St. Monica's Newsletter





2025 Term 1 - End of January Edition



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



We're here to learn. We're here to make a difference.

I can be safe.
I can be respectful.
I can be responsible.
I can be resilient.

Principal's Welcome Back Message

Dear Families,

A very warm welcome to all St Monica's families as we begin the 2025 school year. I hope and pray that this year will be one filled with happiness, excitement, and meaningful learning for everyone in our community.

I feel incredibly privileged to lead St Monica's with the support of our amazing staff, particularly **Amy (Deputy Principal)** and **Anna T (School Secretary)**. Their dedication and hard work, along with the commitment of our entire team, help create a school environment where every child feels valued and supported. I am deeply committed to ensuring my focus and energy remain on strengthening our wonderful school community, where every decision is made with the goal of making a difference for our students, families, and the broader community.

We've had a wonderful start to the year, with the children settling smoothly into their classrooms and daily routines. I sincerely appreciate your ongoing support in ensuring students arrive on time, wear the correct uniform, and have everything they need for their school day.

Over the school holidays, St Monica's was a hive of activity! Thorough cleaning took place across the school, and we are excited to have **new carpet installed in the Year 5/6, Year 1, and Year 2 classrooms**. A **huge thank you** to the many parents who were regular visitors over the break, ensuring our gardens remained hydrated during the long summer. Your generosity and care for our school community are truly appreciated.

A special welcome to our newest Foundation students and their families: Gemma, Jason, Penny, Jacob, Cleo, Thien, Anastasia, Jaiden, Alina, Max, Bharvi, Elliot, Estelle, Theodore, Skylar, Anirudh, and Hannah.

We also extend a warm welcome to our new students and their families:

Year 1: Kavin

Year 2: Win, Saanvi, Amber, Ethan

Year 3: **RJay** Year 5: **Ryan**

Additionally, we are delighted to welcome new staff members to our team:

Mrs. Leanne (Year 1 – Monday and Friday)

Ms. Ida (Year 2)

At St Monica's, we value strong relationships between home and school, and I encourage open communication. My door is always open, and I warmly welcome families to meet with me at any time to share thoughts, ask questions, or simply have a conversation.

Thank you for choosing to be part of the St Monica's community. We look forward to a fantastic year ahead and hope you feel a strong sense of belonging and connection within our school.

Together, making a difference

Andrea

Upcoming Events

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	Public Holiday No School	Spelling Mastery PD	First Day of School	30	31 Lunar New Year Celebration
2	3	4	No Foundation students	6	7
3	10	Family Science Information Night	12 No Foundation students	13	District swimming - Selected Year 3-6
4	17	18	19 No Foundation students	20 Teeth on Wheels	Cross Country Welcome BBQ & info sessions
5	24	Get to know you chats	26 No Foundation students	27	28
6	3	4 Shrove Tuesday	No Foundation 5 Ash Wednesday Proposed opening school Mass TBC	Whole School Athletics Day F-6	District Cross 7 Country - selected Year 3-6
7	Labor Day No School	School Closure Day	NAPLAN 12 Year 3 & 5 First Foundation Wednesday	NAPLAN Year 3 & 5	NAPLAN Year 3 & 5
8	NAPLAN 17 Year 3 & 5 Catholic Education Week	NAPLAN Year 3 & 5	NAPLAN Year 3 & 5	NAPLAN Year 3 & 5	NAPLAN 21 Year 3 & 5 Harmony Day - Cultural Food Exchange
9	24	25	26	27	28
10	31	1 Tiny Art show	2 Tiny Art Show	Tiny Art Show	4 End of Term 1

MEET OUR LEADERS



ANDREA
PRINCIPAL
(ACTING)



DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (ACTING) Learning & Teaching Learning Diversity 3-6

AMY



LITERACY COACH



ANNA
RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
LEADER



LIZ LEARNING DIVERSITY F-2



JODIE KINDER LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE

MEET OUR TEACHERS



MOLLY FOUNDATION



HELEN
YEAR 1
PBL LEADER



LEANNE YEAR 1



IDA Year 2



ANNA S YEAR 3/4



SAMI YEAR 5/6

MEET OUR SPECIALISTS



LIZ

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ HEALTH & SPORTS COORDINATOR



JODIE

KITCHEN GARDEN SCIENCE



MELISSA

VISUAL ARTS

MEET OUR SUPPORT STAFF



ANNA T

SCHOOL SECRETARY



DANNI

LEARNING SUPPORT & DAILY LANGUAGES ASSISTANT



ZOE

LEARNING SUPPORT



COMMUNICATION @ St Monica's

St Monica's Footscray uses various forms of communication for a variety of purposes to ensure effective communication with students, families, staff and the broader community. Below is an overview of the different communication tools used and their common purpose.

