

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Term 1, Week 2, 2026

Principal's News

Welcome back to school!

I am so excited to welcome all students and families to the new school year! Whether you're returning to familiar classrooms or starting a brand new adventure with us, I am thrilled to have you as part of our school community here at Cana Catholic Primary School. Our dedicated staff are here to support every student to reach their full potential. This success can only be achieved if all parents, students and staff promise to work together for the good of the entire community.

Last weekend's Gospel is the famous words from Matthew's Gospel- the Beatitudes, where we see the values that we are called to live by. While they provide a great challenge, they also offer great rewards both here and hereafter. There's no doubt that it is hard to be a peacemaker in an age of conflict and division, however this is what we are called to be. Jesus' call to his followers is to become a blessing for others, proclaimers of the Good News destined for the salvation of all. In 2016, Pope Francis offered [6 new beatitudes for modern times:](#)

- *"Blessed are those who remain faithful while enduring evils inflicted on them by others and forgive them from their heart."*
- *"Blessed are those who look into the eyes of the abandoned and marginalized and show them their closeness."*
- *"Blessed are those who see God in every person and strive to make others also discover him."*
- *"Blessed are those who protect and care for our common home."*
- *"Blessed are those who renounce their own comfort in order to help others."*
- *"Blessed are those who pray and work for full communion between Christians."*

Parents and Carers will have the opportunity to meet with classroom teachers at the beginning of the year parent chats on either Monday February 9th or Tuesday February 17th- please use these opportunities to share relevant information with classroom teachers. Just a reminder to return the parent chat note that was sent home this week before your meeting time.

A brief whole school assembly will be held in the yellow area on a Monday morning at 8.45- all welcome!

Statements for **2026 School Fee payments** will be sent home in the coming weeks. The statement will provide further information about payment options, however I am pleased that the school is able accept payment via credit card/EFTPOS in the school office (not offered previously), via Bank transfer into the school account, or via Centrepay for those parents who have a valid Health Care Card. If you are in possession of a Health Care Card and have not yet submitted the relevant paperwork for the concession discount available please contact either myself or Trudy Milligan via trudy.milligan@canahillside.catholic.edu.au. I am more than willing to meet with families who are experiencing genuine financial hardship to discuss matters further. Please note that we are unable to accept cash payments.

Smart Watches: We understand that there are a number of students who are wearing 'Smart Watches' to school, particularly if they are traveling independently to and from school. Just like mobile phones, these must be handed in to the school office upon arrival at school in the morning. Upon dismissal they can be collected from the school office. Any urgent messages must be handled via a phone call to the school office rather than direct calls/texts to student's devices. **There should be no direct messaging between students and their parents/carers throughout the day.** These devices are considered valuable and are brought to school at the owner's (student/parent/carer) own risk which is why they must be stored in the office. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices. We encourage wearing traditional, non-connected analogue/digital watches instead. Thank you for your support with this.

Team Teach update- Last Thursday our staff participated in Professional Learning called 'Team Teach.' Facilitators from MACS assisted staff to grow in understanding about appropriate strategies to use when supporting students who require help to regulate their behaviour and emotions. We recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication. These strategies promote team building, personal safety, communication, and verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques. These techniques support behaviours, reducing risk and minimising the need for physical restrictive practices.

As a school, we have noticed that an increasing number of students are experiencing **separation anxiety** in the mornings for many reasons. Our staff work closely with students and families to provide reasonable adjustments and support to help make morning transitions as calm and successful as possible. We are committed to ensuring that students feel safe, supported and settled as they begin their school day, and we acknowledge that this can sometimes be challenging for both children and their parents/carers.

However, in line with advice from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, we also need to consider the wellbeing of all involved. Prolonged and unsettled drop-offs can result in heightened distress for students and can make it more difficult for them to regulate and engage in learning once the school day begins. For this reason, if a student has not been able to separate from their parent/carer by **9:30am**, families will be asked to take their child home and try again the following day. This approach is intended to minimise prolonged emotional distress and to support a more positive and regulated start

to the school day. Please note that school staff are unable to physically remove or restrain a child when supporting the drop-off process.

Our goal is to work in partnership with families to support successful morning routines, and we encourage parents/carers to communicate with the school if ongoing separation difficulties are occurring so that appropriate support can be discussed and planned together. We also encourage a **quick drop-off** when students are experiencing separation anxiety, as many students settle quickly once they are with their teacher and peers and begin their morning routine.

