



The Marian

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2021 College Theme

***“Let our words and actions
be shining lights for others”***



St Mary's College Seymour is a Child Safe School. We promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children.

Newsletter No.20

Term 3

5 August 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,



Celebrating Confirmation

This Friday evening primary and secondary students will be confirmed during two sacramental liturgy services. Bishop Terry Curtin will confirm each candidate with Fr Ashkar by his side in support as Parish Priest. We are grateful to Bishop Terry for wanting to keep to his schedule as Covid has made life very difficult to keep to all the sacramental duties that is required of a bishop. Please keep all candidates and families in your prayers. The Sacrament of Confirmation is more than a rite of passage for young Catholics, it is receiving the graces from God to be young people who are strengthened by the spirit, as the disciples were. Confirmation is often referred to as the sacrament of maturity. The sacrament celebrates Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit to the disciples and to us for wisdom; understanding; right judgement; courage; knowledge; reverence and wonderment. We wish our candidates a joyous and special time in their journey as young Catholics.

Director of Learning & Teaching

Mrs Buhler in 2022 will move from her current leadership position (Director Learning & Teaching) to the College's Teacher Librarian. Libraries are changing and evolving learning centres that seek to be providers of information; digital literacy; promoting a love of reading and developing students' research skills and the efficacy of self-discipline to be independent and focused learners and researchers. Libraries are uniquely connected to what is happening in the classroom and units of work and themes. Mrs Buhler will continue and further develop this importance, as well as supporting the Colleges drive with MultiLit Intervention. The Teacher Librarian will compliment and support the Colleges Strategic Intent, 'Improving Reading Outcomes for all Students' and have a pivotal role in literacy. Mrs Buhler has been instrumental in leading Learning & Teaching since 2012 and her dedication, commitment and willingness to always want the best will ensure the library is a centre of activity and learning for students and staff. The Director of Learning & Teaching will be advertised externally and internally. Chris Bence and Snjezana Singh from MACS, both are well known to our College, will be invited to participate in the process.

2022 Budget

MACS schools and Colleges are now required to have budgets for the following year completed in September. Each school is allocated a MACS Business Manager and Mrs Melville (Business Manager) works closely with Trish Cain (MACS Business Manager Northern and Western Region School Accounting & Compliance) who visits fortnightly and has built a close relationship with our finance team and understands the future directions for St Mary's. There are many variables in budgeting and Mrs Melville considers every possible avenue to expand the dollar for the common good of students.

Thank you to parents for the sacrifice given to commit to the College fees. Non-government schools do not receive the same funding as government education, therefore the gap is supported by family fees and levies. We value 'every' contribution!



Positive Behaviour for Learning

PBL is not an overnight journey and can take a few years to embed in the College. There are already 80 MACS schools involved in this journey with our College being one of them. Mrs Allison Moore (Director Wellbeing) has engaged Jo-Ann Patrick (MACS Consultant – Positive Behaviour Learning) to direct the move to PBL.

At Wednesday's Covid style staff meeting we began the journey to review the College TAG. *What do staff – student – parents want our creed to be? Does the current TAG need a new visual look?* The process that Jo-Anne will lead will provide all stakeholders with input – student and parents will have an opportunity to vote on key words that best describe what we want our students to be.



Flying into Foundation

Mrs Gail Strahan (Office Manager/Enrolment Registrar) has visited local Kindergartens to provide College information on the St Mary's College 'Flying into Foundation' Transition program providing each centre with a banner for advertising.

I was sceptical about holding the Olympics during times of Covid, but how good has it been! So many extraordinary achievements and stories coming from Australian athletes who have had to overcome incredible difficulties to get to the Olympics as elite athletes in their sport. Peter 'Super' Bowl 4th in the 800m final and whose family escaped the wars in Sudan. Owen Wright the surfing Bronze medalist who had to learn to walk again after a brain injury from a surfing accident and the Australian track cyclist, Bronze medalist Matthew Glaetzer who returned to cycling after a battle with cancer to represent his country. Their actions are shining lights!

May our actions and words be shining lights for others.