Communication Tool	School Staff Communications	Families		
Email	The school will contact you via email for a range of reasons. Please ensure your current email address is listed on Operoo. Emails may include: • Notifications from Operoo, The school newsletter, Letters from the Principal to the school community • Health Advice i.e. Notice of headlice • Fee statements	Staff email addresses all follow the same pattern: first name.last name @smfootscray.catholic.edu.au i.e. Andrea Wilberger's email is: andrea.wilberger@smfootscray.catholic.edu.au		
	We kindly ask that all emails to staff are done between the hours of 8am and 6pm. Teachers do not check their emails when they are in the act of teaching, therefore response may take time. Staff will endeavour to respond to emails within 2 working days. If you have an urgent message please call the school office.			
Operoo	This app can be accessed online or via the app. It will be used for: Newsletters Event details Reminders Excursion permission notes	It is important that your details are up to date on Operoo, this includes email, phone number and your child's medical needs.		
nForma	This platfrom is used to send out student reports at the end of Semester 1 (June) and Semester 2 (Decemeber). You can view all student reports from 2023 onwards. New families will recieve instruction on creating an account around reporting times.	We use email address listed on Operoo to create Parent Portal accounts, please ensure these details are up to date.		

Communication Tool	School Staff Communications	Families
Seesaw	This app can be accessed online or via the app. It is used as a digital portfolio to showcase student learning. Teachers and students regularly upload work samples including photos, videos and annotations.	Families will recieve class access codes from their child's teacher at the beginning of the year. Families can interact with posts, leaving postive comments on their child's learning.
Term Overviews	At the beginning of each term each class will share an overview of the focus of key learning areas, important dates and reminders for the term.	Provide families with insight into the learning focci for the term in key curriculum areas.
Newsletter The school newsletter is distributed 3 times per term on the last Friday of ea month.		Sent via Operoo with current and past issuse also available on the school website.
Weekly Overviews	Shared weekly on Sunday evenings to provide a brief overview of the week ahead.	Sent via Operoo
School Website	Contains whole school general information including school vision and policies. www.smfootscray.catholic.edu.au	Provides information for current and prospective parents.
Assemblies & Liturgies	Assemblies will be held throughout the year to mark special occasions. Notice of upcoming assemblies and liturgies will be sent via operoo in the newsletter and weekly overviews.	Families are invited and encouraged to attend school assemblies and liturgies.
Social Media	We use these platforms to promote our school to the wider community and share highlights of our year. www.facebook.com/stmonicasfootscray www.instagram.com/stmonicasfootscray	Families are encouraged to connect with and share our social media posts to promote our school.

At any time, teachers welcome parents to make appointments to discuss their child's progress and wellbeing. The Principal and Deputy Principal also welcome appointments to discuss issues which may not be easily resolved by the class teacher.

MACSEYE

MACSEYE launched their Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) program at St Monica's this week!

Quynh and Ren, our dedicated MACSEYE educators, will be leading the program.

OSHC operates daily from 3:15 pm to 6:00 pm, offering a variety of exciting activities for children to enjoy, including arts and crafts, sports, drawing, story writing and games.

OSHC is available every day from 3.15pm - 6pm.





St Monica's OSHC

Footscray

Ensuring every child can flourish and achieve their fullest potential.

MACSEYE is a new approved provider, established by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools to offer a high quality Outside Schools Hours Care (OSHC) service, with a strong link to your school.

We believe in providing a safe and inclusive environment where every child can thrive. Our dedicated educators will support your child to explore their interests and choose how they spend their play time. Children can choose from a range of resources, including art and craft, games, and outdoor sports activities. We also have cozy, quiet spaces for anyone needing some down time.

There's also always a range of healthy foods available to help kids stay energised, and active.

Request for Bookings are now open, so contact our friendly team today!

Enrol now at stmfootscrayoshc@macseye.vic.edu.au





Enrol your child for Outside School Hours Care today.

Request for Booking are now open for Term 1, 2025.

OSHC program

- For 5-12 year olds
- Monday to Friday [term time]
- After School 3:15pm 6.00pm

OSHC cost per session

 After School Care (Permanent) – \$30.50 (Casual) – \$35.50



Request for Bookings are now open, so contact our friendly team today!

