



## Important Dates

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### College Board Meeting

Tuesday 1 April 2025

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20.03.25

## Principal's Update T1, W8

### Working together to enhance learning

By Week 8 of Term 1, students should be well and truly attuned to routines and expectations. I am enjoying walking through classes and seeing some of the great work students are engaged in and the achievements being recorded and reflected upon, with goals being set for future improvement. Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 have participated in NAPLAN tests with good focus, and Senior Years Learning Conversations with students and parents have started this week. It is great to see a genuine commitment to success.

When there is a consistent focus on learning and high expectations coupled with necessary supports, students make excellent progress. At both Benedict and Bosco, teachers and Educational Support Officers are working to consolidate and extend students' learning. Intervention programs are being implemented to bridge gaps in learning, particularly in literacy where skills are foundational to learning across the curriculum.

At every year level of schooling, there are things parents can do to support children to experience success:

- Encourage reading rather than screen time at home. As Mrs Freer wrote in the last newsletter, developing fluency in reading underpins all learning. Practising sounds and sight words at home, especially in the Early Years, and making time to model and encourage good reading habits will be a game changer in your children's learning. Maintaining good reading habits as students progress through school significantly improves learning outcomes and the ability to use language for multiple purposes in both writing and speaking.
- Show interest in learning. Ask questions about what is being studied and support your child in allocating time to homework and assessment tasks.
- Check in about due dates and homework requirements – in the middle and senior years there is usually something to be working on. Help children prioritise activities to meet deadlines, which is an important life skill. External commitments, such as sport and part-time jobs are great for wellbeing and developing life skills, but balance is important, and paid work should not negatively impact learning commitments.
- Support consistent attendance as this enables continuity of learning. Regular absence adds stress to students as they can fall behind quickly. Avoid appointments or holidays during school time. There is a strong correlation between high attendance and achievement.
- For Bosco students, ensure devices are charged overnight so that students have the tools they need to be productive in class.
- Let us know if there are any concerns so that we can work together on solutions. We all want the best for our students.

Success takes different forms, and we work to individualise what this means for our students. Success takes commitment and hard work. Your assistance and support is essential and we are grateful for all the ways that parents and guardians work with us in enhancing learning and wellbeing outcomes for our young people.

***Dr Sandra Hewson, Principal***

20.03.25

## Faith and Mission, T1, W8

### **Project Compassion Fundraising**

So far in the Lenten season, our Year 9s have made a red-hot go of fundraising for Project Compassion. Events have raised several hundreds of dollars for Caritas Australia already. We have had Benedict and Bosco bake sales, a sausage sizzle, a sponge throw, a 'Lucky Squares' competition and 'Guess the Number of Lollies in the Jar', to name a few. Closer to Easter, there will be themed events as well, such as an Easter Egg Hunt.

To see where the money raised during the Project Compassion campaigns goes, head to the [Caritas Australia website](#) or to donate money, visit the [St Mark's College Fundraising page](#). The fundraising page is for community donations, while the total raised at school is banked separately. The Caritas website has many different fundraising ideas that can be actioned by our school families and the local community. Please consider how these could be implemented this year or in future years as we commit to supporting the good works of Catholic charities like Caritas Australia.

### **2025 Easter date common to both Eastern and Western Churches**

Arguments on doctrine and statements of belief in the Universal Church throughout history have raised issues for those who disagree with the decisions or take a different viewpoint. One of these differences happens between the Western (Roman) Churches and the Eastern (Orthodox) Churches. Celebrating Easter is common to both East and West and central to our faith - in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Despite this, which date to celebrate Easter each year is still a point of difference.

In the Eastern Churches, the date is still determined using the Julian Calendar, a precursor to the Gregorian Calendar, while the Western Church uses the Gregorian Calendar. As such, the dates of Easter frequently differ between the Churches, sometimes by several weeks.

In 2025, however, the dates will align on the same day, Sunday 20 April.

Pope Francis suggests that in this Jubilee Year, with the connections between East and West at their closest, the bonds of ecumenism can be strengthened with discussions to move towards a common Easter date every year. In the past, this has been a significant barrier towards Christian unity. May we pray that their dialogue be constructive and fruitful for the benefit of all Christians.

### The Witness

[Click here](#) for the latest edition.

### Southern Cross

[Click here](#) for the latest edition.

