



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



St. Damian's Newsletter

5 Settlement Rd, Bundoora 3083 Ph: 9467 8566

Email: info@sdbundoora.catholic.edu.au

Thursday 6th February 2025

The St Damian's School Community acknowledges that we come together on the ancestral lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation

A Note From the Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians & Carers

Welcome Back for 2025

A very warm welcome back to all our families, students and staff for the 2025 school year. I hope that the holiday break was both enjoyable and relaxing for all of you. I take this opportunity to welcome all who are new to St Damian's. I hope that your time here with us will enrich you. We value the contribution you make as a member of our community and, we look forward to developing positive relationships with you as we work in partnership for the benefit of your children.

Last week during testing sessions, it was wonderful to see the children as they came to their group session and even more wonderful to welcome them all back on Friday for the beginning of another school year. The students all looked happy and excited to be back and most especially to be reunited with their schoolmates. On Monday morning in the extreme heat, we also welcomed the newest members of our school community, the 2025 Foundation Year (Prep) students. We all felt for these little people who started school in such weather. However, the Preps settled into their classrooms quickly and happily. Commencing school is a very exciting and special time for the children and their families. I would like to thank our Prep teachers, Tori Allen and Taylor-Jade Mullane for their commitment in ensuring a smooth start for the children. I am sure the teachers and the students will have a great year of learning and fun.

We also extend a warm welcome to some new staff members. **Mrs Anne-Marie Sukkar who has joined the Year 3 Team, Mrs Samantha Collins who has joined the Specialist Team as the Music Teacher and Ms Lisa Piccolo and Mrs Liana Tornese who have joined the Learning Support Officers Team.** We hope that each of these new staff members find their time here at St Damian's both fulfilling and exciting.

2025 Staff Members

It is my pleasure to introduce to you the staff of St Damian's for 2025:

Leadership Team:

Fr. Dong – Parish Priest
Mrs Rosanna Piccolo - Principal
Mrs Dianne Viola – Deputy & Learning & Teaching Leader
Mrs Mary-Ann Wright – Religious Education Leader
Mrs Angela Lombardi – English Leader
Mrs Julie Cannatelli – English Leader
Mrs Carmen Bruce – Mathematics Leader
Ms Charissa Beeby – Wellbeing Leader
TBC – Learning Diversity Leader

Class Teachers:

Prep: Miss Taylor-Jade Mullane and Miss Tori Allen
Year 1: Miss Stephanie Caligiuri; Mrs Saveria Ciurleo and Miss Sajantha Santhiapillai
Year 2: Mrs Annemarie Anthony and Miss Kira Young
Year 3: Miss Amber Bourke; Miss Mary McArdle and Mrs Anne-Marie Sukkar
Year 4: Mr Rodney Nethercote /Mrs Mary Karayannis; Miss Nicole Richardson and Mrs Anna Walpole
Year 5: Mrs Barbara Milana and Mrs Bernadette Rizzo/ Mrs Lauren Bozinovski (Fri)
Year 6: Mr Riki Bossini; Mrs Julie Cannatelli/Mr Mario Gauci and Mrs Amy Harbrow

Specialist Teachers:

Mr Alex de la Rangelje – Performing Arts; Mrs Samantha Collins – Music; Miss Charissa Beeby – Visual Arts; Mr Simon Insolia – P.E.& STEM Yr P-2; Mr Rodney Nethercote – Year 4 & STEM Yr 3-6; Miss Martina Battista– Italian Language Leader; Mrs Alison Smith – Literacy Enhancement; Miss Sophie Jarman – I.T./Library

Learning Support Officers:

Mrs Marie Costanzo, Mrs Valli Dalla Riva, Mrs Anita Filomeno, Mrs Lidia Hristova, Mrs Jenny Jyrijs, Mrs Maleisha Leach, Mrs Adrienne Lee; Mrs Dorothy Lee, Mrs Mimma Martini, Ms Lisa Piccolo, Mrs Joanne Sobey and Mrs Liana Tornese.

Administrative Staff:

Mrs Angela Parisi: Mon – Thurs & Mrs Laura Gibellini (alternate Fridays) Mrs Lina Parisot Bursur, Mon – Thurs & Office Fri (alternate).