Enrol now at footscrayoshc@macseye.vic.edu.au





Literacy

At St Monica's we provide students with evidence based learning opportunities to support the development of literacy and numeracy skills across all year levels.

To support your child as we transition into the school year we have put together some strategies you may like to implement at home.

Phonological Awareness	Phonics & Word Recognition
 Take turns saying rhyming words i.e. cat, mat, sat, bat Sing nursery rhymes and tongue twisters Take turns saying words that start with the same sound i.e your name starts P for peter, p p p - penguin, p p p - parrot Blend sounds to say words i.e. /c//a//t/ what's the word? cat 	 Practice letter sounds Look at words and asking your child to say each sound then blend them to read the word
Vocabulary	Fluency
 Ask your child to name objects, plants, animals, places they go Discuss the meaning of interesting words in books Talk about the WHO WHERE WHEN WHAT in the books you read together 	 Read at different speeds until you find the "just right speed" Read the same book more than once Point to the words as you read Use punctuation to change your voice when reading
Concepts of Print	Writing Skills
 Find the front/ back cover Find the title Reading direction Find a picture Find a word Find a full stop 	 Drawing shapes Holding different size pencils, chalk, markers Writing uppercase and lowercase letters to sit on lines Writing numbers to fit on lines and in boxes

Cyber Safety

We partner with Inform and Empower to support us with keeping our children safe online. Termly incursions have been organised for all year levels in 2025. These incursions teach students a variety of skills to navigate the online world safely.

We are proud to offer free access to all our families to the Inform and Empower Webinar for Parent and Carers

RAISING KIDS IN WEBINAR FOR PARE A DIGITAL WORLD & CARERS

Social media

Online gaming

Strengthening family communication

Impacts of screen time

Cyberbullying

Managing devices at home

Child & tween online trends

Explicit/adult content

St Monica's Primary School Thursday 20 February | 7.30 - 9.00 pm



Webinar registration: bit.ly/20feb-webinar

*This session is strictly for parents and carers only as the content is not suitable for children.



Presented by Martin McGauran, primary teacher and digital safety educator and Carley McGauran, psychologist and mum to 3 school-aged kids.

An evening that provided some reality checks! A few new changes in our home this week! - Parent

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



Incredible session... Should be essential for all parents! - Parent





RAISING KIDS IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Dear parents of primary school children,

I know just hearing the topic "Cyber Safety" may leave you feeling overwhelmed but I really need you to hear what I have to say. Please keep reading all the way to the end. As a mum of three children (all now teens) I know just how hard it is to keep on top of what our kids are doing online. None of us grew up in a digital world so we are all learning (and don't our kids know that!). It can be so tough, certainly plenty of upset, conflict and tears over technology in my family over the years! As a psychologist for 20 years, and more recently as a cyber safety & digital wellbeing educator, I see the truly devastating impact of children and young people who are exposed to unsafe situations and inappropriate content online... including:

- Being groomed and/or abused
- Being exposed to pornography and/or hyper sexualised content
- Viewing drug or alcohol themed content
- Watching or playing violent games
- Seeing content related to suicide and self harm
- Viewing horror content and other adult themes
- Struggling with cyber bullying

So I want to share with you today 10 ideas (by no means an exhaustive list) you can start ticking off today so your children can be safer and healthier online.

If you sat with children/young people and heard the first hand accounts that I have, you would not hesitate to make this a priority.

So here goes...

- Make sure devices are only used in communal areas of your home and no devices in bedrooms.
- Ensure there is active supervision when kids are on devices (an adult must be present and checking in regularly).
- Set parental controls on all devices, games and apps. Parental controls are usually found in the settings. They can be enabled and password protected to ensure your child is playing the safest version. For example, Roblox can be made significantly safer by enabling the parental controls (new as of Nov 2024).
- Talk to your children about the risks of talking to or messaging people they do not know offline (even if they seem really nice!).
- Reduce the risk of exposure to inappropriate content on YouTube by using YouTube Kids app as long as possible and if allowing access to YouTube ensure that restricted mode is enabled. I also recommend, where possible, that YouTube is watched on a TV for better adult supervision.
- Delay kids having any social media accounts of their own! If you are looking for a messaging app for under 13s, then consider Messenger Kids (by Facebook).
- Any time your children come to you with an online problem, stay calm, take a few deep breaths and be curious instead of furious.