### Mr Isaac Ellis, APRIM



20.03.25

## Benedict Campus Reminders, T1, W8

### Key Dates: Term 1, Week 9 and 10

- **Little Lions Session 7**  
Monday 24 March, 8.30am – 11.30am
- **Mini Mark's Playgroup – Transport Day**  
Tuesday 25 March, 8.45am – 10.15am
- **SAPSASA Softball**  
Wednesday 26 – Friday 28 March
- **Combined Choir Rehearsal**

Friday 28 March, 9.10am – 12.45pm

- **Mini Mark's Playgroup – I Love Animals**

Tuesday 1 April, 8.45am – 10.15am

- **Parent Teacher Interviews**

Tuesday 1 April, 3.40pm – 8.00pm

- **Year 5 and 6 Interschool Winter Carnival**

- Football and Netball**

Friday 4 April, 9.15am at allocated sports venue, completion at 2pm

## **NAPLAN**

We would like to congratulate students for their positive attitude in participating in National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing. We wanted to provide you with important information regarding this assessment and the support available to schools and students.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to parents for prioritising this one avenue of evaluating students' knowledge and understanding. As this is merely one method for assessing students' knowledge and comprehension, we appreciate the positive perspective families have passed onto their children.

Approximately 1.3 million students from over 9,400 schools and campuses across Australia, including those in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9, have taken part in the NAPLAN test. This assessment acts as an educational "health check," measuring each student's proficiency in five key domains: numeracy, reading, writing, spelling, and grammar and punctuation. The NAPLAN results offer a clear view of students' progress and allow for comparisons with peers nationwide.

### **NAPLAN Testing Period**

The NAPLAN tests were conducted over an 8-day period, each with particular test requirements.

### **Why NAPLAN Matters**

NAPLAN helps to identify specific areas of strength and areas of challenge for each student, allowing teachers to provide timely intervention or extension as needed. This valuable information enables schools to have meaningful conversations with students and parents, ensuring that the right support is in place to help each student thrive.

### **NAPLAN Results**

When you receive the NAPLAN results, they will reflect your child's proficiency in the five key domains: numeracy, reading, writing, spelling, and grammar and punctuation. The results provide information on your child's performance in each category, allowing you to understand their strengths and areas for improvement. This insight is invaluable for supporting your child's ongoing learning journey.

We encourage you to continue supporting your child by maintaining a positive mindset and fostering a love for learning. Your involvement and encouragement play a significant role in their success.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

### **New Playgroup Facilitator**

We are delighted to welcome Deanne Clayton as our new Mini Mark's Playgroup Facilitator. Deanne brings an abundance of experience and a vibrant enthusiasm to the playgroup, ensuring it remains a nurturing and enjoyable space for all. She is eager to make full use of the versatile spaces—both indoors, outdoors, and across the two rooms—to create fun, engaging activities that help families forge early

and meaningful connections with St Mark's College. Her dedication to fostering community and her creative energy make her a wonderful addition to our school family. We feel fortunate to have her join us!

**Mrs Sarah Freer, Deputy Principal, Benedict Campus**



# What's been happening at Benedict Campus?

There's been plenty happening at Benedict Campus during Week 7 and 8...



21.03.25

## Bosco Campus Reminders, T1, W8

Key Dates: Term 1, Week 9 and 10

- **Year 7 Camp A**  
Monday 24 – Wednesday 26 March
- **Year 7 Camp B**  
Wednesday 26 – Friday 28 March

- **Year 10 – 12 Learning Conversations**

Wednesday 26 March

- **Year 10 & 11 Drama/Music Excursion (A Migrant's Son)**

Friday 28 March 10:45am-12:30pm

- **Ag Sponsors BBQ**

Wednesday 2 April, 6.30pm McNally Farm

Many opportunities continue to enrich the experiences of our students.

Today, we had the privilege of hosting special guests for the official opening of our new Boarding House. A heartfelt thank you to the staff and students who contributed to the blessing liturgy, ministries, and catering. We pray for the ongoing success and growth of this boarding community, now and in the years to come.

### **Learning Conversations**

I was grateful to have a parent come and share their reflections at the end of our Senior Learning Conversations.

"I am just so grateful. I said that 2 years ago, and tonight I feel the same. I want the staff to know how great the experience of these conversations is. They know my boys, in 7 weeks they have nailed them. They shared their strengths and called them out on their weaknesses. I am a tough critic as a teacher myself and I am just so grateful for all that they are offered here".

What a powerful thing to have 3 way conversations where students, staff and families are working towards our young people reaching their full potential.

