St Joseph's School Newsletter

Volume 36 No 1

28th January 2026

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday:	8:30am–4:00pm
Tuesday:	8:30am–4:00pm
Wednesday:	8:30am–4:00pm
Thursday	8:30am–4:00pm
Friday	8:30am–4:00pm

WHERE POSSIBLE PLEASE PHONE THE SCHOOL DURING OFFICE HOURS

Calendar

Friday	13th Feb:	SML Swimming
Saturday	14th Feb:	Beginning of School Year Mass 6.30pm
Tuesday	17th Feb:	Shrove Tuesday
Wednesday	18th Feb:	Ash Wednesday
Friday	20th Feb:	Water Fun Day
Wednesday	25th Feb:	Little Desert Swimming –Horsham
Friday	27th Feb:	Clean Up Australia Day

Dear Parents, carers, families, parishioners and friends,
Welcome to the 2026 school year!
We warmly (pardon the pun!) welcome all students, staff and families to the new school year. We look forward to a year filled with learning, growth and joy as we work together to support every child.

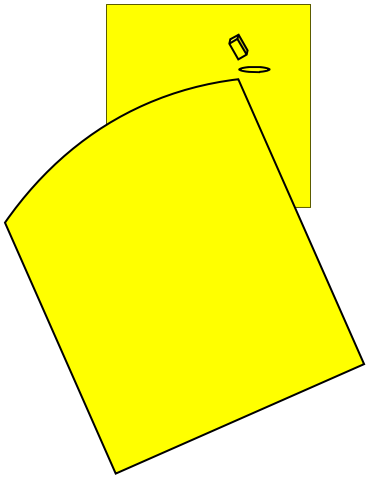
A sincere and heartfelt welcome to our new staff member, Shainna McNamara, taking on the role of Learning Support Officer. We are delighted to have you join the St Joseph's team and are confident that your skills and passion will greatly enrich our school community. We look forward to working alongside you as we continue to nurture and support the learning and wellbeing of every student.

We also extend a very warm welcome to our newest Foundation students, Dawson, Donin, Ivan, Maisie, Phoebe and Rahli. Beginning school is a truly exciting milestone, and we are thrilled to welcome you and your families into our St Joseph's community. We look forward to seeing your bright smiles, curiosity, and enthusiasm as you begin your learning journey. Our newest students were full of excitement as they started today!

To our returning students, families, and staff, thank you for your ongoing commitment to making St Joseph's a welcoming and inclusive place for all. As we begin 2026, let us do so with a spirit of collaboration, kindness, and perseverance. May this year be filled with learning, growth, and many memorable moments, and may our school community be blessed with joy, success, and God's abundant grace.

Wishing you all a wonderful week! Cynthia

A COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LEARNING



Welcome to the 2026 school year!

Attached this week:

Fresh Fruit Friday reply slip

Lunch order price list

Thank You, Families!

A huge thank you to our wonderful families who gave their time and energy at the Working Bee. Your hard work has helped prepare our school beautifully for the start of the year and created a welcoming environment for our students. We truly appreciate your generosity, teamwork and continued support of our school community.

Thank you also to the many family members that helped out on New Year's Eve. The bar ran very smoothly, although the colder night saw a lot of people leave earlier than usual. We'll let you know the profit from this night as soon as we've received all outstanding accounts.

We are truly blessed to have such an incredibly supportive parent community to help out at these events. Thank you!

Swimming & Water Safety

Learning to swim and developing strong water safety skills are essential life skills for all children. Through our swimming program, students build confidence, improve fitness and learn how to stay safe in and around water. These skills are especially important in Australia, where water activities are a big part of our lifestyle. We encourage families to support and reinforce water safety messages at home.

Our swimming program will begin TOMORROW at the Hopetoun Pool. The main focuses of our swimming sessions are Water Safety and Water Familiarisation. During each session the students rotate through activities based around Water Safety and Confidence, Endurance and Stroke. Please remember that while we do spend a certain amount of time on stroke technique, we do not specifically teach our students to swim. We aim to give them skills and knowledge about how to keep themselves safe in and around water.