Important Dates- more to come

Student Free days for the year:

Thursday February 26th 2026- Staff Professional Learning for PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning)

Monday April 27th 2026- Staff Religious Education Professional Learning with Father Elio Capra)

Monday November 2nd- Staff Time in Lieu

Friday November 27th- Planning and Preparation for 2027

Wednesday December 16th- Staff Time in Lieu

Thursday December 17th- Staff Time in Lieu

Term dates:

Term 1: Monday February 2nd- Thursday April 2nd 2026- Students finish at 1pm

Term 2: Monday April 20th- Friday June 26th- Students finish at 1pm

Term 3: Monday July 13th- Friday September 18th- Students finish at 1pm

Term 4: Monday October 5th- Tuesday December 15th-Students finish at 1pm

Child Safety News

All members of the Cana Catholic School Community are reminded to abide by the MACS Code of Conduct for Parents. Child Safety is an important, non negotiable priority for all schools, and as Principal, my responsibility is to ensure that all children are safe at all times. At times, children may disagree with each other and physically or verbally fight with each other. If this occurs at school, it is the responsibility of the school staff to manage this. **Under no circumstances, are parents allowed to approach another child to 'speak' or 'deal with' a situation regardless of how upset they may be.** This is a clear breach of the Child Safety Parent Code of Conduct and I will then follow this up formally. Thank you for your understanding.

All members of the community need to be in partnership and to always be respectful of each other during all interactions - face to face or on social media. We are role models for our children and need to be reflective of our communications and actions. If there are any concerns please see your child's classroom teacher as the first point of contact, or you can contact a member of the Leadership Team.

Overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards:

The Victorian Child Safe Standards are a set of 11 minimum requirements that all organisations working with children must meet. These standards are designed to:

- Prevent child abuse and harm
- Make child safety a shared responsibility
- Support the wellbeing of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with disabilities
- Promote the participation and empowerment of children and young people

These standards apply to all school staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone working with children in schools.

Throughout 2026, we will explore each of these standards with the staff, students and with the wider community. Please see later in this newsletter for more information regarding MACS' stance on upholding **Child Safety Standard 1: "Establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued."**

Working with Children checks: All parents who wish to assist in the school in a voluntary capacity must have a current Working With Children check. This is a Child Safety mandate from both MACS and the Vic Govt. [You can apply for one online here.](#) You will then need to inform the school office so that we can add it to our records. Opportunities for volunteers to assist in the school include: Icypole sales on a Friday, parent helping at excursions, the Mother and Father's Day gift stalls, etc.

We are very grateful for all the helpers in the school!

Car parking: I acknowledge that the change to arrangements have presented some difficulty and frustration for some families in this adjustment phase. Thank you to those families who have expressed their understanding, appreciation and support of the change.

Car Parking and Drop-Off Arrangements – Important Reminders

Thank you to our families for your understanding and cooperation following the recent changes to our car parking arrangements. We appreciate that adjustments to routines can take time, particularly during busy morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods. To ensure the safety of our students and the smooth flow of traffic, we ask families to please be mindful of the following reminders:

- The drop-off zone at the front of the school on Banchory Avenue is for drop-off or pick-up only. Cars should not be parked in these areas during drop-off and pick-up times, as this prevents traffic from moving efficiently.
- When leaving the drop-off zone, please continue driving in the direction your car is facing. Conducting three-point turns to travel in the opposite direction is dangerous and significantly disrupts traffic flow.

- Please continue to observe all parking signs to ensure neighbouring driveways and properties are not blocked.
- Ensure that the residents in the streets around the school including Melfin Drive, Sandalwood Avenue, Wolviston Avenue and Domain Drive are able to have their bins emptied on Mondays.
DO NOT BLOCK ACCESS TO BINS.

Over the past week, we have also noticed an increase in students being dropped off at the front and back gates well before the gates open. This results in students being unsupervised for an extended period of time, which is a serious safety concern. Please note that there is no staff supervision at the gates before 8:30am. **Should this occur, students will be placed into MACSEYE Before School Care, and the cost will be charged to parents.** The safety of our students must always be our highest priority.

Curriculum News

Year level newsletters will be emailed directly to families once per term. These newsletters have been prepared by the teachers and contain helpful information about curriculum, classroom news and year level reminders. Please read these carefully and contact your child's teacher if you would like more information.

