

**Term 1, Week 4, 2026**

## Principal's News

Dear Families,

Today is Ash Wednesday, where we enter the Season of Lent- a season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We will hear from the Prophet Joel "It is the Lord who speaks... come back to me with all your heart." May this Lenten season be a time for us that mirrors Jesus' time in the desert, offering us a chance to strip away the noise of modern life and refocus on what actually matters. Caritas' [Project Compassion website](#) has amazing resources for teachers, students and families to refer to during Lent. The website contains stories about the challenges experienced by those living in poverty and is an exemplary example of social justice in action.

### THREE PILLARS OF LENT



### OPENING PRAYER

Merciful God,  
look upon us as we enter these Forty Days,  
bearing the mark of ashes,  
and bless our journey through the desert of Lent.  
May our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.  
All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus,  
for in his cross you proclaim your love  
for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Ash Wednesday Mass was celebrated today by Father Linh and the new assistant priest Father Hoang. We look forward to working with them in partnership and stewardship.

Our **Parent Teacher chats** have now concluded with many teachers sharing how valuable they found the opportunity to meet with parents and carers to learn more about the students that they are teaching. Thank you parents and carers for coming along and being part of these.

**Visa documentation changes:** Parents and carers who are not Australian citizens are asked to inform the school immediately if there are any changes or updates to your visa documentation or Australian residency requirements. It is important that we maintain accurate records here at school, in alignment with the Australian Government directives for schools. If you and/or your children change from permanent residency to Australian citizenship please bring a copy to the school as soon as possible.

**Parent/Carer contact details:** It is important for the school to maintain accurate contact details (phone numbers and email addresses) for all parents/carers at all times. Please email Chrissy and Carla [office@canahillside.catholic.edu.au](mailto:office@canahillside.catholic.edu.au) if anything needs updating. This includes emergency contacts, asthma plans or medical plans- thank you.

**Enrolments for Prep in 2027** will open soon- priority is given to siblings of existing families and then opened to Catholic families who live in the Cana catchment zone- please see the school website for more information. It is vitally important that parents of existing families wanting to enrol their child for Prep in 2027, complete the enrolment enquiry on the website. This is to ensure that you do not miss out on a place. **Due to the rapid increase in enrolments here at Cana, there will only be three classes of Prep at Cana in 2027.**

**Health Care Card Holders-** if you have a Centrelink issued Health Care Card and have not yet provided it to the school, please contact Trudy at the Office. Eligible Health Care Card holders may be eligible to claim the CSEF (Camps, Sports and Excursions funding) and the fee concession. The card holder must be a parent or carer, not in the name of the child.

**Statements for 2026 School Fees** will be sent home this week in hard copy. Please contact me if you require a confidential discussion about possible financial support.

**Extended absences/family holidays:** A number of families take holidays throughout the year (not in school holiday break time) for interstate or international travel. This is often because it is cheaper to travel during school terms rather than during the holidays. I understand the reasoning for this and I highly value the opportunity for families to travel, however it should be noted that alternative school work will not be provided for students to make up for the curriculum that they miss out on. Students are always encouraged to read and write a journal when they are away- this can then be shared with their teacher and classmates upon their return.

Parents and carers must inform the school of the dates that their child will be absent for a holiday- this can be done via email to me at [principal@canahillside.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@canahillside.catholic.edu.au) or at the office. This is a requirement of the federal government who primarily funds our school.

**Attendance-** all parents and carers must (by law) inform the school if their child will be absent for any reason (illness, appointment etc.). Please call the school or complete an absence notification via Audiri or NForma. In accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, schooling is compulsory for children and young people aged from 6 – 17 years unless an exemption has been granted. Parents/guardians must enrol a child of compulsory school age at a registered school and ensure the child attends school at all times when the school is open for instruction. Some students require support to separate from their family in the morning or to come to school. Please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or a member of the leadership team if you are concerned about your child's absences from school.