### **Harmony Week and Close the Gap**

Celebrating Harmony Week this week has allowed us a time to celebrate Australia's cultural diversity and promote the importance of inclusivity, respect, and a sense of belonging for all. It reminds us of the strength in our multicultural community/society and encourages everyone to embrace different cultures and backgrounds. I was impressed with the work our Year 12 Captains put into facilitating activities to promote thinking and awareness around this week.

It was a pleasure to attend the local Close the Gap Day celebrations in the Tarpari Centre with some our students yesterday. The event provided the opportunity for a yarn over lunch and to promote the ongoing efforts to improve health and education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is a call to action for all Australians to work towards equality and fairness. My thanks to Mrs Jenna George for facilitating not only this event but all of our supports and structures for recognising our First Nations people. By engaging with the themes of Harmony Week and Close the Gap, we can build towards a more united and just society.

Best wishes to our Year 7 students who venture off on camp next week. Please see Operoo for all details and the packing list.

***Mrs Katie Pole, Deputy Principal, Bosco Campus***

# What's been happening at Bosco Campus?

There's been plenty happening at Bosco Campus during Week 7 and 8...





# Celebrating Harmony Day across the College



20.03.25

## McNally Farm, T1, W8

### News from McNally Farm

McNally Farm has been a hive of learning in first term!

Yesterday, our Agriculture students attended the Arid Lands Pastoral Field Day, held at Pt Augusta Racecourse! It was an excellent opportunity for our Agriculture students to network with board members, businesses, and exhibitors from the Pastoral Industry. They were able to expand their knowledge through hands-on workshops, and captivating demonstrations. A huge shoutout to Brett Devitt and his team at the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board for making this experience possible!

There have also been several visits from people in industry and lots of support from our local community that we are grateful for:

- Thanks to Tom Ashby from Merino SA, who visited to tag and weigh our Show Led Wether Sheep. He was assisted by our Year 11 Agriculture students Sophie, Ryder and Kycenn.
- A big thank you as well, to Greg Andrews and Nicole Luckraft for donating 5 led wether sheep and Ashley Dunsford for supplying 4 led wether sheep for our Show, Sheep Competitions.
- Special thanks to Scott and Sally Wilson for donating over 2 tonne of high protein, homogenous feed mix, for our Show sheep and goats.

- Local Bee Keeper Robin Stevens has donated 3 bee hives along with other bee and honey processing equipment. A big thankyou to Robin and also to Crystal Brook, Apiarist and Beekeeper, Tim Grossman for organising the hives to be relocated to St Mark's. Tim has been a long term supporter of our bee and honey program.
- Chris Fogarty, Agronomist with Kerin Agencies, visited our Year 12 Agriculture class this week and assisted students with their Plant Trial considerations and Gross Margin information. Chris also provided a recommendation for the College's Hay/Cropping program for 2025. We thank Chris and Kerin Agencies for their continued support of our Agricultural Program.



20.03.25

## College Board Nominations

### College Board Nominations

Two members are concluding their time on the College Board at the AGM in May. I sincerely thank Martin Hayes and Hugh Richter for their service.

I invite you to consider nominating to join the College Board. This is a great opportunity to contribute to the governance of the College and its future directions.

Our College Board is an advisory body supporting the Principal in the effective governance of St Mark's on behalf of the Bishop of the Diocese of Port Pirie. The Board ensures we fulfil our mission as a Catholic school and operate within the policies and guidelines of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools.

Nominations are invited from people who have skills and experience able to contribute to our mission in promoting educational excellence, exercising financial stewardship, ensuring compliance with legal responsibilities, and fostering harmonious and positive collaboration with the College community.

Potential members of the College Board should:

- Possess an enthusiasm for and willingness to promote the mission of Catholic schools
- Demonstrate a desire to give service to and make recommendations for the good of the whole school community
- Have an ability to work cooperatively and constructively with all Members of the Board
- Be prepared to undertake formation, and have current police clearance
- Uphold confidentiality in Board matters and not pursue individual agendas
- Have sufficient time for Board duties.

There are seven Board meetings per year, on a Tuesday evening from 7-8.30pm. These are held in the Conference Room at the Bosco campus. In addition, Board members may nominate to join sub-committees that are formed periodically depending on the needs and directions of the College e.g. Traffic Management Committee.

I welcome a conversation with you if you would like to find out more.

### How to Nominate

A written nomination outlining your name, connection to the College, your skills and reasons for wishing to join the College Board should be sent to [Lisa Manners](#) by Friday 4 April.

