

Important Dates

School Ends for all
students - Normal
3pm Finish

Wednesday 11 December
2024

Pupil Free Day (No
School - OSHC

Booking- pls call
Jenn 0437609630)

Thursday 12 December 2024

Pupil Free Day (No
School - OSHC

Booking- pls call
Jenn 0437609630)

Friday 13 December 2024

School Begins Term
1 2025

Tuesday 28 January 2025

Farewell Message from Mr. Mercer!

Dear Families,

After 42 years as a teacher in Catholic Education, with the last 30 years as a Deputy Principal or Principal, I find myself writing my last ever newsletter. It is amazing how quickly the time has gone and the number of young people and colleagues I have had the pleasure to have met along the way. I feel truly blessed to have been enriched by the thousands of encounters that I have had: whether that be students, staff, parents or visitors. Every school I have been in has been a positive experience for me and St Mary Magdalene's is no exception.

Last week the Australian Government passed laws to implement 16 years as the minimum age for access to social media. I believe this is a huge step in the right direction for our country. Sadly, the number of issues that I have had to deal with over the past twenty years, involving social media issues, has been enormous. Most of these issues arise outside of school but the fallout happens when the children see each other at school. I am not sure how it is all going to be enforced but it will make relationships much better in schools. I have attached a letter from the Premier, Mr Peter Malinauskas, addressed to parents and caregivers about this change to this newsletter. A copy was also sent out via Seesaw last week.

Last week we had the dental van visit, with the majority of our children having some time in the van to have their teeth checked. The dental technicians were quite concerned at the amount of decay they have been seeing in our children's teeth this time around. There seems to have been a marked increase since their visit early in the year. I encourage you to take your children for regular dental check ups.

This week we have sent our school Student Reports out to parents. Included with the report is a letter advising your child's teacher for 2025. Our Year 4 students would also receive a copy of their RElat (Religious Education assessment tool) Report. While we do our best to try to ensure reports are accurate, we do occasionally have a mistake, such as a grade being missing or a spelling typo. If you find an error in your child's report, please let us know and we will happily fix the mistake and reprint a copy for you. I would like to thank our staff for the great effort they put in to assessing children, writing reports, editing and printing each semester.

Please note that the St Mary Magdalene's **2024 School Resource Fees was due to be paid** in full, by the **6th December 2024**. If you have not finalised your school account and do not have an approved payment plan in place, please contact the front office or email accounts@smm.catholic.edu.au as a matter of urgency.

We would like to remind students and families to be wary of approaches from strangers, especially when they are unaccompanied or

travelling to and from school. If they are approached, students should not respond and should not accept offers of rides or gifts. Students should seek the assistance of other nearby adults if they feel unsafe and should report any events to a trusted adult (parent or school staff member) as soon as possible. SAPOL advises that taking out a mobile phone and calling police can deter an offender and they recommend the student making a formal report to their closest police station.

I would like to thank each one of you for the contribution you have made to our school community this year. I would especially like to congratulate our Year 6 Graduates and thank and farewell those families who are leaving us: Bow-Davies, Clayton, Dowling-Smith, Gartlan, Habib/Habibullah, Howell, Lang, Owen, Solomon, Vorabouth and Walker. Thanks and farewell to our Principal, Chris Platten as he leaves and takes up his new position as Principal of Holy Family School at Parafield Gardens. Farewell to Melissa Musolino who will be taking leave for the next twelve months. Farewell and good luck also to Will Splann, one of our co-educators who has taken up a position at McAuley Community School at Hove for next year. Thank you and farewell to Sandra and Ian Renshaw, who have been the cleaners in our schools for many, many years. We wish you well in your retirement! We wish you all well in your future endeavours and thank you for the fantastic contribution you have made to our school community.

I have loved every moment in my teaching career. Coming to St Mary Magdalene's School in 2022 was like 'coming home' and I have felt welcome and blessed to have been here to finish my career. I have every confidence in our replacements, Mrs Belinda Bennett and Mr Gareth Molyneux. I wish them all the best for the next 12 months and I hope that you make them feel most welcome when they arrive. I have no pearls of wisdom to leave with you, no amazing insights or famous quotes. I would simply like to remind you of our Mercy Values that are central to our school community: Compassion, Courage, Hospitality, Justice, Respect and Service. These aren't just values we use for school. These are values for life, for adults and children alike. If we all take these on board and try to live these out every day, then the world will be a better place. Thank you for letting me share in part of your journey here at St Mary Magdalene's. It has been a privilege and an honour.

Remember school resumes on Tuesday 28th January 2025. Have a blessed and special Christmas time with your family and enjoy the holiday break.

Kind regards and thanks

Peter Mercer
Head of School
'Shaping our Future Together'

Recent News



THE HON PETER MALINAUSKAS MP

PREMIER OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dear parent/caregiver

Today, the Federal Parliament passed laws to implement 16 years as the minimum age for access to social media.

This globally-leading reform was initiated here in South Australia.

The State Government was determined to see reform in this area amid mounting concern and recognition from experts, clinicians, educators, parents and caregivers of the negative impacts of social media use on children's mental health, wellbeing and development.

Following substantial engagement with these stakeholders, it became clear to us that, on balance, a national minimum age for access to social media, is the right thing to do.

That's why here in South Australia, we commissioned former Chief Justice of the High Court, the Hon. Robert French AC, to conduct an independent legal examination into enforcing a minimum age limit for social media access.

His report outlined a path forward to legislate; however, our preference was always for a nationally consistent law, which is why I raised the matter at National Cabinet.

Now, through the work we started here in South Australia, our nation will be a global leader in keeping our next generation safe from the harms of social media.