<https://beyou.edu.au/resources/fact-sheets/child-and-adolescent-development/school-refusal>

**Birthday treats** - To ensure we are in line with our *No Sharing Food* policy and to keep all students safe, we kindly ask that families **do not send food treats to school** to celebrate birthdays. Birthdays will continue to be acknowledged and celebrated by the classroom teacher in special ways, such as singing Happy Birthday, giving stickers or certificates, and recognising students at our weekly assembly with the school community.

If your child would like to bring something small to share with classmates, they are welcome to bring **one** small token such as a bubble wand, balloon, stickers, pencil, or bouncy ball.

In line with this policy, teachers will also not be distributing Easter chocolate eggs or other food items to students at Easter time.

Please note that if food items are brought to school for birthday celebrations, they will not be shared with the class and will be returned to the parent/guardian.

Thank you for your support in helping us maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all students.

**New Appointment** - We are pleased to announce the appointment of Margaret Canny, who will be joining Doreen Micallef as our second Learning Enhancement teacher. Together, they will provide targeted literacy support to students in Years 1–5. Students selected for the intervention program have met specific criteria based on data collected from assessments conducted at the beginning of the year. Families will be notified shortly if their child has been selected to participate in the intervention program.

### Important Dates

#### **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

**Term 1 Dates:**

**Tuesday February 24th** - 2027 Enrolment School Tour, 5pm

**Tuesday February 24th** - 2026 Prep Information Evening, 6pm **(for current Prep families)**

**Wednesday 25th February** - 2027 Enrolment School Tour, 10am

**Thursday February 26th 2026-** Staff Professional Learning for PBL - no school for students

**Monday March 2nd** - School photos-students wear full summer school uniform

**Tuesday March 3rd** - 2027 Enrolment School Tour, 10am

**Wednesday March 4th - Friday March 6th** - Year 6 camp

**Monday March 9th** - Labour Day Public Holiday - no school

**Tuesday March 10th** - School Advisory Council Meeting, 6pm

**Wednesday March 11th - Thursday March 19th** - NAPLAN- Year 3 and Year 5

**Wednesday March 11th** - 2027 Enrolment Information Evening, 6pm

**Thursday March 12th** - 2027 Enrolment applications open

**Tuesday March 17th** - St Patrick's Day/Harmony Day celebration - wear something **green** and/or **orange**

**Tuesday March 17th** - Open classrooms to celebrate Catholic Education Week, 2:30pm - 3:00pm

**Wednesday March 25th** - Cana Feast Day picnic, 5:00pm - 6:30pm (more information to come)

**Thursday March 26th** - 2027 Enrolment applications close

**Friday March 27th** - Second hand uniform sale, 8:30am and 3:00pm

**Monday March 30th** - Easter raffle draw at assembly, 8:45am

**Wednesday April 1st** - Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser

**Thursday April 2nd** - Holy Thursday - students finish at 1:00pm

**Friday April 3rd** - Good Friday - no school

### Child Safety News

**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**

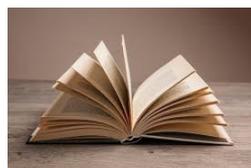
Thank you to our families for your understanding and cooperation following the recent changes to our car parking arrangements. We appreciate that adjustments to routines can take time, particularly during busy morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods. To ensure the safety of our students and the 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**



#### **Rich Literature at Cana**

Rich literature is an effective way to expand students' vocabulary and comprehension skills. At Cana we use rich literary texts throughout F-6 through storybook sessions in the junior school and novel studies in the middle and senior classes.

These sessions assist students in building deeper background knowledge, learn complex vocabulary and intricate sentence structures that are rarely encountered in daily speech. These studies provide the necessary scaffolding for students to transition from learning to read to reading for learning; a skill

needed to navigate complex ideas throughout their lives. Reading rich literature to your child at home is also a valuable activity that you can enjoy together.

### **Home Reading**

Home reading began in all Year 1 - Year 6 classes this week.

Your continued support of your child with their home reading routine is an important practice that helps to consolidate reading skills.