 Remember this is a teachable moment, an opportunity for your child to learn to make more healthy decisions and even more important than that....to learn to trust that they can come to us.
- Be firm when setting boundaries and even when kids say "everyone else is on Snapchat" or "all my friends are playing it", make your decision in line with what they need and not what they want... which can be very different! Don't give in! (I get it, this can be so hard).
- Visit Kids Helpline with your kids before there is a problem so they are comfortable doing so when they may need it.
- Download the free, parent friendly Beacon app to help with all things digital.

I thought it might also help if I share with you the sort of chat I've had with my children many times over the years.

There is all sorts of content on the internet and a lot of it is not suitable for children your age. Just like it is important to eat healthy food to nourish your body, it is important to watch content that is healthy for your brain. If anyone asks you to watch something or do something online that makes you feel uncomfortable you are allowed to say "no". Try saying "I'm not allowed to watch that/do that" and blame your strict parents. If you ever find yourself in a situation that makes you feel yucky, worried, scared or unsafe at all, you can tell me. I promise you won't be in trouble. I can and will help you. No mistake you make will ever stop me loving you - seriously nothing! If there is ever a time you need help and for some reason you can't come to me, don't forget you can talk to another trusted adult or contact Kids Helpline.

I know our children absolutely love what gaming, social media and the internet has to offer but as parents we need to help our kids make safe and healthy decisions. I don't have all the answers. I often worry about whether I'm making the "best" decision. I do know this though... We can change our minds as parents and reset boundaries. So if for example, you have allowed your child on social media, I urge you to re-think this.

Also, us parents have to be okay with making unpopular decisions, navigate our way through the tears (theirs and ours) and their anger. If you are already doing this, keep going! Lastly, start having conversations about topics like predators and pornography (even if it's uncomfortable), there's no such thing as a "perfect conversation", just start. When our children become young adults our aim is that they are equipped with healthy habits, accurate information and critical thinking amongst other skills to manage the challenges of our world.

So from me to you - prioritise your self care so that you can show up as your best self and reach out to other parents - hang in there, we really, truly are all in this together.



Kind Regards,

Carley McGauran Mum and Psychologist

MY FAVOURITE RESOURCES:

Getting started with Parental Controls: bit.ly/tamingthetech

Starting sexuality (including pornography) conversations: podcast: bit.ly/sexuality4parents book: bit.ly/vanessahamilton

Setting up Roblox Parental Controls: bit.ly/roblox2025

Kids Helpline: kidshelpline.com.au

eSafety Commissioner: esafety.gov.au

Beacon App:
Search in the App Store or Play Store

Carley McGauran is a registered psychologist with APHRA and member of the AAPi as well as endorsed by the eSafety Commissioner as a Trusted eSafety Provider with Inform & Empower.





On Friday we celebrated Lunar New Year at St Monica's. We dressed in red and yellow, read books about Lunar New Year and had lots of fun.















School Fees Reminder

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, I would like to remind you of the details regarding School Fees and Levies for 2025.

Fee Structure

Tuition Fee (Family Fee): \$1640.00

• Curriculum Levy: \$380

• Swimming Levy: \$130.00

• Excursion Levy: \$165.00

(4) QUARTERLY PAYMENTS NOTE: CAMP FEES NOT INCLUDED			
	1 CHILD	2 CHILDREN	3 CHILDREN
TERM	\$578.55	\$747.50	\$916.25
(10) PAYMENTS NOTE: CAMP FEES NOT INCLUDED			
MONTHLY	\$231.50	\$299.00	\$366.50
(20) PAYMENTS NOTE: CAMP FEES NOT INCLUDED			
FORTNIGHTLY	\$115.75	\$149.50	\$183.25

School Saving Bonus (SSB)

The School Saving Bonus recently seen in the media is \$400 of additional support for families who qualify for CSEF funding in 2025. To ensure this is distributed correctly SMF encourage eligible families to submit their CSEF/concessions 2025 application as soon as possible in Term 1 2025. This will be applied to your Student levy and/or camp payment to cover the cost of camps, excursions and school based activities. MACS Schools cannot provide this SSB to families in a way of cash, vouchers or reimbursement.

Any family who is experiencing difficulties in meeting their financial commitments or wishing to discuss alternate fee payment arrangements for 2025, is asked to arrange an appointment with Andrea Wilberger Acting (Principal - 2025). In line with the MACS Concessional Fee Policy, discounted fees are available for families experiencing financial difficulty (including those on an eligible HCC).

Fee Concessions/Remissions

St Monica's School provides fee remissions/concessions to families in need, including families who are:

- of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage
- holds a HCC and is eligible for CSEF
- experiencing severe financial hardship
- holds a DVA Gold Card
- identified as refuges and holding an ImmiCard
- HSS who attend a MACS primary school on a part time basis, who meet any of the criteria detailed above.