We congratulate Miss Amy Starr who was married in January. We wish her and her husband every happiness for the future. Miss Starr is now Mrs Harbrow.

Mr Tim Holland (Learning Diversity Leader) left at the very end of last year. Tim accepted a position at the Special Development School in Springvale which is closer to where he lives in Croydon. The travel time, due to the distance coupled with family commitments, was becoming very difficult for him to manage. We wish him all the best in his new position. Mrs Madelaine Gutierrez, one of our Learning Support Officers, informed me during the holidays of her need to resign due to a family member's illness. Our prayers go with Madelaine and her family and we send our love during this challenging time.

We also congratulate our Student Leaders for 2025 and look forward to working with each one in their particular responsibility. Introducing:

School Captains: Robbie & Lucia

Vice Captains: Orlando & Alyssa

Sports Captains:

Damian House (Green): Callan & Maddison

Cosmos House (Blue) : Rishab & Lincoln

Francis House (Red) Franciso & Johnny

Claire House(Gold) Oskar & Soraya

We also congratulate all the Curriculum Leaders who will support our school in many ways this year: Maths – Samuel, Hanna, Adan & Keerath, Social Justice – Cecilia & Julieta, STEM – Jack & Chloe, Performing Arts – Jade, Winter & Giselle, Visual Arts – Rianna & Zoey Y, Sustainability – Suhannie & Laura, Wellbeing – Stephen & Zoe T

Learning Conversations

The Learning Conversations will be held on **Monday 17th February** from **8.30am until 5.30pm**. These will be held onsite, however there is the opportunity to meet online for those families that prefer this option. **Students are not required to attend school on this day** as the teachers will be involved in the Learning Conversations, however we expect that the students will be participating in the Learning Conversations. Parents will need to book online for their interview times. Information on how to book a time will be sent to families soon.

School Saving Bonus

Any families who are receiving or are eligible to receive the means-tested Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) are also eligible for the School Saving Bonus. Parents do not need to apply for the Bonus as the school administers this once we have all the relevant information. The \$400 School Saving Bonus is available for each child. This means that an **eligible** family with two school-aged children will receive a total of \$800, with three children will receive \$1,200. Please note that more information about the School Saving Bonus is available at vic.gov.au/school-saving-bonus.

Every Day Counts Legislation

Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education. School attendance allows for more than just academic achievement, it provides an avenue for social interactions and building relationships. Therefore, unless a student is ill, attending school is important. We respectfully ask that families reserve taking holidays during the designated holiday periods in term breaks.

Student Absences

Parents are reminded to notify the classroom teacher or the school office if a student is not attending school. This procedure ensures the safety of all students at all times. If a student is absent and we have not been notified, we are bound to make immediate contact with parents to ensure the child's safety. Therefore, please let us know if your child is not attending school on the day by either email or phone. Thank you.

Anaphylaxis

It is important that I remind you that we have many students in our school who are at risk of having an anaphylactic reaction. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that is life threatening. The most common allergens in school aged children are peanuts, eggs, tree nuts (e.g. cashews), cow's milk, fish and shell fish, wheat, soy, sesame, latex, certain insect stings and medication. The key to prevention of anaphylaxis in schools is knowledge of those students who have been diagnosed at risk, awareness of triggers (allergens) and prevention of exposure to these triggers.

Partnership between schools and parents is important in ensuring that certain foods or items are kept away from the student while at school. Adrenaline given through an EpiPen auto injector to the muscle of the outer mid thigh is the most effective first aid treatment for anaphylaxis. Teachers will be sending home a letter informing you if there is a child in the class at risk of anaphylaxis.

School Safety & Child Safe Standards

As a matter of child safety, parents are reminded that the school's **Duty of Care** regarding supervision of students **begins at 8.30am and concludes at 3.30pm every school day**. Children are **never to be left unattended at school outside of these times**. Our school protocols are that students gather on the top basketball court around 8.30am where there is a teacher on duty at this time. The music begins at 8.40am when teachers come out to collect the children and walk them into the classroom so they can ready themselves for the beginning of the day. **Meditation begins at 8.45am**. We ask that all students attend school on time to help them settle in for the day's learning. The children will also line up on the oval after each recess break and be taken into class by their respective teachers. At the end of the day all students will be dismissed from their classrooms to allow them to meet with parents/ guardians or grandparents at the agreed meeting place.

