



# ST CATHERINE OF SIENA NEWSLETTER

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

Term 2, Week 9 19th June 2026

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## Principal's Message

Dear Families,

This week, I have been reflecting on my first six months as Principal of St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School. I am deeply grateful for the warm welcome, trust and partnership shown by our community throughout this time. Over the past six months, I have witnessed firsthand the many strengths of our school: the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students and the commitment of our parents to work alongside us in supporting their children's learning and wellbeing.

Since joining St Catherine's, I have been inspired by the strong sense of community and the shared commitment to ensuring every child thrives. Together with the Leadership Team, we have continued to strengthen teaching and learning practices across the school, with a focus on delivering high-quality instruction and improving outcomes for all students. It has been wonderful to see our students engaging in their learning with confidence, curiosity and enthusiasm.

One of the highlights of this term has been meeting many of our prospective 2027 Prep families through the enrolment interview process. These conversations have provided a wonderful opportunity to share the story of St Catherine's and showcase the welcoming, faith-filled community that makes our school so special. It has been exciting to hear families speak so positively about our school and to see the strong interest in joining our community. I would like to thank the staff who have supported this process and helped ensure that each family has felt welcomed and valued.

Over the past six months, our school community has also demonstrated remarkable resilience as we have worked through the process of establishing a new leadership team. Change can often bring uncertainty; however, our staff have embraced these transitions with professionalism, flexibility and a continued focus on providing the very best outcomes for our students. I am pleased to share that next term we will welcome Sara Liro as our new Literacy Leader. Sara Liro brings a wealth of experience and expertise and I know she will make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning at St Catherine's.

At the same time, we congratulate Matt Galea, who has been seconded to the role of Acting Deputy Principal at Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School for the next six months. While we will certainly miss Matt's leadership and presence at St Catherine's, this opportunity is a wonderful recognition of his skills and commitment to Catholic education. We wish him every success in this exciting role and look forward to welcoming him back at the conclusion of his secondment.

Alongside the learning taking place in our classrooms, our community events have been wonderful highlights of my first six months. Celebrations such as Mother's Day, St Catherine of Siena Feast Day and Sacramental celebrations have showcased the vibrant spirit of our school and provided opportunities for families, staff and students to connect and celebrate together. These occasions remind us of the importance of belonging and the strength of our Catholic community.

One of the greatest joys of my role has been getting to know our students. Whether in classrooms, on the playground, at assemblies or during school events, I have been continually impressed by their kindness, resilience and willingness to embrace opportunities. They are a wonderful reflection of the values that underpin our school community.

I have also appreciated the opportunity to listen and learn from our families, staff and students. These conversations have provided valuable insights into what makes St Catherine of Siena such a special place and have helped shape our priorities as we continue to grow and improve together.

As we look ahead, I am excited about the opportunities that lie before us. We will continue to build on our strengths, nurture the wellbeing of every student and ensure that our school remains a place where faith, learning and community flourish.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank our St Catherine of Siena families for your ongoing support, encouragement and partnership. My first six months have been incredibly rewarding and I feel privileged to be part of such a welcoming and dedicated community.

God bless,  
Lisa Black  
Principal  
St Catherine of Siena Primary School

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## Important Update: School Closure Date Change

Please note an important change to our school closure dates for 2026.

Friday, 17 July is no longer a School Closure Day. The school will operate as normal, and students are expected to attend classes on this date.

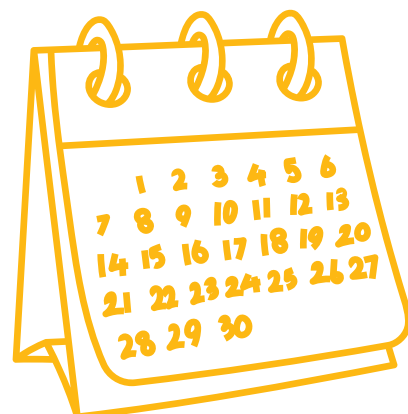
Our scheduled Staff Professional Development (PD) Day has been moved to Friday 9 October. This will now be a School Closure Day, and students will not be required to attend school.

### Updated Dates

- 17 July – School open as normal
- 9 October – Staff Professional Development Day (School Closure Day)

We encourage families to update their calendars and make any necessary arrangements. Thank you for your understanding and support as we continue to provide valuable professional learning opportunities for our staff.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office.