### **Times Tables Rock Stars Update**

Students in Years 4-6 have now received their login details. The Year 3 students will receive access later on in the term, after they complete their multiplication and division unit. Below is some key information about Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS):

#### **1. What is it for?**

Times Tables Rock Stars helps students develop speed, accuracy, and confidence with multiplication and division facts.

#### **2. How often should my child use it?**

Short, regular practice works best — around 3–5 minutes each day.

#### **3. Will it suit my child's level?**

Yes. The program adapts to your child's ability, providing appropriate challenge and support.

#### **4. How can I see my child's progress?**

Your child can share their heat map with you to see strengths and areas to practise, helping you support them in focusing on the facts that need the most attention.

#### **5. Can it be used at home?**

Yes. Students can log in on any device, and the Times Tables Rock Stars app can also be downloaded on tablets and phones.

**This short video provides more information:**

[What is Times Tables Rock Stars? Parents and Carers Guide](#)

## **Religious Education News**

**Due to unforeseen circumstances there are changes of times for Grade 4 Eucharist as highlighted in RED. Please mark this in your calendar.**

**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 4S - 1pm**

**Grade 4K - 2.30pm**

**Project Compassion Boxes** - these are located in your child's classroom and the front office - spare change from ice cream money on Fridays could be placed in the boxes to support the **Three pillars of LENT** especially the almsgiving pillar.



Dear Families,

This year we excitingly welcome more Masses at Cana! For safety and space reasons, we have split the school into 2 groups. These groups are titled Group A, and Group B. The two tables below are for your reference to see which group your child/ren are in and when they will be in the hall for the Mass and/or leading the Mass.

Families of students who are in the hall on the designated week or are leading the Mass, are invited to attend Mass. This information is in the grey shaded area.

We look forward to praying with you as a school community.

Group A	PC, PH, 1M, 1S, 2C, 2N, 3C, 3W, 4K, 5M, 5V, 6G
Group B	PJ, PT, 1R, 1T, 2A, 2M, 3M, 3S, 4G, 4S, 5W, 6S

Week TERM 1	Date	Time	Group in hall	Class - Group Leading Mass	Theme
4	WEDNESDAY 18 <sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY	12:30pm	ALL EXCEPT PREPS	Mary MacKillop Group	ASH WEDNESDAY
6	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	2:15pm	Group A	2C/2N	Friendship
8	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	2:15pm	Group B	2A/2M	Catholic Education Week/ St Joseph's Feast Day
10	Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	2:15pm	ALL GROUPS	Students (Scenes from Holy Week)	Holy Week

### Learning Diversity News

### Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD)



Our school is currently participating in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD), which is a mandatory annual process for all Australian schools. At this time, we are in the 'implementation stage' of the NCCD process, where schools review and document the support provided to students who require additional adjustments to access and participate in learning.

The funding schools receive to support these students is based on clear evidence across four key

areas:

- the adjustments being made within the school setting
- how these adjustments are monitored and reviewed
- assessment of identified needs
- consultation and collaboration with families

Please visit the NCCD website for more information: <https://www.nccd.edu.au/>

In the coming weeks, Program Support Group (PSG) meetings will be held with some families to discuss specific goals and support for their child. Families will be notified of meeting times by the end of this week.

### Student Wellbeing News

The game of soccer is becoming increasingly problematic during break times at Cana. The level of aggression that some students from Years 2-6 display while playing is very concerning. Some students are highly competitive and are showing behaviours not in keeping with the values that we want here at Cana. These behaviours were identified as problematic by students and have been observed by staff on many occasions, including:

- Swearing
- Overly aggressive moves such as slide tackles, nudging and 'chesting' each other.
- Tackling, shoving
- Creating teams that are not even (e.g. 7 players versus 3 players)
- 'Showing off' and getting in each other's faces after kicking a goal.