Applications for concessional school fees must be made on the St Monica's school fees approved concession program form, which can be provided upon request. Information provided in support of concessional school fees will be treated in the strictest confidence, in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy. For approved applications for concessional fees, an automated payment plan will be established by direct debit/credit to the school.

School Closure Days in 2025

These dates are aligned with the MACS Vision for Instruction and our School Improvement
Plan and Annual Action Plan

Flourishing Learners West Conference	Term 1 Tuesday March 11th (revised date)
Professional Learning	Term 2 Friday 16th May
Professional Learning	Term 3 Friday 15th August
Time in lieu for staff	Term 4 Monday 3rd November (the following day is also the Melbourne Cup Public Holiday - school is closed)

Last day of school for students

Tuesday 16th December

Last day for staff - Wednesday 17th December

Time in lieu days - Thursday 18th Dec and Friday 19th December



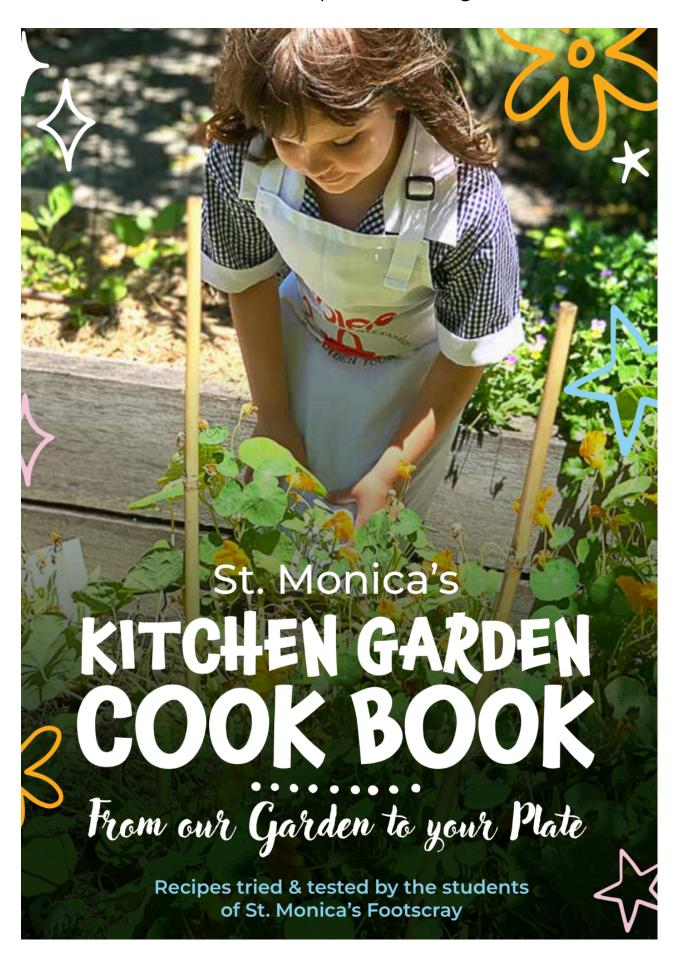




Time	Activity
8:30am	Gates Open - Supervision begins
8:50am	Bell rings, students enter learning space, morning routine and prayer
9:00am	Planned learning begins
10:00am	Fruit break - whole school
10:10am	Planned learning continues
11:00 - 11:15am	Students eat lunch in their classroom
11:15 - 11:55am	1st Play - lunch
11.55-12.00pm	End of play - Meditation in classroom
12.00pm	Planned learning continues
1:40 - 1.50	Students eat a snack in the classroom
1.50 - 2.20	2nd play - snack
2:20	Planned learning continues
3:15	Dismissal

\$15

Please see the Office to purchase by cash or card.





Teeth on Wheels will be visiting our School!



Don't miss out, Sign up today!

SCAN THE QR CODE TO COMPLETE YOUR FORM

Music Tuition In Your School

education specialists





Piano



Singing



Drums

Sign up to shared lessons with a friend, get 1 free lesson each!



SIGN UP NOW No sign-up fee

Experienced teachers

Parent portal & lesson calendar

Weekly lesson notes & practice log

Private & shared lessons available

Comprehensive method books created specifically for young beginners

Lessons conducted during the school day

P: 1300 GO ROCK

E: info@juniorrockers.comwww.juniorrockers.com.au