Wayne Smith

Principal, St Mary's College Seymour

DipEd (ACU) DipREd (ACU) BEd (ACU) GradCertEdAdmin (Edith Cowan)

GradDipREd (ACU) MEdAdmin (Charles Sturt) MTheoSudies (BBITAITE)

Deputy Principal Operations



St Mary's College Pedagogy

The teachers at St Mary's are dedicated to providing the students of our College with a high-quality education. We believe that if teachers excel, students excel. As a College we are committed to the principles of explicit instruction across all subject areas from Foundation to Year 10. This is reflected in our strategic intent, 'to improve reading outcomes for all students by personalising teaching approaches and explicit reading instruction'.

On Tuesday night teachers engaged in professional learning aimed at developing a shared understanding of what explicit instruction looks like in the classrooms of St Mary's College.

In our classroom's teachers will:

- Present the learning intention in steps and incrementally
- Model steps with ample opportunity for student practice
- Ask students to respond once they have been explicitly taught the content
- Have a predictable lesson structure
- Deliver lessons that build on what was previously taught
- Provide engaging instruction
- Do more teaching than 'telling'

eSafety

On Monday students in Year 3-6 were involved in education sessions delivered remotely by Kids Helpline counsellor, Brooke, to support students to have safer and more enjoyable online experiences.

The Year 3 and 4 sessions were focused on 'Being Kind Online'.

The topics included:

- Boundaries
- Mindful messaging
- Power of words
- What weight do our words carry online?
- Disagreeing respectfully with S.A.S

The Year 5/6 sessions were focused on 'Cyberbullying'.

The topics included:

- Power of words
- Ways to tackle cyberbullying
- Support
- Bullying is never OK

S	Stay Calm <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take a few deep breaths• Have a break from the screen, app or game	
A	Avoid Put Downs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use Kind and Respectful Language• Ask yourself "Could this hurt their feelings?"• Choose to talk it through face to face when possible	
S	Say "I" statements instead of "you" statements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I don't agree because..."• "I feel that..."• "In my opinion..."	

We can tackle cyberbullying by using the 4S

Stay calm	Screen shot	Shut it down	Support
Cyberbullying can trigger a lot of emotions. It's important you don't panic or retaliate as sometimes that can make things worse. It's always a good idea to respond when you are feeling calmer and have a clear mind	Take screenshots. It's important to keep the evidence if you have to report. If you find you keep looking at the screenshots or that having these saved are impacting on you, send a copy to someone you trust (e.g. a parent) and then delete your own copy.	You can block the person and report the cyberbullying to the game, site or app it occurs on. In most cases, cyberbullying is against their terms and conditions of use and should be removed. If you are unhappy with the response you get or the cyberbullying is not removed after being reported, you can also report it to eSafety.	Report the cyberbullying to more than one trusted adult and keep on talking to them until the situation is resolved. You could talk to a parent, a teacher, your school counsellor, another family member and Kids Helpline to name a few.



Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)

As mentioned in the College newsletter of 24 June, St Mary's has begun the journey to revisit our Positive Behaviour for Learning. This is the framework for behaviour expectations for all members of our community.

Recently St Mary's staff identified 6 school-wide behaviour expectations they believe should form the positive behaviour expectations. From this list, 3 or 4 expectations will be chosen to create the Positive Behaviour Expectations Framework for St Mary's College.

Student representatives will vote and we will also invite your input as parents and carers of St Mary's College students to identify your top 3 expectations. The list of words will be provided in a survey distributed via Operoo on Monday.



Friendship and Conflict

During primary school children go through many stages of making friends and along the way will experience conflict at some stage. It is very normal for children to experience conflict from time to time as this is a way of children discovering what works with friends and what doesn't – put simply children are developing their social and emotional skills. Some children may get confused when they have a disagreement or conflict with another person and may call this bullying. There is a great difference between conflict and bullying and here is a simple way to differentiate between them:

- **Misunderstanding** – usually problems around communication.
- **Disagreement** – do not agree on something and both want their own way.
- **Conflict** – people usually want to solve the problem. Can be over a period of time if not sorted properly.
- **Bullying** – threatening, repetitive, targeted, deliberating wanting to harm, abusive, no attempt to resolve issue.