# Photograph and Recording Permissions

As part of our commitment to protecting student privacy, families are reminded that they may review, change or withdraw their consent regarding the use of photographs and recordings of their child at any time.

If permission has been provided, the school and Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) may use photographs and recordings in school publications and communications, including newsletters, websites, social media, promotional materials and educational resources shared through the National Educational Access Licence for Schools (NEALS).

Parents and carers who wish to update their current permissions or withdraw consent are encouraged to visit the school office. Any changes to consent require the completion of a new permission form.



Thank you for your continued support in helping us celebrate and share student learning and achievements while respecting family preferences and privacy.



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## Parent Teacher Conversation Reminder

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held during the final week of Term 2. This is a wonderful opportunity to discuss your child's progress and achievements this semester.



**When:** Tuesday, 23rd June & Thursday, 25th June

**Time:** 3:45pm – 8:00pm

**How to Book:** Bookings are now open directly via your Compass Portal. Simply open your Compass app, click on the "Parent Student Teacher Conferences" notification (or find it under the 'more' menu) and select a timeslot with your child's classroom teacher.

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## Semester 1 Student Reports Now Available

We are pleased to advise families that Semester 1 Student Reports for 2026 are now available.

Reports can be accessed directly through the Compass Portal. We encourage parents and carers to take the time to review their child's report, which provides valuable information about their learning progress and achievements throughout the semester.

To view your child's report, simply log in to Compass and navigate to the Reports section.

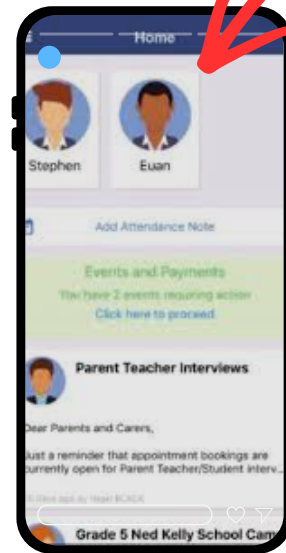
We congratulate all students on their efforts during Semester 1 and thank our families for their ongoing support of student learning. Should you have any questions regarding your child's report, please discuss this with your child's teacher at the planned Parent Teacher Conversation next week.

# Compass

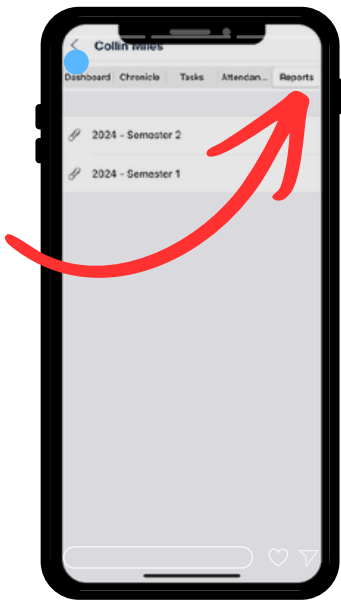
## How To View & Download Semester Reports

Student reports are now accessible directly through your Compass Portal. To view and/or download your child's Semester 1, 2026 report (or any previous reports) follow the steps below.

*Open Compass App and click on your child's profile picture*



1



2

*Click on the 'Reports' tab*

*Click on a reporting cycle to view the report. You can also download the report as a PDF file onto your device*



3

# AUSLAN Education Services Visit

On Friday 12 June, all students from Prep through to Year 6 had the opportunity to meet with Naomie from Auslan Education Services. Many students also recognised Naomie from the YouTube channel Auslan Time with Geo and Gem, where she plays Gem.



Across the day, each class participated in a session that helped students deepen their understanding of Auslan, Deaf culture and the Deaf community. Students learnt that Auslan is its own language, used by members of the Australian Deaf community, and that learning Auslan also involves learning about culture, community and respectful communication.

A key message shared with students was that Auslan is not simply English on the hands. English uses spoken words, while Auslan uses signs, facial expressions, eye contact, body movement and visual attention. Students were reminded that when we are signing, we use our eyes and hands, and that having our “voices off” helps us focus on Auslan as a visual language.

Students also explored some important ways to show respect when communicating in Auslan. This included looking at the person who is signing, taking turns, using facial expressions to show meaning and emotion, and understanding that eye contact helps show who we are communicating with. These are important Deaf cultural behaviours that support clear and respectful communication.