Any student arriving late must be signed in at the school office by an adult. Then the student will enter the buildings via the office area. All external doors will be locked at all times to ensure everyone's safety and that we know who is in the school and on the property at all times. All messages and items to be given to students must be done through the school office.

Parents entering the school building must sign in at the office and collect a visitor's badge. Parents wishing to speak with teachers should communicate via email, phone or by making an appointment at a mutually suitable time.

School Hats

St Damian's school is a Sunsmart school. This means that we expect all our students and staff to be wearing hats when outside during high UV periods, mainly in Term 1 and Term 4. Therefore, we ask all parents to ensure that your child(ren) have their **school hat** to wear when at school. Australia has one of the highest rates of *skin cancer* in the world. Anyone can be at risk of developing *skin cancer*. The majority of *skin cancers* in *Australia* are caused by exposure to UV radiation in sunlight Hence our school policy: **NO HAT NO PLAY**

School Uniform

It is an expectation that students wear the correct school uniform at all times. This includes wearing school shoes, not black runners. School shoes should be **plain black leather**, which is much healthier for growing feet. Runners (any colour) should only be worn on sport days with school sport uniform. We also ask that students **do not** wear jewelry to school as this can easily be lost and can cause distress to both students and families. Only sleepers or stud earrings should be worn as a safety precaution. NO dangly earrings, nail polish or other accessories to be worn with the uniform, this includes hair accessories please. Also, please ensure that hair that is longer than shoulder length is tied back. This applies to both boys and girls.

Assembly

This Friday, 7th February, we will be Commissioning the new FIRE Carrier students and staff. Our local State member, the Hon Colin Brooks MP will join us for this important occasion. All families are welcome to join us at 11.45am in the hall. The next whole school Assembly will be held on Monday 24th February at 2.30pm as normal. At this assembly the SRC Representatives will be presented with their badges.

Holidays

School Holidays (term breaks) are determined by the Education Department for all schools at particular times of the year. If parents decide to take holidays outside these times, an application form must be filled in with the relevant times and reason for the leave period. Whilst we understand that taking holidays outside of holiday periods is cheaper, the absence from school will have a detrimental impact on the student's learning. Parents should carefully consider the benefits of keeping children out of school for long periods of time as the learning in the classroom continues in the child's absence. Catching up with missed work is often difficult for students once they return.

Communicating with teachers

Effective home - school partnerships rely on positive relationships being established. One way to ensure this happens is to have good communication between teachers and parents. Our teachers' main job is to teach the children, therefore they may not always be available to speak with parents. For minor issues, parents can 'catch' a teacher when they collect their class in the morning. However, for important issues it is necessary to set aside appropriate time to meet. I encourage parents therefore to communicate via email or preferably make an appointment with the teacher so that issues or concerns can be addressed calmly and appropriately. Parents should also note that when sending an email, the teacher may not be able to respond immediately as they are usually involved with classroom duties. Parents should expect an answer to their email within a 24-48 hour period and only within business hours. Teachers will not respond to emails before 8.30am and after 5.30pm. Thank you for understanding.

Protocols for Addressing Issues

There may be times during the year when a concern arises, this could be a behaviour or an academic issue. These should be addressed with the classroom teacher in the first instance, as the classroom teacher has the most knowledge of the issue and knows the child best. If the issue continues to be a concern, then the Principal may need to be involved and an appointment made to meet. **At no point should parents ever approach another child or a parent regarding an issue.** This is not appropriate and certainly not helpful to anyone as this can exacerbate the situation for all parties and rarely leads to a resolution. I refer parents to the Code of Conduct which outlines expectations of all in the community.

Car parking

Just a reminder that the front carpark is not a drop off zone. Parents are asked to park in the bays and to adhere to the open and close times to ensure the safety of all in the community. Parents are not allowed to open or close gates, this is the responsibility of the staff on duty. Please do not move your car from the bays until the gate opens as often there are children moving about.

Joseph Street is our Kiss and Drop off point in the morning. Drivers do not get out of cars. Students alight from cars once stationary and quickly make their way to the oval. There is a staff member on duty to assist if needed. No car is to park inside the gates as this area is only for staff parking. Please be aware that Joseph Street has parking only on one side of the street during the morning and afternoon. As a safety precaution, never use the driveway next to the school gate to turn the car. This area is very busy with children and families leaving the school.