If your child does experience conflict, this is a wonderful teaching moment to guide them and help them learn about how to get along with others. Sometimes children can resolve conflict themselves, particularly as they grow into the upper years of primary, but when they are young, they may need guidance, and most importantly emotional support. The best way to give emotional support is to use 'reflective listening'. When we practice this type of listening, we listen to the content of what your child is saying and listen for the emotion and then we reflect back what they are saying for example. "It sounds as though that really frustrated you when you did not get to play your game". We can then try to help them problem solve the situation by giving them lots of opportunities to brainstorm a solution without stepping in too early to solve it for them.

Conflict teaches kids:

- How to give and take
- How to come to an agreement
- How to compromise
- How to solve problems
- To build empathy
- To understand others and their needs
- How to get along in a group
- How to develop successful, loving and healthy relationships as adults.

Mrs Allison Moore

allison.moore@smseymour.catholic.edu.au

Director of Learning and Teaching



Update Regarding: Semester 1 Student Reports

Unfortunately, some issues have come to light regarding the end of semester student reports. During the report writing period at the end of Term 2, there were disruptions to the connectivity to the server. When teachers were doing reports, data was not saving and updating accurately. This was in the area of progression points, which show your child's achievement against the Victorian Curriculum Standards by year level. Only **secondary student reports** were impacted.

On Friday 6th August a full update to all student reports will be done. Your child's report will automatically be updated in PAM to reflect the judgement given by the teacher by a process of moderation within the subject area. If you have any questions, please contact the teacher by email for a follow up conversation.

Remote Learning Support for Students

During the recent period Lockdown 5 – there were 7 days for students to work from home. Between Monday 19th July and Tuesday 27th July, secondary students were expected to follow their timetables to complete work and to attend Google Meets for teacher instruction and support. Teachers were expected to create work suitable for remote learning and for a child's learning needs. Unfortunately, a **significant number** of students did not meet their work expectation for this period of time. While we understand that there may have been a variety of reasons for this, we are here to support each students learning progress.

The Curriculum team has provided teacher support for students during lunchtimes this week. This has assisted students in the completion and submission of all work so that they can be up to date. There has been a very positive approach by most students in taking responsibility for their work.

Review Of Curriculum

The Curriculum team has called for volunteers to form a working party to review the design of curriculum and the electives currently being offered to students. In preparation for 2022, we look forward to presenting the community with updated handbooks for all secondary students at the beginning of Term 4.

The Primary Curriculum review is also underway, and similar updates will be provided.

The following resource is being used as our guiding document.

eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities

(eXcel) articulates the importance of wellbeing to children and young people's spiritual, cognitive, physical, emotional and social growth.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) has developed **eXcel** as an explicit, practical guide to inform pedagogical practice, curriculum design and policies to strengthen children and young people's wellbeing and learning outcomes. It explores in detail the nature and importance of wellbeing and how it is enacted in Catholic schools.

Presented as four intersecting dimensions of **enable**, **connect**, **engage** and **learn**, the first letter of each has been combined to form the overarching concept of '**eXcel**'.

enable + connect + engage + learn = eXcel

Ms Christine Buhler

christine.buhler@smseymour.catholic.edu.au

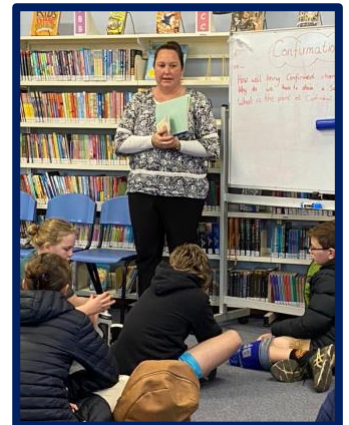
Director of Faith and Mission



Confirmation

Friday night we have 38 students and one of our staff members, Kath Kovacic, receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation is our chance to make our own choice to follow God. It's where we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and become fully part of the Catholic community. It isn't just about receiving a certificate or being 'initiated', it's about taking the responsibility as an adult to continue strengthening our relationship with God. Being confirmed means that we are responsible for our actions in the eyes of the church and God. As I reflect on this Sacrament of Confirmation, I am convinced that choosing God isn't a statement we make one day, for the rest of our lives. It is a decision we make each and every day for the rest of our lives.

