

School Information Booklet

This booklet will assist you in getting to know our Catholic Parish Primary School and all that it offers. St. Mark's School has a vision that centres on Jesus Christ.

We aim to model Jesus' love, peace and joy to the children and adults in our learning community. We are committed to nurturing the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and physical growth of the children in our care.

Our vision statement presents our hopes and aspirations for all within our school community.

'The St Mark's Catholic Primary School, Fawkner Community promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children.'

St. Mark's School Vision Statement

St. Mark's School, guided by the person of Jesus and by our Catholic tradition seeks to build a learning community enriched by diversity and united in faith, where all are welcomed, valued and respected. Our school community strives to develop happy, resilient children with a passion for lifelong learning. We aim to engage our students in a rich, relevant curriculum that caters for their needs. We will provide a safe, supportive and effective environment that inspires all its members to excellence.

St. Mark's School is a collaborative community where all work together.

Our school motto is from St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians and reminds us that all of our blessings come from God.

"What do you have that you did not receive from God?"



"Happy Children, Friendly Families"

As a community our parents, staff and clergy, believe that working together as a team can give our children a primary school preparation that will establish a strong foundation for lifelong development.

As a team we recognize the need to provide a quality education that will give each child the means to acquire an understanding and appreciation of their own worth, their strengths and their ability to make an important contribution to society. We foster an appreciation of the core values of Catholic and Australian traditions - care and compassion, respect, honesty, trustworthiness, integrity, responsibility, understanding, tolerance, inclusion and freedom.

The importance of a positive attitude and confidence in the learning process will encourage the acquisition of solid habits and attitudes leading to greater knowledge, responsible citizenship, good health and the maintenance of one's physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing.



We respectfully acknowledge,
the traditional owners,
of this land,
on which St Mark's is located,
The **Wurundjeri** people.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and
emerging and we commit to the ongoing journey of
reconciliation.

We also acknowledge,
the contributions,
of Aboriginal Australians
and Non-Aboriginal Australians,
to the education,
of all children and people,
in this country,
we all live in,
and share together,
Australia.



School Information and Administration

Principal: Mr Peter Wilson

Deputy Principal: Ms Alison Dean

Office Manager: Ms Lisa Pevitt

Address: 118 Argyle Street, Fawkner, 3060

Contact: T: 8335 4100

e: principal@smfawkner.catholic.edu.au

www.smfawkner.catholic.edu.au

School Hours: Soft Start 8:45 a.m.

8:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Monday to Friday)

Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. (Monday to Friday)

Parish Priest: Fr Colin Xavier

Address: 9 Lee Street, Fawkner, 3060

Contact: T: 9359 3111 (closed Monday)

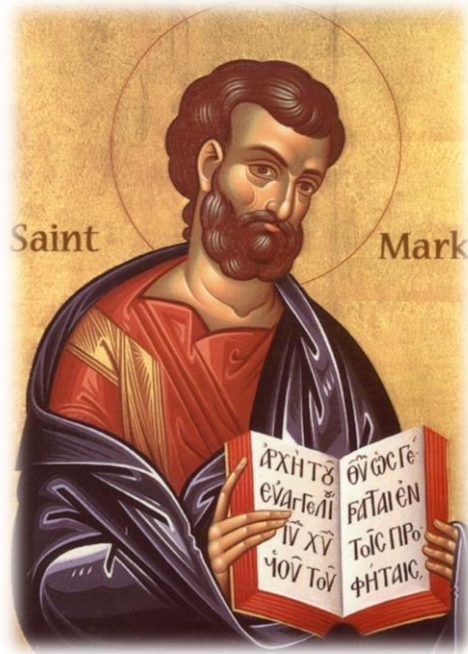


Term Dates 2023

- Term 1: Friday 27th January (Staff Only) – Thursday 6th April
Prep Students commence - Tuesday 31st January;
Gr 1-6 students commence Wednesday 1st February
Gr 1-6 Assessment Days : 30th & 31st January
- Term 2: Monday 24th April – Thursday 22nd June
- Term 3: Monday 10th July – Friday 15th September
- Term 4: Monday 2nd October – Friday 15th December - TBC

History of our School

St. Mark's Catholic Parish Primary School was established in 1934. It was operated by the order of the Sisters of Mercy until 1976 when the first lay Principal was appointed. In the late 1950's and early 1960's there was an influx of multicultural families in to St. Mark's School and that trend continues today. A significant percentage of our children come from EAL (English as an Additional Language) backgrounds.



