms can include fever, cough, runny nose, red or sore eyes or feeling unwell. A rash often follows, usually starting on the face and spreading down the body.

Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and others. Two doses of the measles mumps rubella (MMR) vaccine provide lifelong protection.

If you are aged 20 to 59 and are unsure if you've had two doses, or know you haven't, you can get a free MMR vaccine through Council immunisation sessions. By appointment only.

Book online: www.melton.vic.gov.au/Immunisation

Learn more about measles and if you should or shouldn't get vaccinated:

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/measles>

Check current exposure sites:

<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-alerts/measles-public-exposure-sites-victoria>

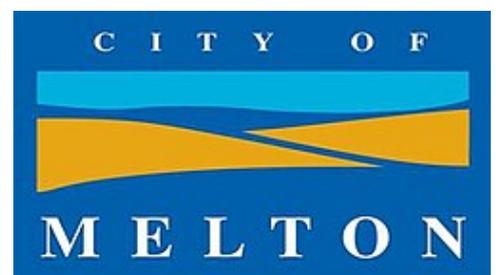
Find out how to access your immunisation records:

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-to-get-immunisation-history-statements?context=22436>

Thank you for helping us keep our school community safe and well

Kind regards,
Immunisation

Immunisation@melton.vic.gov.au





St Catherine of Siena, Melton West

Home Learning Parent Guide

At St Catherine of Siena, we believe learning happens everywhere — at school, at home, and in the community. When families and teachers work together, children thrive academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Parents are a child's first educators. Your encouragement, interest and involvement make a significant difference in building confidence, responsibility and a love of learning.

Home learning strengthens and consolidates classroom learning. It helps students:

- Develop responsibility and independence
- Build positive study habits
- Connect learning to real-life experiences
- Grow in faith and values

Home learning may include reading, maths practice, online learning tasks, times tables practice, research, faith-based activities, or integrated projects.

Home learning tasks and reading expectations are communicated by classroom teachers and can be recorded in your child's Take Home Diary. Parents are encouraged to check and sign the diary regularly to support organisation and communication between home and school.

Please note that we will not be sending home levelled readers at this time as we are currently assessing your child's reading level to ensure appropriate placement and support.

Time Expectations



Prep – Year 4

Up to 20 minutes per day (including reading and maths)

Year 5 – Year 6

Up to 30 minutes per day (including reading and maths)

Homework is not set during school holidays.

Supporting Literacy at Home

- Listen to your child read each night
- Discuss characters, events, and vocabulary
- Ask questions to build comprehension
- Encourage regular reading habits
- Record completed reading in the Take Home Diary (where applicable)



Home Learning Parent Guide

Supporting Mathematics at Home

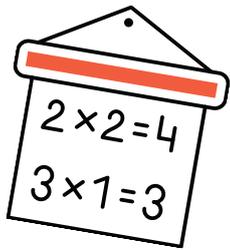
Mathematics practice builds fluency and confidence.

Online Learning – Mathletics

Students may be assigned activities through Mathletics to reinforce classroom learning.

Parents can support by:

- Ensuring tasks are completed regularly
- Encouraging accuracy as well as effort
- Recording completion in the Take Home Diary where required
- Celebrating persistence and improvement



Times Tables (Years 3–6)

Automatic recall of multiplication facts is essential for success in middle and upper primary mathematics.

You can help by:

- Practising daily for short periods (5–10 minutes)
- Using flashcards or quick quizzes
- Encouraging quick recall
- Recording practice in the Take Home Diary

Creating a Positive Home Learning Routine

- Establish a regular homework time
- Provide a quiet, organised workspace
- Limit distractions, especially devices
- Encourage completion before recreational screen time
- Check and sign the Take Home Diary regularly

Consistency builds independence and responsibility.



Support Without Taking Over

Parents are not expected to be the teacher.

- Ask guiding questions
- Encourage effort and resilience
- Allow mistakes — they are part of learning
- Communicate with the teacher if concerns arise

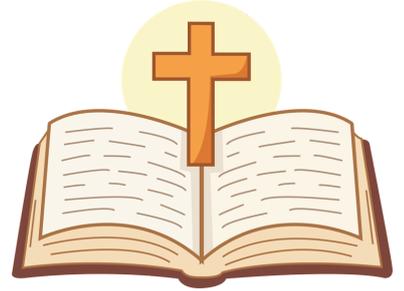
A calm, supportive approach builds confidence.

Home Learning Parent Guide

Faith Development at Home

Parents are the first educators in faith. You can support your child by:

- Praying together
- Attending Mass as a family
- Discussing Gospel messages
- Participating in parish and sacramental opportunities



Our school provides liturgical celebrations and faith experiences, and we warmly encourage family involvement.

Working in Partnership



We are committed to open communication and strong home-school partnerships. Teachers will:

- Provide clear outlines of learning
- Offer feedback on home learning
- Work collaboratively with families

Together, we create the best environment for your child to flourish — academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Please refer to the [MACS page](#) on Learning at home for further guidance

Assembly Change - Week 8

Please note that there will be a change to our assembly schedule for Week 8.

There will be no assembly on Wednesday this week. Instead, our assembly will take place on Friday 20th March, beginning at 2:15pm.

At this special assembly, our Year 5 students will present the Stations of the Cross, sharing this important reflection as part of the Lenten season.

Parents and family members are warmly welcome to attend. Please enter through the office doors.

We look forward to seeing you there and thank you for your understanding regarding this change.



HARMONY DAY

Friday 20th March



Wear Orange or Cultural dress. Parade at Assembly at 2.15pm.
Students to contribute a Easter donation/ Egg for our Raffle.

Term 1 & 2, 2026

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

16 Week 8 Catholic Education Week	17  St Patrick's Day - Wear a splash of GREEN	18 Year 6 Youth Leadership Conference Parents & Friends Meeting @ 9am	19	20 Assembly @ 2:15pm Harmony Day 	21	22 5th Sunday of Lent
23 Week 9 NAPLAN testing period ends for Year 3 & Year 5	24	25 Year 1 attending Parish Mass @ 9:15am Prep Responsible Pet Program	26	27 Year 6 Girls Tech Day	28	29 Palm Sunday 
30 Week 10	31	1 April Whole School Mass @ 9:15am Assembly @ 2:15pm	2 Last Day of Term 1	3 Good Friday 	4 Holy Saturday	5 Easter Sunday 
6 Easter Monday	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Week 1 Term 2 Commences	21	22	23	24 School Closure Day	25	26
27 Week 2	28	29 Whole School Mass - Feast of St Catherine @ 9:15am Assembly @ 2:15pm	30	1 May	2	3
4 Week 3	5	6 Whole School Mass - Mother's Day @ 9:15am	7	8	9	10
11 Week 4	12 RACV Road Safety Incursion - Prep	13 Assembly @ 2:15pm	14	15	16	17