On Wednesday all Candidates gathered together for a day of reflection and final preparation for this wonderful Sacrament. They started the day with Mass and then celebrated Reconciliation with Father Ashkar, to ensure they would be ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation with a clean heart. During the day they shared their understanding of the Holy Spirit's gifts and fruits, discussing ways they could show these to others in their families, school and community. Students were respectful and showed great maturity as they discussed the reasoning behind their choice of saints and sponsors. **A special thank you to Mrs Evans and Mrs Brock who took over the running of the preparation day, when was I on sick leave.**

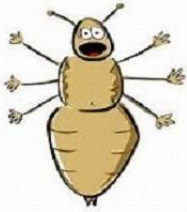


We pray for the candidates and their families during this extra special time. We also thank their teachers, for their preparation of our students, and to Father Ashkar and Bishop Terry Curtin for their great spiritual leadership.

Mrs Rochelle Gough

rochelle.gough@smseymour.catholic.edu.au

College Nurse



Head Lice

Cases of head lice infestation are being reported in Junior Primary classes. With the weekend almost upon us Parents are requested to check their child's hair, particularly if they are complaining of 'an itchy head'. If necessary, please carry out the appropriate treatment. Your local Chemist will have the required lotion to deal with the infestation. To assist us further in the attempt to control the infestation, please inform the College Office of any re-occurrence.

Mrs Brooke Wessels

brooke.wessels@smseymour.catholic.edu.au

Defence School Mentor



Posting

It's that time of the year, some posting orders are starting to come out. Let me know if your family is leaving St Mary's and I can support our defence students in preparation for the changes ahead.



Defence Community Hub

Defence Community Hub is an online resource for ADF members and their families. It is a Defence Housing Authority, Defence Member and Family Support and Defence Families Australia collaboration supporting ADF families throughout their Defence Life. Browse locations throughout Australia <https://www.defencecommunityhub.org.au/>

DMFS Member and Family Helpline

Support, local community information and advice is available for ADF families through the Member and Family Helpline. It operates 24-7 and is staffed by qualified human services professionals including social workers and psychologists. This is the best way to access DMFS programs and services offered to help Defence families manage the military way of life. Phone-1800 624 608 or Email memberandfamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au

Mrs Emma Marrinan

emma.marrinan@smseymour.catholic.edu.au

Dates to Remember

Term 3

Week 4	Fri 6 Aug	Confirmation Mass 6pm and 7:15pm
Week 5	Wed 11 Aug	Year 9 attending Parish Mass 9am
	Thu 12 Aug	Year 3/4 Swimming
	Fri 13 Aug	Year 7-10 Round Robin
Week 6	Wed 18 Aug	Year 10 Attending Parish Mass
	Thu 19 Aug	Year 3/4 Swimming
	Fri 20 Aug	F-10 Book Week Parade 2:30pm MPH

Term Dates 2021

Term 3: 12/07 – 17/09

Term 4: 04/10 – 17/12



What: Come to school dressed as your favourite book character!!

When: Friday August 20, 2021

Where: MPH

Time: 2:30pm

Parent Welcome!!

(Covid Restrictions Permitting)

Students F-10 are asked to come to school dressed up as their favourite book character to celebrate the launch of Book Week 2021.

St Mary's College

90 High Street, Seymour
Telephone: (03) 5792 2611
PO Box 269, Seymour 3661
Office Hours: 8:15am-4:30pm

St Mary's Parish Seymour ~ St Joseph's Tallarook

Parish Priest: Father Eugene Ashkar

Telephone: (03) 9412 8406 / 0455 123 509

Mass Times: St Mary's - SAT 6:00pm, SUN 10:00am;
St Joseph's - SUN 8:30am