*St. Mark.
The Patron Saint
of St. Mark's School.*

We believe St. Mark's School is a place where:

- ✚ The Catholic faith and church doctrine are valued and taught.
- ✚ All members of our community are welcomed and encouraged to participate.
- ✚ We respect the individual rights and giftedness of each member of our community.
- ✚ Children are encouraged to be active and independent learners who take responsibility for their actions.
- ✚ The school community encourages imagination, creativity and self-expression in the hope of fostering self-esteem.

Family / School Partnerships – everyone is important at St. Mark's

When your child begins at St. Mark's School, your whole family becomes a part of the school community. We know that when school and home, teacher and parent, work together in partnership, the children learn better and develop their full potential. We offer many opportunities for families to be involved at school, and engaged in their children's learning at school, at home and everywhere else. You will be welcomed into a thriving learning community that works hard for all the children and celebrates every success along the way.

Statement of Democratic Principles

RATIONALE

The VRQA Minimum Standards for School Registration includes a standard concerning the school's adherence to Australian democratic principles and practice. This standard is as follows:

The programs of, and teaching in, a school must support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- *Elected Government;*
- *The rule of law;*
- *Equal rights for all before the law;*
- *Freedom of religion;*
- *Freedom of speech and association;*
- *The values of openness and tolerance.*

PURPOSE

The purpose of this statement is to affirm the school's adherence to the principles and practice of Australian democracy.

STATEMENT

Australian society is defined, among other aspects, by a belief in elected Government; by a commitment to the rule of law, to equal rights for all before the law; and by a belief in freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of association. Our society is also tolerant of a range of religious, political, social and cultural beliefs and values in the context of the fundamental principle of our democracy.

The 'Education and Reform Act 2006' requires all education providers to operate in a manner consistent with this set of Australian democratic principles.

In accordance with the Act we will deliver our programs and teaching in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy. This includes a commitment to:

- Elected government
- The rule of law
- Equal rights for all before the law
- Freedom of religion
- Freedom of speech and association
- The values of openness and tolerance

The following processes and resources assist our school to support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy in our programs and teaching.

The Catholic School Review processes require our school to present a published vision and mission statement based on the mission or purpose of a Catholic school. By the very nature of Catholic schools, which seek to develop the whole person and to assist students to become active members of the Catholic Church and contributors to the common good of society, these statements acknowledge Australian democratic values.

Our school displays a poster of democratic values as required by the Australian Government. It is located in the school entry foyer.

The Civics and Citizenship domain of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, which are required to be taught in all Catholic schools, provide students with knowledge, skills and opportunities to understand and practise what it means to be a citizen in a democracy. All students are required to work through the two dimensions of the Civics and Citizenship Domain; Civic Knowledge and Understanding, and Community Engagement.

RESOURCES

The "Values For Australian Schooling" poster can be found at: CEVN-website.

Victorian Essential Learning Standards – Prep – Year 10 Civics and Citizenship curriculum and standards: <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vels/index.html>

Learning and Teaching

The term 'curriculum' covers all the arrangements we make for students' learning and development. It includes the content of activities, learning and teaching approaches and the way in which teachers and the learning areas are organised. It also includes decisions on the need for and use of facilities. St. Mark's School curriculum planning is based upon understandings of students, their development, needs, strengths, interests and the way they learn best. Our curriculum supports the development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in accordance with Victorian Curriculum.



Our curriculum enables students to explore the world in which we live, ask questions, make discoveries and develop new understandings. It is designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to understand and practice what it means to be an active citizen in a democracy. We want the students of St Mark's to be able to engage with and shape our world in the context of the Catholic faith.