The visit was a wonderful opportunity for students to learn directly from a Deaf presenter and to continue building their confidence, awareness and respect as Auslan learners. We are grateful to Naomie and Auslan Education Services for supporting our students’ learning and helping them understand that Auslan is connected to language, culture, community and identity.

Meeting Naomie was good. I was excited because she came to our school.

*Airabella - Prep A*

On Friday I met Naomie and I was signing to her. I felt happy because it was my first time going upstairs and meeting her.

*Noah - Prep B*

I felt proud on Friday because I got to show Naomie how I can now sign “turtle”.

*Owen - Prep C*

On Friday I had fun because I got to meet Naomie for the first time and sign to her. I chose to sign - turtle.

*Noah - 1A*

On Friday I met Naomie. This was the first time. She signed different things. Some of my friends signed their name and she helped them a bit. I felt happy as this was my first time seeing her with my own eyes and not on TV.

*Pypah - 2C*

On Friday we got to meet Naomie. Naomie is a deaf person who is a presenter on the videos we watch for our lessons and on YouTube. Some people had the chance to sign with her. It was great that we were able to learn more about her.

*Zoey - 3B*

Naomie visited our school on Friday. She played games with us using Auslan. I felt really happy and excited to be seeing her again.

*Penny - 4C*

I had fun on Friday seeing Naomie. It was great to learn more facts about the deaf community and how they live their everyday lives.

*Reighson - 5B*

On Friday 12th June, all the year levels went to meet Naomi. For those who don't know, Naomi is deaf and uses Auslan. While we learn Auslan, Naomi is normally in the videos we learn from. We all sat down and waited for the session to start.

First, Naomi introduced herself. She had an interpreter who told us what she was saying, and told her what the students were saying. The students introduced themselves using finger spelling, and we also did the alphabet. Naomi would help us learn how to sign the alphabet correctly and clearly. It was really fun to improve in Auslan and to learn the culture even more. After a bit more, we asked Naomi a few questions about her, like her favourite food, movies, etc. While we asked her, she positively and cheerfully responded, answering clearly.

It was interesting to learn how deaf people experience life and live, as it's way different from the way we live.

Near the end, we said bye to Naomi, and we headed back to our classes. We left with a thoughtful mind on how deaf culture works.

*Shahana - 6A*



# Casual Clothes Day

To celebrate a wonderful term we are having a casual clothes day next Thursday 25th, the last day of Term 2!

Children are invited to wear their soccer kits to celebrate the FIFA World Cup 2026 or casual clothes.

Let's celebrate all that we have achieved this term!!

Go Socceroos!!!!

LET'S  
CELEBRATE





## Year 5 Indigenous Incursion

On 18 June, the Year 5 students participated in an engaging Indigenous Incursion presented by Yamba Konrad Beck from Sunset Dreaming. Throughout the day, students deepened their understanding of Aboriginal culture, traditions and history through a range of hands-on experiences and learning activities.

As part of their Inquiry studies, Year 5 students have been exploring Aboriginal culture through art. They have also enjoyed reading *Black Cockatoo* and *Dirrarn* by Indigenous Australian author Carl Merrison. In Literacy, students learned about Jandamarra, a significant Aboriginal leader who fought to protect his people and Country.

During the incursion, students listened to the sounds of the yidaki (didgeridoo) and learned traditional Aboriginal dances. They also observed a smoking ceremony and learned about its cultural significance as a practice of cleansing and connection within Aboriginal traditions.

Students explored the meanings behind Aboriginal symbols and animal tracks before creating artworks that represented their families and local communities using the symbols they had learned. They also learned about ochre and its traditional significance in Aboriginal culture. Students who wished to participate were given the opportunity to have their faces painted with ochre, providing a meaningful connection to this important cultural practice.

The incursion was both educational and enjoyable, providing students with valuable opportunities to develop a deeper appreciation and respect for Aboriginal cultures, histories, and traditions. Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed this enriching experience and the opportunity to continue learning about Australia's First Peoples.