When staff and students have been brainstorming ideas for how to best support students, these are some of the consequences and procedures that have been derived:

- An automatic red card and removal from the game for any of the behaviours listed above. Depending on the frequency of the behaviour occurring or re-occurring, a conversation will then be held with parents/carers.
- Students who repeatedly display the behaviour may then be 'banned' from playing soccer for a longer period of time.
- Weekend soccer (playing for a club) is traditionally more competitive, however students have been told that these rules are not in place here at school. School soccer should be more fun and team-oriented.

It is vital that we have parent/carer support with this, to ensure that all students are aware of the

importance of playing safely and fairly at break times. If there is no overall improvement in the temperament of some of the soccer playing students, games will be banned and the soccer nets closed.

### **PBL at Cana (Positive Behaviour for Learning)**

Last Tuesday our school PBL Team participated in Professional Learning at the Catholic Leadership Centre with MACS staff and other MACS schools to begin the first steps of our PBL journey of change here at Cana. PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) is a whole school evidence-based, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework. For schools seeking to improve academic achievement, attendance, behaviour and school climate, the PBL framework is a proven framework for supporting educators in their goals.

Our PBL team consists of myself, Liz Cutajar, Vanessa Coulter, Natalina Raso, Aiden Cassar and Erin Galllott. Stay tuned for more details- our whole school closure day planned for next Thursday February 26th will give staff a valuable opportunity to work together to develop our school values, our school rules and expected behaviours. We will also be seeking input from students and parents/carers regarding the values that we want to uphold at Cana.



### **News from the P and F Committee**

#### **Parents and Friends Committee**

Dear Cana School Community, It is a pleasure to welcome you all to the 2026 school year.

As part of the Parents and Friends (P&F) Fundraising Committee, we are committed to supporting Cana through a variety of fundraising and social events that help foster a strong, family-oriented community. These events not only bring our families together but also raise valuable funds that contribute to school projects and equipment for the benefit of our students.

Our goal is to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all members of our school community. The safety and wellbeing of our children is always our highest priority, and all committee members are required to hold a current Working With Children Check or VIT registration.

We warmly welcome new families who would like to become involved in the P&F Committee. If you are interested in joining, please feel free to contact me, Belinda, at [belinda.1787@gmail.com](mailto:belinda.1787@gmail.com).

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to our current Parents and Friends Committee members for your ongoing dedication and support of our school.

We look forward to a wonderful year ahead!

### **Second-Hand Uniform Sale**

Over the next two weeks, we are collecting donations of clean, good-quality uniforms for our upcoming Second-Hand Uniform Sale. If you have any uniforms your family no longer requires, please drop them off at the school office.

In the coming weeks, we will announce a sale date where families will have the opportunity to purchase second-hand uniforms during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Thank you for supporting this initiative and helping make uniforms more affordable for our school community.



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](https://macs.vic.edu.au)

CHECK OUT OUR TERM  
GROUPS FOR 2026!  
SPOTS ARE FILLING UP FAST!

REGISTER



# GIRL TALK!



## 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

TERM 1  
Personal  
Strengths and  
Values

TERM 2  
Emotions

TERM 3  
Puberty

TERM 4  
Healthy  
Relationships

## 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

**Keilor Downs Conference**  
St Mary of the Assumption Parish  
Odessa Avenue  
KEILOR DOWNS 3038

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12 February 2026

Ms Alison Bretag  
Principal  
Cana Catholic Primary School  
46 Banchory Grove  
Hillside 3037

Dear Ms Bretag

**St Vincent de Paul 2025 Christmas Appeal**

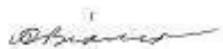
On behalf of the Keilor Downs Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society, please accept our sincere thanks and blessings for the incredible efforts of your students and teachers during our 2025 Christmas Appeal.

The contribution made by the staff and students of Cana Catholic PS was truly an impressive achievement. I am pleased to report that **50 families** with children benefitted from this generosity, receiving much-needed relief from hardship, and the opportunity to experience the joy and cheer of the Christmas season.

Warm gestures of support like yours to the work we do, never fail to bring a sense of hope, comfort, and dignity to all of us.

God bless!

Yours sincerely



Armando Bianco  
**President**