Get Ready for Home Reading!

Consistent reading at home is important for reinforcing the skills taught in class and building necessary fluency. Starting in **Week 4** (16/2/26), home reading will begin for all students in Grades 1-6. To ensure a smooth start, classroom teachers will be sending a note home shortly detailing the routine and expectations. Please check your child's bag for this important information.

Please note that existing logins for the MultiLit E-Library (for 2025 P-2 students) are no longer valid as the roll over process has begun. New logins for 2026 P-2 students will be sent home shortly.

Coming soon - Timetables Rockstars TTRS

Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) is an online learning platform that helps students practise and secure their multiplication and division facts in a fun and engaging way. We will be setting up TTRS for students in Years 3–6 to support their learning and build accuracy and speed with times tables. Students will have regular opportunities to use TTRS during class time and they will also be able to access it at home online or through the TTRS app. More information, including login details and how families can support learning at home, will be shared soon — so please stay tuned.



Religious Education News

Please place these dates and times in your calendar -

Year 6 students-

Family Engagement Evening - Tuesday 21st April 2026 @ 5pm (only one session)

Sacrament of Confirmation- Sunday May 3rd 2026

Grade 6G - 1.30pm

Grade 6S - 3.30pm

Year 4 students-

Family Engagement Evening - Tuesday 18th August 2026 @ 5pm (only one session)

Sacrament of First Eucharist- Saturday August 22nd 2026

Grade 4G - 11.30am

Grade 4K - 1pm

Grade 4S - 2.30pm

Year 3 students-

Family Engagement Evening - Tuesday 13th October 2026 @ 5pm (only one session)

Sacrament of First Reconciliation-

Tuesday October 27th 2026

Grade 3C - 5pm

Grade 3W - 6.30pm

Wednesday October 28th

Grade 3M - 5pm

Grade 3S - 6.30pm

Ash Wednesday - Wednesday 18th February 2026 at 12.30pm in Cana Hall (All Welcome)

The Mary MacKillop Group will be leading this Mass.



Mass times - Other Mass times for the year will be sent out shortly.

We also welcome to our parish and school community a new Assistant Priest - Fr. Hoang Dinh - he will be assisting Fr. Linh Tran in celebrating Mass with us.

Please email me if you have any questions regarding RE on -

lina.vermeulen@canahillside.catholic.edu.au

Learning Diversity News

What is Learning Diversity in a school setting?

Learning Diversity supports students with additional learning, social, emotional, physical or sensory needs by coordinating reasonable adjustments and targeted supports. The role of the Learning Diversity leader is to work collaboratively with teachers, families and at times, external professionals, to ensure all students can access and engage meaningfully in learning.

Transition to school / new year level

Thank you to the families who have worked collaboratively with the school during their child's transition to school / new year level. It is important to remember that some students require additional time during this transition period to settle fully into the new routine.

Program Support Group Meetings (PSG Meetings)

For some students at our school, Program Support Group (PSG) meetings are held with families and relevant school staff to discuss individual goals and learning adjustments. These meetings will take place in Weeks 6, 7 and 8 of Term 1. The specific days and times will be communicated to relevant families shortly.

If you have any questions relevant to Learning Diversity at Cana, please feel free to contact the DP/Learning Diversity Leader, Mrs Liz Cutajar, on the email below:

elizabeth.cutajar@canahillside.catholic.edu.au

Other News

Local roadworks- corner of Banchory Avenue and Melton Highway: The intersection of Banchory Avenue and Melton Highway is currently undergoing significant roadworks. Please see the diagram below which was sent from Melton Council. I will keep the community updated as required.



2026 Cana Catholic School Staff

Principal	Alison Bretag
Deputy Principal/REL	Lina Vermeulen
Deputy Principal/Learning Diversity Leader	Liz Cutajar
Student Wellbeing Leader	Vanessa Coulter
Literacy Leader	Melanie Pizzonia
Mathematics Leader	Shannon Cobbin
Inquiry Leaders	Liz Cutajar and Melanie Pizzonia
MHiPS Leader	Sarah Adigun
Phys Ed Leader/Digital Tech & Website Leader	Aiden Cassar
LOTE (Italian) Teacher	Laura Pepper
Arts Teacher	Cheryl D'Abreo
STEM Teacher	Natalie Galea
STEM Teacher	Jessica Bustos
Learning Enhancement Teacher	Doreen Micallef
School Bursar & Facilities Manager	Trudy Milligan