Please be aware that if your child does not follow the instructions of the adult leaders of the group they will be sat out of the pool for their safety and the safety of rest of the group.

Students need to come to school in uniform and will change into their bathers before going to the pool. Students can wear their sports uniform to school on swimming days. Alternatively girls can still wear their dress if this a quicker, easier option for changing.

Please send your child's swim gear in a named separate bag. All clothing including socks and jocks to be named. Please see further in the newsletter for swimming dates.

All students need to wear a rash vest for this program.

In an emergency we can be contacted on the Pool phone (50833049).

Please note the fee for swimming if your family does not have a pool membership is $20 per student. Could this please be forwarded to school ASAP.

Thanks to Mrs Horman for her organisation and to all staff & Emma Mill for their assistance with the program.

Foundation Rest Day Reminder
A reminder that Wednesdays are rest days for our Foundation students. This quieter day supports their wellbeing and helps them recharge as they settle into school routines. Thank you for your support in helping our youngest learners get the most out of their week.

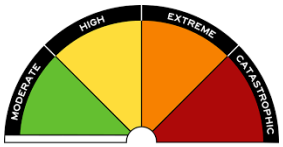
Beginning of School Year Mass

Our Beginning of the School Year Mass is an important opportunity for our whole school community to come together in prayer as we commence a new year. All families are expected to attend as we gather to give thanks, seek God's blessing, and warmly welcome our new families into our community. Our Beginning of School Year Mass is Saturday 14th February, commencing at 6:30pm. Following Mass, families are invited to stay for a shared meal, providing a special time to connect, build relationships and strengthen the sense of belonging within our school. All families are asked to bring a plate of food to share. Jobs will be allocated to students in the near future so please contact Cyn ASAP if your family is unable to attend. We look forward to seeing you all then!

Taking photos

A reminder to parents to please ensure, when at school events, to take photos of your child/ren only. Please do NOT post photos of other children at school events on your personal social media pages.
We thank you for your cooperation in respectfully using social media and doing your bit to keep everyone in our school community safe.

Catastrophic Fire Rating Days



St Joseph's School is rated CAT 4 on the Victorian Fire Risk Register. This means that our school must close on days forecast as 'Catastrophic', by the Bureau of Meteorology within our designated fire district. The decision to close will be confirmed by the Emergency Management Commissioner no later than 1.00 pm the day prior to the closure. Once we have received confirmation of the closure we will contact you directly via SMS before the end of the school day to confirm this.

Upcoming Dates
Please note the following dates for your Calendar

- Friday 13th Feb SML swimming
- Saturday 14th Feb 6:30pm Beginning of School Year Mass
- Tuesday 17th Feb Shrove Tuesday
- Wednesday 18th Feb Ash Wednesday
- Friday 20th Feb Water Fun Day
- Wednesday 25th Feb Little Desert swimming (Horsham)
- Friday 27th Feb Clean Up Aust Day
- Wednesday 11th March NAPLAN commences
- Thursday 19th March Pupil Free Day
- Tuesday 24th March P/T Interviews
- Thursday 2nd April Last day of Term

Swimming dates

Thursday 29th January 11:30am-1pm
Friday 30th January 11:30am-1pm
Thursday 6th February 11:30am-1pm
Monday 2nd February 11:30am-1pm
Tuesday 3rd February 11:30am-1pm
Wednesday 4th February 11:30am-1pm
Thursday 5th February 11:30am-1pm
Friday 6th February 11:30am-1pm
Monday 9th February 11:30am-1pm
Tuesday 10th February 11:30am-1pm
Tuesday 17th February 11:30am-1pm
Thursday 19th February 11:30am-1pm
Friday 20th February Water Fun Day

SPECIAL REPORT: Talking about Bushfires

Events such as bushfires can be distressing for children and young people, even when they are not directly affected. Ongoing media coverage, changes within communities and conversations about loss or danger can influence how children understand safety and uncertainty. While some children may appear largely unaffected, others may experience worry, confusion or changes in behaviour as they try to make sense of what they are seeing and hearing.