Key subjects include: Religious Education; English; Inquiry; Mathematics; Humanities; Languages Other Than English (Italian) and the Arts.

Other essential skills that apply across the curriculum areas include: Communication; Thinking processes; Design; Creativity and Technology; Information and Communications Technology.

English - Literacy

At St. Mark's School the teaching of Literacy – Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening is fundamental to all areas of the curriculum. Literacy learning occurs every day for approximately two hours. All students participate in a variety of teaching and learning activities, which cater to their individual literacy needs with a focus on the four areas of literacy. Students are assessed regularly and the results then form the basis of the teaching and learning activities which are prepared for the students.

Oral Language development is fundamental to learning. We highly value our work in this area.

Mathematics – Numeracy

At St Marks School, the Mathematics program is based on the Contemporary Teaching and Learning of Mathematics. To assist our students in becoming competent, confident and efficient users of number a strong focus is placed on the development of numeracy skills, knowledge and understandings.

The Mathematics curriculum covers the areas of Number and Algebra, Geometry and Measurement, Probability and Statistics. Students are exposed to a range of teaching and learning experiences which encourage the development of the understanding of mathematical concepts through the use of concrete materials, digital technologies and pen and paper activities.




Each year students participate in a Maths Talent Quest which promotes the use of mathematical problem solving through investigations.

Social Emotional Learning

Physical, personal and social skills involve learning around being active and healthy; developing self-confidence and managing personal learning. This includes: Health and Physical Education; Inter-personal Development; Personal Learning and Civics and Citizenship – Social Emotional Learning / KidsMatter – SEL programs.

At St. Mark's School we know good mental health is vital for learning and life. Children who are mentally healthy are better able to meet life's challenges. They also learn better and have stronger relationships with teachers, family members and peers.

Beginning in 2006, the Australian Government has been implementing a framework called BeYou (formerly KidsMatter). St Mark's became a KidsMatter school in 2010. The BeYou framework has three major aims:

-  To improve the mental health and wellbeing of primary students
-  To reduce mental health problems among students
-  To achieve greater support for those students experiencing mental health problems.

St. Mark's School Expectations

At St. Mark's School we promote a happy and safe environment. In order for this to occur we co-operate with one another.

Our school expectations are:

- Be safe
- Be respectful
- Be a learner

St. Mark's follows the Restorative Practices approach to student behaviour management. Restorative Practices is a whole school approach to promoting resilience and aims to contribute to the building of positive relationships in school communities. It is focused on helping young people become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others through personal accountability and learning from a conflict situation. An important component of restorative practices is the focus on restoring relationships after harm has been done.

St Mark's is a Child Safe School

At St. Mark's School we pride ourselves on being a BeYou (KidsMatter) School with the four BeYou Framework Components, Positive School Community, Social and Emotional Learning for Students, Working with Parents and Carers and Helping Children with Mental Health Difficulties, driving all that we do. The care, safety and wellbeing of all students within our school is the foundation upon which we make decisions and introduce policies and procedures.

The Victorian Government's 2013 Parliamentary Inquiry resulted in the Betrayal of Trust Report, which found that more could be done to strengthen existing approaches to child safety. In response, the Victorian Government has phased in child safe standards for organisations that work with children, including schools. On Thursday January 7th, 2016, the Victorian Parliament passed Ministerial Order 870, Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools. On July 1st, 2022 Ministerial Order 1359 came into being, replacing Ministerial Order 870.