What a long newsletter! I promise that it is not this long each week. Have a wonderful year everyone.

Prayer for the Week:

Lord God of all Creation. We ask you to bless our students, families and staff throughout this year. Help all in our community to be the hands, heart and voice of Christ as they work and learn together.

Have a great week,

Faith News

Sacraments 2025

Please find below the Sacramental Dates for 2025.

Sacrament of Confirmation 2025 – Year 6 Students – Saturday 31st May 2pm;

Sacrament of Reconciliation 2025 – Year 2 Students – Thursday 5th June 7pm;

Sacrament of Eucharist 2025 – Year 4 Students – Saturday 13th September 2pm.

Term One School Community Masses

Our Opening School Mass will be celebrated on **Thursday 13th February at 9:15am**. Our School Staff will also be commissioned at this Mass. We will celebrate Ash Wednesday Mass on **Wednesday 5th March at 9:15am** with the Parish Community. You are most welcome to join us in celebrating each of these Masses as we continue to ensure our Catholic Faith and Traditions are nurtured across the generations.

Daily Christian Meditation

Each morning, our School Community begins the day with Christian Meditation. Meditation **begins at 8:45am and concludes at 8:50am.**

Christian Meditation:

Engages the mind in Prayer; Provides an opportunity for Students to experience the real presence of God within their lives; Provides an opportunity for Students to hear the Word of God speaking to them through the Scriptures; Assists Students to discover the presence of God within them, thus, enabling them to meet God deep within their hearts.

Beginning of the School Year Prayer

***Father in Heaven,
Creator of all source of goodness and love.
Please look kindly upon and receive our heartfelt gratitude in this time of giving thanks.***

***Thank you for all the graces and blessings you have bestowed upon us:
Our faith; Our religious heritage; Our food and shelter; Our health;
The love we have for one another; Our family and friends.***

***Dear Father, in your infinite generosity,
please grant us continued graces and blessings throughout the coming year.***

***This we ask this in the name of Jesus,
Your Son and our Brother.
Amen.***

Mary-Ann Wright
Religious Education Leader

First Week of Prep

Congratulations to our wonderful preps who have completed their first week of school. It has been a pleasure to watch our preps settle in to their class and make new friendships.

Here are some comments from our students about what has been their favourite part of the week:

“I liked playing sport and doing puzzles” Selina Prep A

“I like my classroom and colouring in” Max Prep A

“It’s been fun! I like playing in the playground” Bella Prep M

“I like writing” Andy Prep M





PARADE COLLEGE OPEN DAY



REGISTER HERE



Sunday 23rd February
9.30am - 1.30pm

WWW.PARADE.VIC.EDU.AU
1436 PLENTY ROAD, BUNDOORA



Kinder is FREE

Kindergarten Open Days

Thursday 27 February
5.30pm – 7.30pm

Saturday 1 March
9.30am – 11.30am



IT ALL STARTS WITH KINDER



whittlesea.vic.gov.au/kinder

3 and 4 year old kinder is



FREE



NEW YEAR OF APPLICATIONS
OPEN 1 FEBRUARY FOR 2026-2027

Apply online for:

- Three-year-old kindergarten in 2026 and
- Four-year-old kindergarten in 2027



whittlesea.vic.gov.au/kinder



Places are still available for 2025

School Crossing Supervisor positions now available

Enjoy the benefits of permanent part-time work!

There are so many great reasons to join the City of Whittlesea team as a Crossing Supervisor:

- Join the City of Whittlesea's active social club and attend organised events
- Starting hourly rate of **\$35.02** (work 40 weeks but be paid for 52 weeks a year)
- Work 15 hours per fortnight during school terms (Annualised salary paid 12.6hrs per fortnight)
- Paid public holidays that fall during school terms
- 11.5% superannuation and pro-rata sick leave
- Receive on-the-job training and uniform is provided
- Reduced price memberships available at Mill Park Leisure and Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre
- Health & Wellbeing Programs available

TO APPLY



Complete the application form on the reverse side of this flyer or online at

www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/schoolcrossings

For further information please contact the School Crossing Team on **9217 2170** or email school.crossing@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Apply now!