Research shows that large-scale disasters can have emotional effects that extend beyond the immediate event, with responses varying depending on age, temperament and level of exposure. For families, this can raise questions about how much information to share, how to reassure children effectively and how to recognise when additional support may be needed.

By providing clear, age-appropriate information, maintaining routines and encouraging open conversations, parents can help children feel supported and secure during uncertain times.

Here is the link to your Special Report https://sjhopetoun.catholic.schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/special-report-talking-about-bushfires

Cutlery

A reminder to pack cutlery for your child/ren if they need it for recess or lunch.
Thanks for your cooperation with this!

Drink Bottles

A reminder to ensure that your child has a labelled drink bottle of water with them every day.

Brain Break

Students have a Brain Break at 10am each morning, which includes a fruit snack. Please ensure your child's fruit snack is ***cut up and ready to be consumed quickly***.
Thank you for your support with this.

Fresh Fruit Friday

The school provides fresh fruit for students at recess each Friday. We reply on parents helpers to purchase the fruit from IGA (book it down to the school) and then prepare fruit platters for the students to enjoy at 11am. A reply slip is attached today. If you are able to help out with Fresh Fruit Friday, please fill in the slip & return it to school.
Thanks for your support!

Lunch Orders

Lunch orders are available through Bow Bakery on Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays. Students wishing to order their lunch are asked to bring their order to school, written on a brown paper bag and with the correct money inside. Orders are placed in the basket outside the classrooms before school for Julie to collate. Big thanks to Julie for her work with lunch orders; it can be very busy some days!
A price list for this year is attached today.

Vision Statement

St. Joseph's School is an inclusive community of faith and learning with Christ at its centre. St Joseph's School will educate its students to be of service to society in the Catholic tradition of love, faith and hope.

Mission Statement

As a Christ centred school we celebrate our Catholic beliefs, values, practices and traditions.

As an educational institution we:

- Will support the development of the whole person.
- Will provide a comprehensive curriculum, which challenges all students in their pursuit of success.
- Will cater for the varied learning styles of our students.
- Will be a child safe school by providing a physical and online environment that is happy, safe and welcoming.
- Will respect the dignity of the individual and value the participation and contribution of all.
- Will work in partnership with parents, the parish and the wider community.
- Will encourage our students to make a difference in the local, national and global communities in which they live.

HOUSEKEEPING!!

Student Absence from School

A reminder that it is a legal requirement for parents to explain absences from school. We do not need to know 'nitty gritty' details, simply sickness, doctor's appointment or family reasons will suffice. ***Please remember to log on to PAM to complete the notification or email or phone the school prior to 10am on the day of absence. An absence SMS otherwise will be generated. If there is a scheduled absence please advise us in advance.*** Thank you.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen is provided by the school for our students, however we do encourage the children to bring their own sunscreen to school to assist with sun protection. Students are regularly encouraged by teachers to apply sunscreen throughout the day.

Hats

School hats MUST be worn at all times when students are outdoors, except for extremely windy days where hats blow over the fence. School Hats are now $15.00.

Signing out

Please remember to sign out your child at the office if you need to take them from school during the day. This is not only a legal requirement but also an important part of our emergency management plan.

P & F dockets

A reminder that any purchases for P & F from IGA must be put on the P & F account (not school account). Dockets then need to be sent to school please.

Pie warmer containers

A reminder that students can bring lunch to school wrapped in foil or in a foil container to be heated in the pie warmer. Pie warmer containers **$22.00** for 50 containers.

Please ensure your child's pie warmer is clearly marked with their name to avoid confusion at lunch time.

Grounds Roster February : L Hateley & T Donnan

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