The St Mark's, Fawkner Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct explicitly list acceptable and unacceptable behaviours with regard to student care, safety and wellbeing. This Code of Conduct, that all staff, volunteers and contractors sign and are bound by, was developed in line with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) guidelines and overtly details the school's expectations and standards that influence behaviour. The Code of Conduct applies to ALL who enter our school including parents, visitors, volunteers, clergy and staff as well as anyone here to work as a contractor in a consulting, counselling, tutoring or building/maintenance capacity. Our Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on THE School Website – www.smfawkner.catholic.edu.au

Our Code of Conduct is based on 11 standards and these standards take into account the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to):

- the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children with disabilities, and
- children who are vulnerable

The 11 Child Safety Standards are embedded in our school culture through:

1. Effective leadership arrangements
2. A Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy and CECV Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
3. A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
4. Screening, supervision, training and other practices which reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
5. Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Faith Education

Choosing to send your child to St. Mark's School shows your commitment to his/her faith development within the Catholic faith tradition. Your involvement and support in their continued faith development and Sacramental programs such as Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation (through Years 3-6) is encouraged. Parent and child workshops are held in conjunction with class preparations for these Sacraments.

Specialist Programs

St. Mark's School supports a comprehensive specialist program. We have dedicated specialist teachers that have passion and enthusiasm for teaching in their particular area of expertise. These subjects are:

- Digital Technologies/Coding/Robotics
- Physical Education
- Visual Arts
- Italian (Language Other Than English – LOTE)
- Performing Arts / Music / Drama / Dance

These subjects occur each week.

Some examples of student work made in Visual Arts class



Prep

Years 3
and 4



Years 5
and 6



Learning Through Inquiry

Inquiry describes a number of teaching and learning processes including:

- ✚ Problem-based learning: learning that starts with a real world problem to be solved
- ✚ Project-based learning: students research a topic or area and create a project or presentation as a demonstration of their understanding
- ✚ Design-based learning: learning through the working design of a solution to a complex problem

At St. Mark's School, we strive to develop happy, resilient children with a passion for lifelong learning. We aim to engage our students in a rich, relevant curriculum that caters for their needs. We do this by providing students with hands-on opportunities designed to build life-skills including: identifying problems and creating solutions; design and evaluation; developing questioning and reasoning skills; improved communication and co-operation skills while collaborating within and beyond the classroom. The Inquiry-based approach provides students with meaningful learning through shared experiences.

Students at the middle and senior levels develop these skills through play experiences, research, consultation with experts, observations, and trial and error, focusing on a particular topic.

Students in the junior years are given opportunities to develop and enhance their Inquiry skills through play. Role-play, imaginative play, sensory play and investigatory play cultivate students' logic and reasoning skills, problem-solving ability, imagination, literacy skills and language development.

At St. Mark's School, Inquiry topics are cyclical, based on a two-year calendar. Topics include:

Year A

- Term 1: Identify, Wellbeing and Relationships
- Term 2: Science and Discovery
- Term 3: History, Tradition and Change
- Term 4: Design and Innovation

Year B

- Term 1: Culture and Community
- Term 2: Natural Systems and Environment
- Term 3: Science and Discovery
- Term 4: Design and Innovation

The Inquiry process supports other curriculum areas by demonstrating the real-world application of literacy and numeracy proficiencies while enhancing oral language and social skill development.



At St. Mark's play is an important part of a student's learning and development.

Imaginative Play includes retelling familiar stories and acting out their own stories through role play or play with dolls, teddies and figurines. This might look like 'Mums and Dads,' 'Superheroes,' 'At the Shops.' As students become more advanced in their play, they begin to explore less familiar themes, such as, 'Astronauts in Space,' 'Animals in the Zoo,' and 'Marooned on a Desert Island.' They will also begin to sustain their play for longer periods.

Imaginative play skills are strongly linked to Literacy skills and to Social-Emotional Learning. Creating their own stories helps a child to better understand stories that are read to them and stories they will eventually be reading themselves. At St. Mark's, students orally retell the imaginative stories they have created, similar to how older students will write about stories they have read. Prep students will also record their stories through drawings and, later, through their writing.

Through **Discovery-based Inquiry**, students learn about their world around them.

Discovery-based Inquiry allows students to explore artistic, mathematical and scientific ideas and concepts through relevant and authentic play experiences. Students develop curiosity and wonder as they formulate personal questions related to the current Inquiry topic. They set out to 'discover' the answer to their questions by creating, researching, tinkering, constructing, de-constructing and inventing. Discovery based Inquiry encourages students independence and engagement as learning is based on the students' interests. Discovery-based Inquiry helps students to build and practise investigative, reflective and collaborative skills as they become independent, life-long learners.