Finance and Admin Officer	Blaz Coric
Admin Officers	Carla Doherty & Chrissy Theodosiou
Prep Teachers	Tanisha Calleja
	Kate Johns
	Taylah Hili
	Ewa Tripptree
Year 1 Teachers	Tahlia Tanti
	Cassandra Scott (Mon - Thurs) Stephanie Belcastro (Friday)
	Natalina Raso (Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri) Sarah Livoti (Thursday)
	Lia Memete
Year 2 Teachers	Louisa Canturi
	Sarah Adigun (Mon, Thurs, Fri) Alex O'Shea (Tues & Wed)
	Dionne Nicolaou
	Mikaela Cassar
Year 3 Teachers	Jordan Saringolis
	Agatha Caruana
	Breanna Madigan
	Narelle Watson
Year 4 Teachers	Ennamarie Giurlanda
	Tom Kulczynski (Mon - Thurs) Sarah Livoti (Friday)
	Shelley Shein (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri) Sarah Livoti (Wednesday)
Year 5 Teachers	Jenson Micallef
	Olivia Vermeulen
	Simone Whelan
Year 6 Teachers	Jake Schembri
	Erin Galliott
Learning Support Officers	Gayle Burley Maria Visevic Angie Gregory Julie Cassar Lorenza Malamas Khai Sebek Lisa Croswell Juliette Mendez-Illufi Joyce Debrincat Natascia Favorito

Ice Creams

Varieties will vary from time to time



Zooper Doopers

\$1.00



Paddle Pop Icy Twist

\$2.00



Chocolate and Vanilla Frozen
Yoghurt

\$2.00



Strawberry and Vanilla
Frozen Yoghurt

\$2.00



Chocolate Paddle Pop

\$2.50



Calippo- Lemon, Pineapple
and Raspberry

\$3.00



**Please note strictly 1 ice cream per child only, available in Term 1 and 4.
We are kindly asking for students to bring coins only for payment as large change will not
be given.**



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Child Safety

MACS has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and is deeply committed to upholding and embedding the highest standards of child safety across our schools.

We are guided by our Catholic faith and the unique and unrepeatable dignity of every person in our care. We are dedicated to creating an inclusive and protective environment where every child can feel and be safe.

We are responsible for inspiring and enabling every child to flourish and enrich the world.

Child safety is a shared responsibility between MACS, its employees including its Board, Executive Leadership Team, School Principals, teachers, staff and the wider community.

macs.vic.edu.au



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Child Safe Standard 1



Establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

MACS
CARE

Play your part visit: care.macs.vic.edu.au
Reviewed: January 2026

"To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Micah 6:8



Child Safe Standard 1

"Establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued"

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to uphold and actively promote the wellbeing and safety of every student entrusted in our care. Our commitment to the protection of students is enabled in nurturing, respectful and safe communities where the uniqueness and sacred dignity of every young person are celebrated, and they can flourish in their learning and development.

This newsletter series provides an overview of what the Child Safe Standards are, how they are designed to help keep children and young people safe and what schools governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are doing to prioritise and achieve this.

Overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards

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Our Commitment

Our commitment to the protection of students is enabled in nurturing, respectful and safe communities where the uniqueness and sacred dignity of every young person are celebrated, and they can flourish in their learning and development.

This vision is driven by the Gospel message of love, justice and abundance, beautifully reflected in the words of John:

"I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full"

(Jn 10:10)

Note: The term 'Aboriginal' includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is important to be respectful of how individual children, students, their families and community refer to themselves and use appropriate language when referring to individuals or communities.

Working together for Child Safety



Spotlight on Child Safe Standard 1

Creating a Culturally Safe Environment for Aboriginal Children

Child Safe Standard 1 relates to children and young people feeling culturally safe, respected, and valued.

What does this look like in a school environment?