Nominations will be shared in the first newsletter in Term 2, with a voting process taking place, if necessary, at the AGM on Tuesday 20 May.

I look forward to hearing from you!

**Dr Sandra Hewson, Principal**

20.03.25

## Closing the Gap

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Students showed support for National Close the Gap Day, attending community celebrations at Tapari Wellbeing Centre and placing their handprint on the campus banner.



## College Sport T1, W8



### Registrations Open

A reminder to all families that registrations are now open for:

- **Soccer:**
  - Junior Under 7's includes Receptions (if parents deem they are ready for team sport)
  - Under 9's: Age-based
  - Primary: Students up to Year 6
  - Junior High: Year 7, 8 and 9
  - Senior High: Year 10, Year 11 and Year 12
- **Netball:**
  - Juniors (8-17 years)
  - Seniors (turning 18+)
  - Net Set Go
- **Football:**
  - Auskick
  - Under 9 (born in 2016 or younger - or turning 7 in 2025)
  - Under 11 (born in 2014 or younger)
  - Under 13 (born in 2012 or younger)
- **Hockey:**
  - Hook in2 Hockey
  - Under 10's (born in 2015 or younger – but must be turning at least 7 years old in 2025)
  - Under 14's (born in 2011 or younger)
  - Under 18's (born in 2007 or younger)

[Click to register](#), Sports Vouchers are available for download.

### Merchandise

Keep an eye out on operoo for forms to get a St Mark's warm up top or jumper for the upcoming season of sport.

**Mr Leo Coates, Sports Administrator**

## Tips on Practicing Mindfulness



*Tips from our School Counsellors, Naomi and Sonya*

Mindfulness is the practice of staying present and fully engaged in the moment, without judgement. Mindfulness can help reduce stress, improve focus, and promote emotional wellbeing. The practice of mindfulness can look like focusing on your breath and bringing your attention to your surroundings in the present moment. Beginning your day with a few minutes each day can make a huge impact in how you feel.

## 2026 + 2027 Enrolments



Enrolments are open for students commencing at St Mark's in 2026 and 2027. Early enrolment is encouraged! Scholarships are available for new and current enrolments. Click to find out more about our [scholarships](#) which close on 27 June. Click to find out about the [enrolment process](#) or here to view our [Campus Tour](#) dates.

## College Calendar

[Click here](#) to access the Calendar for our College events.

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## Canteen Specials

[Click here](#) to check out the weekly specials for the upcoming fortnight.

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## Community News

### > **OSHC April School Holidays Schedule**

Click to see the schedule and find out more about booking your child's place!

### > **Phillippines Fundraiser - Bottles and Cans Collection**

To arrange pick up of bottles and cans, contact Grant Hanlon 0414 320 840

### > **Advocating for Safe and Respectful School Communities**


Catholic School Parents SA

### > **NDIS Mental Health and Wellbeing Support**

Appointments with Registered Psychologist available now

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## Saver Plus Information Sessions



# Could Saver Plus help with your education costs?

Google

 Saver Plus YouTube

to see our quick explainer video and find out if you're eligible.



[Read More](#)

## Interested in hosting an exchange student?

Bonjour!

We have a group of French teenagers coming to South Australia at the end of May for 12 weeks.

The students come here to improve their English and to have a cultural immersion with an Australian family.

If you have a space in your home to share with a student, please contact:

Jenny Hanson, SA Manager, Southern Cross Cultural Exchange

[jenny.h@scce.com.au](mailto:jenny.h@scce.com.au)

0409 890 184

## Mini Mark's Playgroup



Tuesday mornings, 9.00am – 10.30am held during term time

*All welcome!*

[Read More](#)

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## Out of School Hours Care





Available at Benedict Campus for Before School, After School and Vacation Care.

[Find out more about OSHC.](#)

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## Study Hub



Need assistance with your study?

Visit the Bosco Campus Student Hub after school daily until 4.30pm.

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## College Quick Links

[College Uniform](#)

[Uniform Policy and Guidelines](#)

[Uniform Buy, Swap and Sell](#)

### **Parents + Friends Community**

Join our community!

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## **Term Dates 2025**

**Term 1** - Tuesday 28 January - Friday 11 April

**Term 2** - Tuesday 29 April - Friday 4 July

**Term 3** - Tuesday 22 July - Friday 26 September

**Term 4** - Monday 13 October - Wednesday 10 December

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