Technology

Students at St. Mark's have access to a range of devices including iPads, laptops and netbooks at a ratio of 1 device per student. These devices enhance teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum. Every classroom has an Interactive Whiteboard, and digital cameras to enable students' learning to be captured and used at a later time. Every class has access to the Internet with students able to access educationally friendly websites.

Excursions and Incursions

Excursions (where students travel from the school) and Incursions (where an event is held within the school) are a vital part of our curriculum as they help to broaden children's experiences. Such occasions are always preceded or followed up with class work that relates to them. Children going on excursions must return a signed permission form giving parental consent.

Fawkner Kindergarten at St Mark's School

Fawkner Kindergarten relocated to St Mark's School in 2013. Our connection with the kindergarten has been an important link into understanding 3 and 4 year olds before entering school.

Fawkner Kindergarten is part of Moreland Council central enrolments process. St Mark's 'Kindergarten to Prep Transition Team' and school leaders have regular meetings with the Fawkner Kindergarten director and staff. Both staff often participate in professional development relevant to early learning. The kindergarten children and staff regularly use St Mark's School facilities.

Parent Engagement

At St. Mark's School we believe the partnership between parents and teachers is crucial to our learning community. There are many ways in which families and friends can become involved in their child's education. They include: School Advisory Council and KidsMatter @ St Mark's Action Team, with fundraising activities; classroom support of curriculum related activities; Sacramental programs and Canteen.

We know that family involvement and engagement in their children's education really makes positive differences in their learning.

KidsMatter @ St. Mark's Action Team

KidsMatter @ St. Mark's Action Team is a supportive group of parents and staff who offer their valuable time and expertise. Their fundraising activities assist us to improve upon existing resources and facilities for our students while at the same time building strong community spirit within our school. The group meets regularly and organises and supports such activities as: Mother and Fathers' Day Stalls, raffles and working bees. Our Team warmly welcomes all new families to St. Mark's School.

Our KidsMatter @ St. Mark's Action Team is also an important group of parents and teachers that support the health and wellbeing of our students. All parents are welcome to join this group.

School Advisory Council

The role of the School Advisory Council is to provide advice to the Parish Priest, Father Colin Xavier and the School Principal within the context of the school's vision.

Members of the School Advisory Council will be active members of the parish school community and be valued for their willingness to share ideas and provide sound advice and feedback to our school executive.

The School Advisory Council formally meets once a term.

This is a great opportunity for parents to provide their unique and diverse range of experiences and skills to further improve the learning environment for the children of St. Mark's.

Communication

At St. Mark's School we believe it is important to communicate with our community. Therefore three-way communication between school, home and parish is encouraged. We support this communication through:

Skoolbag Mobile App

Skoolbag is a parent communication tool utilized by St. Mark's School. This mobile app enables us to communicate with parents and carers everything they need to know about school news, newsletters, events calendar, cancellations, school notices, school information, sick note forms, school documents and much more. This app can be downloaded onto mobile devices. Please download this app soon after enrolment so you can receive important notifications about school events.

USER NAME – stmfawkner

PASSWORD – fawk3060



Parent / Teacher Meetings

A Getting To Know You meeting is held in Term 1 each year. Its purpose is for parents to inform the classroom teacher about their child's strengths, needs, concerns, etc. At this meeting parents, teacher (and child if appropriate) will establish goals for the year.

A Student Led Learning Conference is held at the end of Term 2. The purpose of this meeting is for students to share their learning and achievements.

Written Report each Semester

Written reports are sent home twice yearly – mid year and year's end.

Parent Support Group Meetings (PSG)

PSG's occur when it is necessary to discuss student progress. These meetings are documented and all action in relation to the particular student is followed up and a copy placed in the student's file.

Assemblies

Whole School assemblies are held each week on Friday - Terms 1, 2 and 4 at 9.00 a.m. and Term 3 at 2.45 p.m. Parents are most welcome to attend.