- Celebrating culture:** We include and celebrate Aboriginal culture in our classrooms/events e.g. NAIDOC Week, researching stories to share, inviting guest speakers.
- Taking a stance:** We lead by example against racism and swiftly respond if it is observed.
- Working together:** We contact and engage with Aboriginal families and communities to make sure our school is welcoming and inclusive. We ask families what they need to feel supported at our school.
- Ongoing development:** Our staff receive training and knowledge to better understand and support cultural safety.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Here's how you can support:

- Familiarise** yourself with the school's child safety policies and understand how they support student wellbeing.
- Provide feedback** when you notice something that may impact a child's safety or wellbeing.
- Support** your child when they express their views and that their opinions are valued and heard.
- Join in** on school activities, parent committees or forums that promote child safety and wellbeing.

Want to know more?

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how we're supporting child safety, please get in touch.

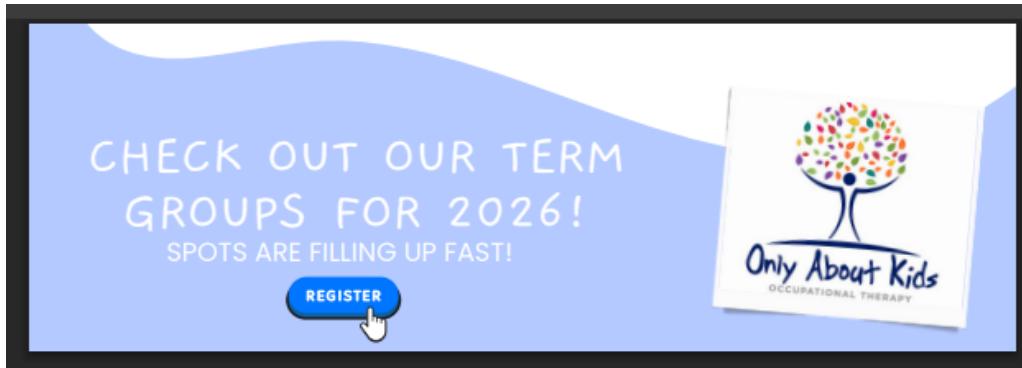
More information on the Child Safe Standards can be found via the [Commission for Children and Young People \(CCYP\) website](#).

Check out these additional resources below to learn more!

- [Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation](#)
- [Koori Heritage Trust](#)
- [Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Victoria](#)
- [AIATSIS: Map of Indigenous Australia](#)
- [Yoorrook Justice Commission](#)

Working together for Child Safety



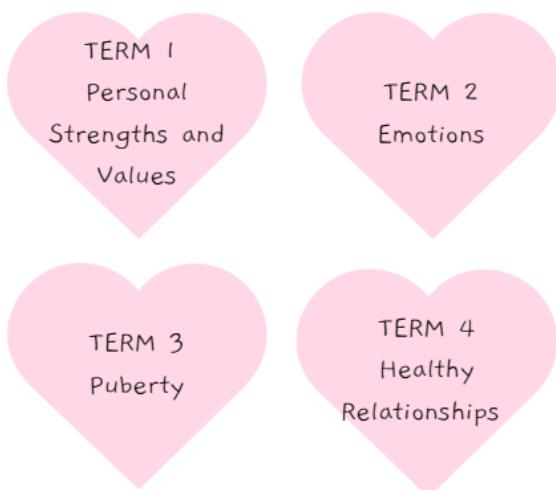


About the program

Girl Talk! is a group designed for pre-teens and teenage girls aged between 11 and 15. Running each term, the group aims to empower young females and build connections.

Objectives

- Building self-awareness
- Recognising and managing emotions
- Understanding puberty
- Building relationships
- Promote self-esteem, resilience and decision making skills



Details

4PM - 5PM

Mondays

\$120 per session*

(*Please note payment is required for the full term)

Please contact our Client Support Team to book your spot or scan the QR code below!



BUILDING BUDDIES



About the program

The Building Buddies groups are designed for primary school aged children to learn and practice the skills necessary to navigate social interactions with their peers. Running each term, children will learn strategies in a real time context to support transference of skills into real life scenarios.

Objectives

- Building conversation skills.
- Understanding friendships.
- Sharing space and taking turns.
- Perspective taking.
- Resolving conflict.
- Identifying and regulating emotions.
- Self-awareness.



Details

SEEDLINGS

Prep & Grade 1
4pm - 5pm

ACORNS

Grade 2 & Grade 3
4pm - 5pm

OAKS

Grade 4+
4pm - 5pm

\$120 per
session*

Days to be confirmed!

Please contact our Client Support Team to book your spot or scan the QR code below!



*Please note payment is required
for the full term