When we see products doing children harm, whether it be drugs, cigarettes or alcohol, governments have a role to play. The addictive nature of social media is no different.

The national laws will commence following a 12-month implementation period and will establish a minimum age for platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok and Instagram. They will place the onus on social media platforms – not parents or young people – to take reasonable steps to keep kids under 16 years of age off their platforms.

In 2019, we announced that in Government, we would pursue a full mobile phone ban for students in South Australian Government schools. We've seen strong and positive outcomes from this pursuit and now every other state has implemented a similar ban.

From next year, all students in state government and Catholic schools will be taught about online safety and the dangers of social media through a strengthened curriculum, providing the tools to navigate the online world confidently and safely.

The new social media laws are another step in ensuring our kids live healthy, active lives – and that smartphones and social media are not the defining feature of their childhood.

We are proud that South Australia has led the way on this important reform that will ensure our children and young people are protected and well-equipped for the world they are growing up in.

Yours sincerely

Peter Malinauskas
PREMIER

29 / 11 / 2024

Blair Boyer
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SKILLS

29 / 11 / 2024

Mr Mercer's Tree Planting!







News from Ms Musolino!

Liturgical Events and Celebrations

Advent is a season of joyful expectation. We take this time every year to practice how to receive Jesus every day, of our lives and we remember the call of Jesus to his followers to make our world a peaceful and loving place. Advent reminds us of the sacred meaning of Christmas. It is the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas and Advent means 'coming' – this is the coming of Jesus into the world. We use the colour purple on our prayer space as we wait in joyful hope to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Something to consider over the four weeks of Advent:

First Week of Advent

How can I be ready for Jesus?

What can I do to be prepared?

Second Week of Advent

Think of some people who show by how they live their lives that Jesus is an important part of their lives.

What is it about their lives that you admire?

Can you live like that?

Third Week of Advent

How do we continue the healing work of Jesus today?

Fourth Week of Advent

Christmas is coming!

How will you celebrate God's coming to us?

So, as we move into the Advent season, let us pray together:

Gracious God open our hearts so that we may receive the message of your coming with joy and wonder. Help us to discover the people and places in the midst of our daily lives where you meet us with your love and care. May we show this love and care to all those we

meet. We ask this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sacramental Program

If you would like your child to be involved in the Sacramental Program for 2025 or would like more information about the program, please email Melissa Musolino.

mmusolino@sttmore.catholic.edu.au

Elizabeth Catholic Parish Christmas Mass Times

24th December Tuesday at 6:30pm Christmas Vigil Mass (Children's Mass) in St Thomas More Church.

24th December Tuesday at 9.30 pm Christmas Carols and Night Mass at 10.00 pm at St Ann's Church.

25th December Wednesday at 8:30am Christmas Day Mass at St Ann's Church.

25th December Wednesday at 10am Christmas Day Mass St Thomas More Church.

Colour Run Fundraising

This year, you helped us raise an amazing amount of money to go towards supporting our two chosen charities. As schools founded by the sisters of Mercy, we choose each year for our 'Mercy Day' fundraising efforts to go to charities supported or 'founded' by the sisters of Mercy.

You might remember that this year the charities we chose were Catherine House and Carrington Cottages. Because of your generous donations, we have been able to provide the charities with the following amount of money.

Catherine House: \$2, 353.75

Carrington Cottages: \$2, 353.75

Molly the fundraising and Campaign Coordinator from Catherine House said there has been a significant increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in our community – particularly women, with the rise of family and domestic violence and the current rental crisis, all is certainly having an impact on the number of women contacting us in desperation for accommodation. It is for this reason; we are so incredibly grateful for the support of your community. Please pass on our thanks to everyone who has been involved.

Your donation will be allocated to our Crisis Accommodation Service. The Crisis Accommodation Service is the entry point to Catherine House and the first door that is opened for women to start the journey of ending their homelessness for good. In addition to safe and secure supported accommodation, women also have access to medical and legal support, housing pathways, wellbeing activities and education and employment opportunities. It costs approximately \$152 a night to accommodate and support a woman at Catherine House including all of the above-mentioned services.

Every donation will certainly ensure we can continue our much-needed work with women experiencing homelessness in South Australia.

Karen, the Chief Executive Officer from Carrington Cottages, said they are delighted to be nominated as the recipients and welcome any donations to support their serving of individuals experiencing homelessness. They would like to utilise the funds in a twofold method if possible. Firstly, ensuring that every tenant has a Christmas Present to unwrap when they are often isolated from previous family and supports. Secondly, we would like to utilise the money to purchase "Welcome Packs" which consists of toiletries, bedding, cutlery, crockery, and interim clothing supplies as often an individual experiencing homelessness

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At this stage, Molly and Karen are unaware of the amount you as a community have generously raised. We look forward to presenting them with a cheque on behalf of our school communities.

A very big thank you goes to Leah our Year 4/5 classroom teacher who took on the leading role in organising our fundraising event and staff sliming activity that occurred on the day and the many hours of behind the scenes work she did to ensure we had a successful and fun filled event.

Regards,

Miss Haylock's Year 3 Class!

Last week of 2024 with Year 3TH

Wow! What a crazy few weeks it has been. We have been busy with farewells to some of our special staff, Christmas concert, transition into our new classes and cleaning for the end of the year! It was nice to be able to take a breath and enjoy our last few days together. We have been getting into the Christmas spirit with some baking! Here are some photos of our gingerbread decorating. We wish you all a happy and safe holiday.

Christmas at St Mary Magdalene's School 2024





Farewell Mr Mercer!



Miss Haylock's Class