# Grandparents Day

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July

Mass at 9.15am

Morning Tea afterwards in the hall



Please reply via Compass note for  
catering purposes

# Term 2 & 3, 2026

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

22 Week 10	23 Parent Teacher Conversations 3:45pm - 8:00pm	24 Whole school Mass - Feast of Sacred Heart @ 9:15am Assembly @ 2:15pm	25 Student Casual Clothes Day! End of Term 2 Parent Teacher Conversations 3:45pm - 8:00pm	26 School Closure Day	27	28
29	30	1 July	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Week 1 Term 3 Commences	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Week 2	21	22 Year 6 Excursion - Macchu Picchu VR Assembly @ 2:15pm	23	24	25	26
27 Week 3	28	29 Grandparents Day Mass @ 9:15am	30	31	1 August	2
3 Week 4	4 Confirmation Family Night @ 6:30pm	5 Year 6 Confirmation Retreat Day Assembly @ 2:15pm	6	7	8 Confirmation Presentation & Commitment Mass @ 6pm	9
10 Week 5	11	12 Whole School St Mary of the Cross Mass @ 9:15am	13	14	15 Year 6 Sacrament of Confirmation	16
17 Week 6	18	19 Assembly @ 2:15pm	20	21	22	23
24 Week 7 School Closure Day	25	26	27 Year 4 Camp - Lady Northcote	28 Year 4 Camp - Lady Northcote 	29	30

## Child Safe Standard 5

### Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to uphold and actively promote the wellbeing and safety of every student entrusted in our care. Our commitment to the protection of children and young people is grounded in fairness, inclusion, and respect for diversity, ensuring every child is treated with dignity and care. Our Catholic communities strive to create welcoming and inclusive environments where diversity is honoured, equity is embedded, and the unique needs of every child and young person are respected.

This newsletter series provides an overview of what the Child Safe Standards are, how they are designed to help keep children and young people safe and what school governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are doing to prioritise and achieve this.

### Overview of Child Safe Standard 4:

To be aligned, schools must support the following:

- Families participate in decisions affecting their child
- The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
- Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.
- Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

### The Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards are a set of guidelines that help organisations create safe environments for children and young people.

They make sure that children are protected from harm, listened to, and respected. These standards require organisations to have strong leadership, clear policies, and a culture that puts children first.

As a parent or carer, you can expect organisations to involve families, empower children, train staff properly, and respond to concerns quickly and respectfully.

**"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."**

**(Galatians 3:28)**

## How do our schools ensure every child is treated fairly and their unique needs are respected?

- In our schools, we believe that every child has the right to be treated fairly, included, and supported according to their individual needs and background. These three principles are part of **Child Safe Standard 5**, which focuses on equity and diversity.
- **Equity** is about fairness, recognising that children may need different levels of support to participate fully in learning, activities, and school life.
- **Inclusion** means creating environments where all children, regardless of culture, ability, language, or background, feel valued, respected, and welcomed.
- **Respect for diversity** is about honouring and celebrating the unique identity of every child, ensuring that differences are recognised as strengths and that everyone's rights and dignity are upheld.

## How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Child Safe Standard 4 is about making sure schools, families, carers and the wider community work together to keep children safe. Here are some simple ways families can help:

- **Talk about inclusion and fairness:** Discuss diversity, equity, and respect with your child, and encourage them to appreciate differences in others.
- **Share insights about your child:** Let staff know if your child has specific needs or cultural practices that should be considered in school activities.
- **Participate in school programs and events:** Support initiatives that celebrate diversity and inclusion, such as cultural festivals, learning programs, or wellbeing initiatives.
- **Provide feedback:** Take part in surveys or discussions about school policies and practices, ensuring the school considers diverse perspectives.
- **Model respect and inclusion:** Demonstrate equitable, respectful, and inclusive behaviour at home and in community activities, children learn these values through example.



## Want to know more?

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how we're supporting child safety, please get in touch.

More information on the Child Safe Standards can be found via the [Commission for Children and Young People \(CCYP\) website](#).

**Check out these additional resources from below to learn more:**

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) Resource Centre: [Explore NCEC Resource Centre \(inclusive education & wellbeing\)](#)

Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA): [Visit Catholic School Parents Australia \(family support & engagement\)](#)

Parents & Families - Catholic School Parents: [Family Resources for Supporting Diverse Learning \(Catholic School Parents ACT/NSW\)](#)

Australian Catholics Magazine & Education Hub: [Read Australian Catholics \(family & faith resources\)](#)

Inclusive School Communities Toolkit (Australian education resource): [Access Inclusive School Communities Toolkit \(parent & school collaboration\)](#)