Classroom Displays

These provide an opportunity for parents to visit classrooms and view children's work related to a particular unit.

*Student Work created in
Inquiry Unit on Community and Citizenship*



School Newsletter

The newsletter is produced and distributed each Wednesday. Its purpose is to keep parents informed of coming events, changes in school routine and what is happening in classrooms.

Daily Routine

8:30 a.m.	School supervision begins
8:45 a.m.	Soft Start / students walk to class
9:00 a.m.	Classes commence
11:10 – 11:50 a.m.	Lunch
1:50 – 2:30 p.m.	Recess
3:30 p.m.	Dismissal

Please ensure that your child is on time. If children arrive late to class, their learning and wellbeing can be impacted and the entire class can be disrupted.

Absences

It is not “OK to be away”! It is expected that all children attend school regularly, however sick children should not be sent to school, but kept at home until well. As teachers need to keep a written record of each absence, a note must be sent to the teacher when the child returns, explaining the reason for the absence. Parents are also able to notify the school of absences via the Skoolbag App or a phonecall to the office and must do so by 9.30 a.m. on the day of absence.

A child must be excluded from school if suffering from the following infectious diseases: Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German measles), Head Lice, Impetigo (School Sores) and Whooping Cough. If you are intending to travel with your children during the school year, please let the school know well in advance.

Early Release

Children will be not be released to a person other than their parents or specified and authorized contact, unless the office manager and teacher have prior notification. If you wish to pick up your child early, you must sign them out via the Ipad located at the office.

School Uniform

Our uniform supplier is PSW who are located in Campbellfield. Price Lists will be provided in due course.

Canteen

The aim of our canteen is to provide a service for the children. The food provided is nutritious. The canteen is currently open on Tuesday through to Friday and volunteers are always welcome. Canteen price lists are regularly forwarded to parents. Online orders are available through our Skoolbag App.

Student Welfare and Wellbeing

Parents are asked to notify the school office immediately of any change of address, telephone number (work, home and/or mobile) for parents and emergency contacts. We ask also that regular updates to a child’s medical record be forwarded to the school if and when necessary. A new form is sent home at the beginning of each school year.

Bike/Bike Helmets

It is law and school policy that all children must wear an approved safety helmet when riding bikes. We have an area where your child can store their bike/scooter if they ride to school.

School Crossing – Lee and Argyle Streets

Children must not be dropped off within 18 metres of school crossings. By-laws officers regularly patrol our two school crossings. All children and parents must use the school crossings when crossing the road.



Car Park

To ensure the safety of ALL children at St. Mark's School, cars are not to be driven into the staff car park before or after school.

If entering via Lee Street, please use the hall entrance; the church car park gates are not open before or after school for student access.

Enrolment

Enrolments for Years 1-6 are accepted throughout the year. Enrolment forms (collected from the school office) must be accompanied by the following documents - Birth Certificate, Baptismal Certificate and Immunisation Certificate.

School Fees and Levies

- Curriculum Levy (per student)
- School Fees (per family)
- School Development Fund (per family)

The annual **Curriculum Levy** for 2023 is:

Years Prep – 2	\$520 per student
Years 3 – 4	\$500 per student
Years 5 – 6	\$540 per student

This Levy is offset against the continued management and upgrading of resources related to the school curriculum as well as the following:

- books and stationery
- excursion / incursion costs
- ICT levy
- one-week introduction to “Water Awareness” – Years Prep to 2 only.

The annual **School Fees** for 2023 are:

Families with one child	\$1400 per family
Families with two or more children	\$1600 per family

The annual **School Development Fund** is \$200 per family – to fund school improvement initiatives.

Families are billed for the combined Fees/Levies/Development Fund at the commencement of each school year. Payment is then made in three instalments (*each instalment equal to one third of the total billed*) in Terms 1, 2 and 3. Payment is to be made within 14 days of receipt of your statement.

To assist parents we offer EFTPOS and highly recommend our Direct Debit payment facility for its convenience.

“What do you have that you did not receive from God?”